

# Road-tripping with Jesus!



July/August 2019

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication



O Lord, you have examined my heart  
and know everything about me.

You know when I sit down or stand up.  
You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.

**You see me when I travel  
and when I rest at home.  
You know everything I do.**

You know what I am going to say  
even before I say it, Lord.

You go before me and follow me.  
You place your hand of blessing on my head.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too great for me to understand!

—Psalm 139:1-6

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## AboutTheAuthors

**Donna S. Bond** is a member of the Shiloh, NJ, SDB Church. She lives in Bridgeton with her husband of 45 years, Tim Bond, and is the proud mother of Levi Bond and Sylvia Kusmiesz, as well as grandmother to David Kusmiesz. Former church affiliations include Independence, NY; New Auburn, WI; White Cloud, MI; and Milton, WI.

**Katie Brown** works as a college advisor in Arkansas and enjoys knitting, reading, and spending time with her family. She is a member of the SDB Church of Texarkana, AR.

**Elianna Chroniger** attends the Alfred Station SDB Church. She has a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Houghton College. "Fun Fact: I have 16 Nieces and Nephews!"

**Scott Hausrath** has been pastoring the North Loup, NE Seventh Day Baptist congregation since 2012. He seeks to walk with Jesus.



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# Sabbath Recorder

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Patricia Cruzan  
Editor

[sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org)

Contributing Editors:

Rob Appel, Katrina Goodrich, Barb Green,  
Nicholas J. Kersten, Jane Mackintosh, Isaac Floyd/  
Rachael Osborn, John J. Pethtel, Andy Samuels,  
Sarina Villalpando

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## WHO ARE SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are.

Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

## THE SEVENTH DAY

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience – not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Seventh Day Baptist Center  
3120 Kennedy Road,  
PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678.

Phone: (608) 752-5055; FAX: (608) 752-7711

E-mail: [contact@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:contact@seventhdaybaptist.org)

SDB Website: [www.seventhdaybaptist.org](http://www.seventhdaybaptist.org)

Director of Communications

Jeremiah Owen

[jowen@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:jowen@seventhdaybaptist.org)

cell: (818)-468-9077

Editor of Sabbath Recorder:

[sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:sdbsr@seventhdaybaptist.org)

## SDBs ONLINE

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# Make Our Paths Straight

by Katie Brown

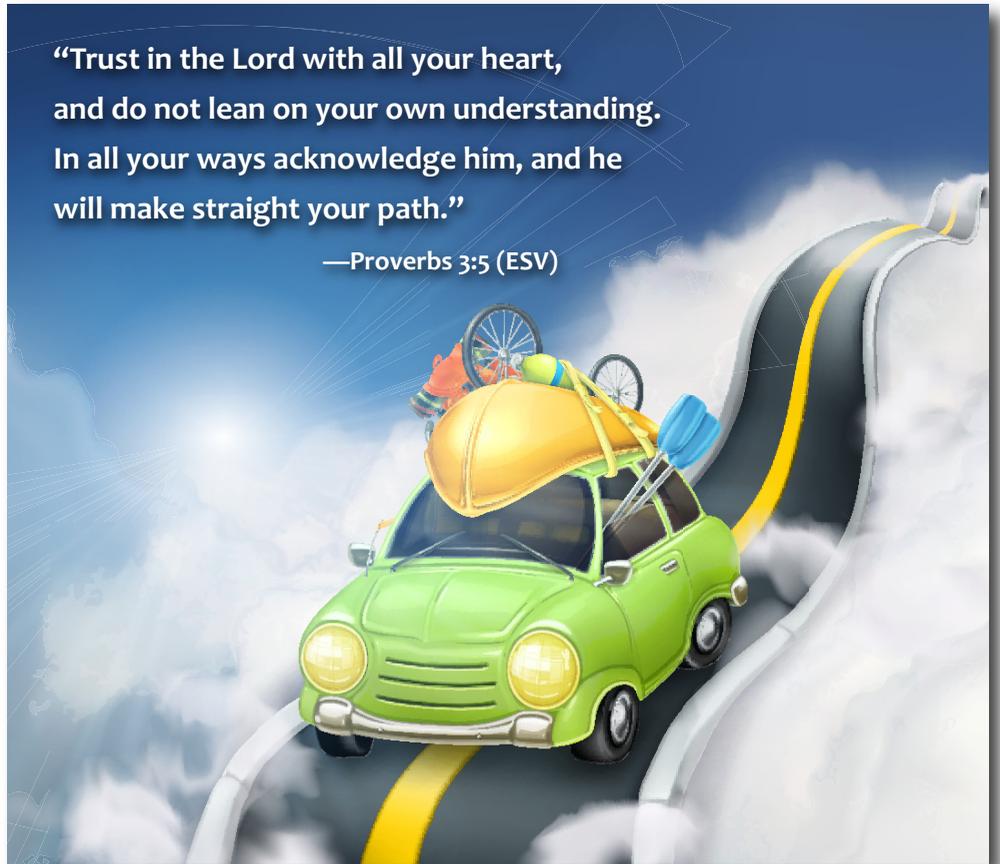
Summertime is a season of imagination and adventure. That is what we remember as children with long summer days and magical, firefly-filled nights. There is a sense of wonderment and possibilities. Perhaps this is associated with the opportunities for camping, road trips, church camps, VBS, and other outdoor activities with friends and loved ones. There is a blessing of fellowship in the summer months even when the weather can be oppressive (speaking as an Arkansan). And as we grow into the roles of camp counselors and VBS leaders, we still keep a spark of excitement in anticipation of the new moments of joy ahead.

Sometimes I think it would be wonderful to go back to those memories of bliss around the campfire as a young teen at camp. I can still smell the smoke and bug spray as we sang worship songs and asked for prayer. But as I grew older, I have to admit that I grew more wary of the summer months with responsibilities and deadlines. It started for me in SCSC as I took on leadership positions in summer church programs for the first time. I noticed the change in myself from carefree camper to stressed out counselor. I loved the opportunity to work with children and fellowship with other believers—but I had to start viewing summer in a different light. I had to learn to trust my summer to the Lord with all of my heart and not to lean on my own understanding.

The challenges involved with summer plans are invitations to trust God to make our paths straight. There are times that I did not know how I was going to do what needed to be done, but God always provided a way when I couldn't see one. As our faith muscles grow, we learn to trust God sooner. And as much as I loved being a camper, I'm grateful for the lessons of gratitude and grace that I have learned from succeeding and

**“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge him, and he  
will make straight your path.”**

—Proverbs 3:5 (ESV)



failing as an adult in the summer months. There are many ways to trust God in the big and small moments over this summer, whether it is mowing grass for neighbors, leading worship for the youth, driving a group across the country, or playing one more round of red rover with grade school children.

There is joy in trusting God and a promise that He will make our paths straight when we do this and acknowledge Him in the process. This is an idea that I am trying to repeat to myself when I am facing obstacles that seem especially intimidating. God has a desire for us to trust in Him with everything that we do. There is nothing too small this summer or this year for us to hand over to God. And with that, we have to agree not to take it back immediately and try not to lean on our own understanding again. (That's a difficult one for me, but I'm learning.) There is a peace in knowing that He will make your path straight.

He will make your path straight: sitting in a busy airport after a flight is delayed or cancelled; packing your house for a move across the country; driving your daughter or son to their new college dorm; arriving to the camp grounds for the first time as a camp counselor or camp director; taking that leap of faith in your job, school, community, church, or conference. When we trust God with all of our hearts this summer, and acknowledge Him in all of our ways, He will make our paths straight. SR

# My Summer Road Trips!

by Elianna Chroniger

As a student I always looked forward to the summer months because it meant that my entire life changed drastically. Instead of waking up early to sit in a classroom all day, I found myself sleeping a little later and waking up to the idea of sitting around all day doing projects, eating at weird times, and even going for walks. I looked forward to the weeks of summer camp at Camp Harley Sutton, the week of Vacation Bible School and most especially, the week of Conference.

Our family never flew to Conference. We always made the journey by car and turned our trip into more than just the week of Conference. We road-tripped! The first trip to Conference that I remember is when we traveled across the country to Oregon. We took the Oregon trail and saw so many amazing things! We stopped at Mt. Rushmore, Independence Rock, and Fort Cody. Our car broke down in Idaho, of all places!

Throughout the rest of our trips to Conference we took friends on some of our adventures. Abigail joined me in my terrorizing of Madge for one particularly memorable trip to Colorado. Annie joined us on our adventure home from Lancaster in a car packed so full of conference materials I could barely sit up straight. We even had Nedd and Aleafa Lozani travel home with us one Conference. Our drive to California included stops at the awe-inspiring Grand Canyon, the Great Salt Lake, and even the high school where “High School Musical” was filmed.

I long for the summers when my life changed so much just because of the month of the year. Even with all those changes, however, one thing stayed the same. Every Sabbath, no matter what state we were in, we would be in a Seventh Day Baptist Church. I visited churches all over the country, and even had time to stream our worship





"We're not friends" says Ellie to Judas

service from Alfred Station some weeks. In all of the hustle and bustle of camp, Conference, and VBS, I never thought about missing the chance to worship with my fellow believers.

When at camp we took the day to worship in the amazing creation that we have been gifted with at Camp Harley. On VBS Sabbath we watched as the kids shared with us what they had learned throughout the week. The Sabbaths leading up to Conference, I explored more churches in our denomination than I ever thought possible. Finally, Conference Sabbath, we worshiped in the midst of hundreds of other Seventh Day Baptists and found rest in knowing that our God brought us together!

So now, as I am working at a grown-up job, I long for summer. Not because my life will be completely transformed in the ways it was when I was growing up, but because it will remain utterly the same. I will road trip with Jesus from my home church as we still experience the joy our young ones get when their lives are transformed by the summer. I'll direct a week of camp at my favorite camp. I'll take the time to watch friends get married, have babies, and grow up. I will see my friends and family at Conference, and I will revel in the fact that, through all of the changes in our lives, we never miss a moment to reach out and worship. I will cherish the summer as the time when things stay the same because of the constant grace of our Savior.

This summer and every summer after, I challenge you to do the same, whether your life is utterly transformed by the summer months, or completely the same. Look to make room for the chances to make worship your constant, even when you feel like life is too crazy to take a break! [SR](#)

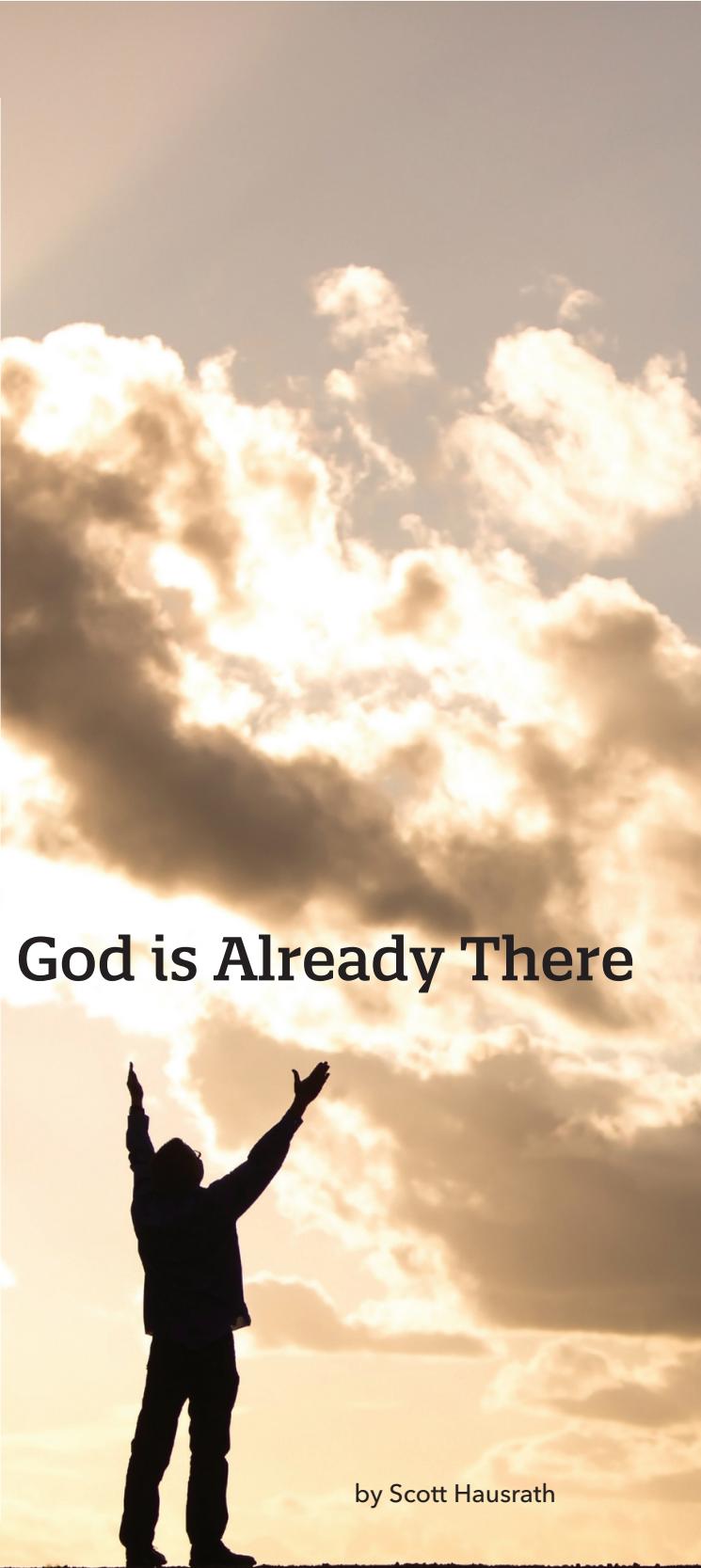


By the time this is published, I will have recently taken a short vacation. Lord willing, during the third week of June I will enjoy a road trip through Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

On Sabbath of that week, I'll hopefully be in Indiana, 775 miles away from my home church—so I won't be worshiping God within the context of my own church family. Nor will I be experiencing the wonderful fellowship of a group of people whom I've known and loved for years. Can I still experience the blessings of Sabbath when I'm in a totally different context?

As I'm asking myself this question, I realize that my perspective is skewed. Asking the "Can I?" question means that I'm trying to assess my own ability to do something. The truth, however, is that I hold no sway over Sabbath blessings. These blessings come not from me, but from God. Yes, sometimes He uses me to provide a blessing for someone else, but even then I am not the author of the blessing—I am the vehicle through which the blessing is provided.

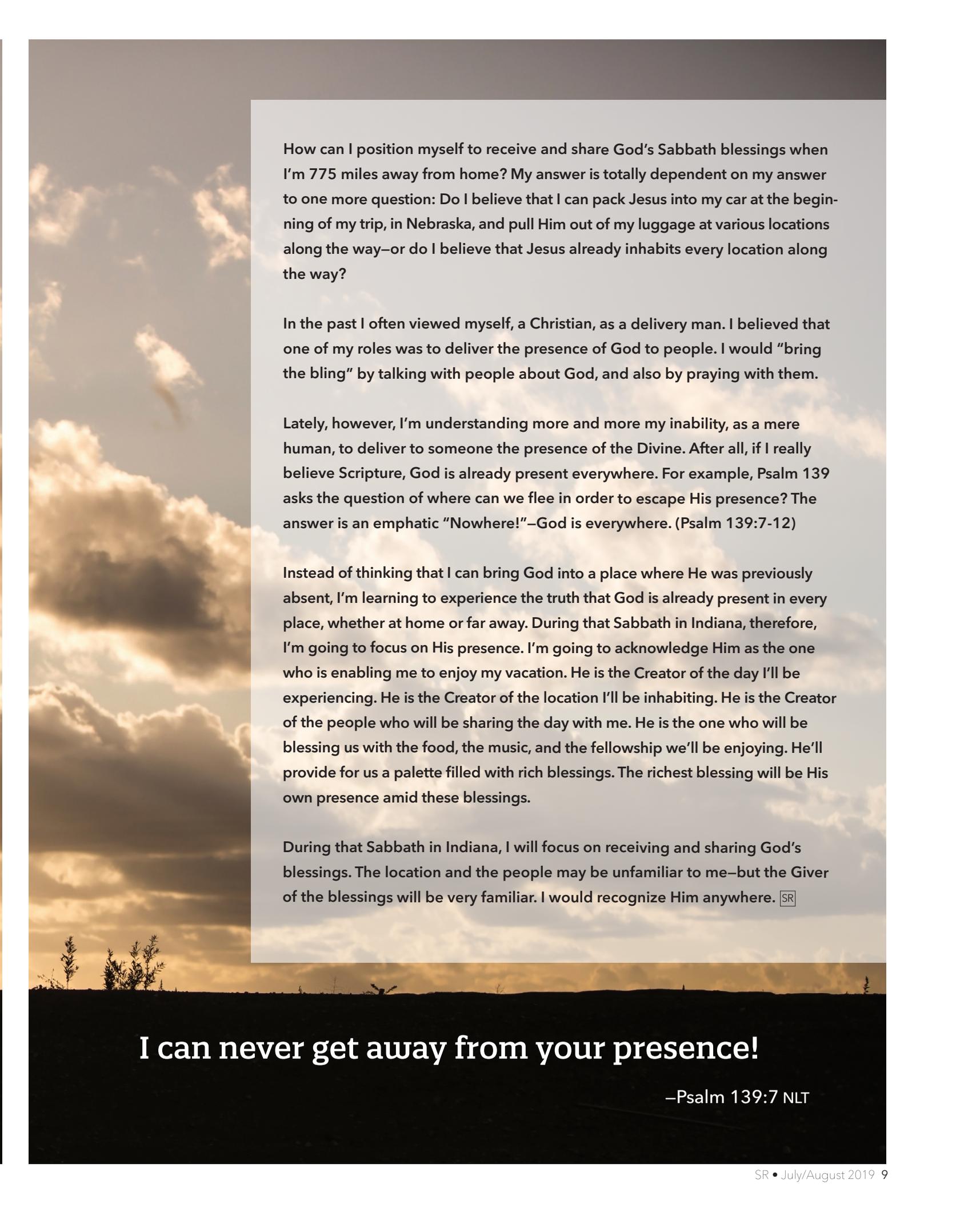
Perhaps these are more appropriate questions to ask myself: Do I believe that God can bless me wherever I am? Do I also believe that God can use me to bless someone else, wherever that person is? Since I truly believe that God is unlimited in His abilities, my answer to both these questions is a resounding "Yes!" I think, therefore, that my primary role that Sabbath in Indiana will be the same as it is every Sabbath in North Loup—to position myself to receive and share God's blessings.



## God is Already There

by Scott Hausrath

**I can never escape from your Spirit!**



How can I position myself to receive and share God's Sabbath blessings when I'm 775 miles away from home? My answer is totally dependent on my answer to one more question: Do I believe that I can pack Jesus into my car at the beginning of my trip, in Nebraska, and pull Him out of my luggage at various locations along the way—or do I believe that Jesus already inhabits every location along the way?

In the past I often viewed myself, a Christian, as a delivery man. I believed that one of my roles was to deliver the presence of God to people. I would “bring the bling” by talking with people about God, and also by praying with them.

Lately, however, I'm understanding more and more my inability, as a mere human, to deliver to someone the presence of the Divine. After all, if I really believe Scripture, God is already present everywhere. For example, Psalm 139 asks the question of where can we flee in order to escape His presence? The answer is an emphatic “Nowhere!”—God is everywhere. (Psalm 139:7-12)

Instead of thinking that I can bring God into a place where He was previously absent, I'm learning to experience the truth that God is already present in every place, whether at home or far away. During that Sabbath in Indiana, therefore, I'm going to focus on His presence. I'm going to acknowledge Him as the one who is enabling me to enjoy my vacation. He is the Creator of the day I'll be experiencing. He is the Creator of the location I'll be inhabiting. He is the Creator of the people who will be sharing the day with me. He is the one who will be blessing us with the food, the music, and the fellowship we'll be enjoying. He'll provide for us a palette filled with rich blessings. The richest blessing will be His own presence amid these blessings.

During that Sabbath in Indiana, I will focus on receiving and sharing God's blessings. The location and the people may be unfamiliar to me—but the Giver of the blessings will be very familiar. I would recognize Him anywhere. SR

**I can never get away from your presence!**

—Psalm 139:7 NLT

# The Last Dance



By Rob Appel  
Executive Director

This is my last article in the *Sabbath Recorder* (SR) as your standing Executive Director of the SDB Conference of the USA and Canada. Because it is the last one, I plan to make it very informative—and I hope that it motivates you to think more about your giving along with the reason(s) you give to our Conference Ministries.

When I started in 2004, we had a communication mailer called the *Lead Line*. In the *Lead Line*, the Conference would post the member churches and their giving to the budget. This would also sometimes get posted in the SR. However, we stopped posting that information due to the sensitivity of some churches that were contributing only a little, and some not contributing at all.

Every year I ask Jan Ehlers, the Financial Assistant at the SDB Center in Janesville, WI, to give me an annual report on the giving. This is for only the “Top 50” givers. Included in this report are churches as well as individuals. Yes! We have individuals out-giving many of our churches! With this information, I compare from year-to-year to see if there are any trends that surprise me. There are always surprises!

The biggest surprise, however, is more often information I receive by direct communication. There are churches that choose to contribute little or nothing towards our budget—yet when asked, they are aware of benefits they receive from Conference ministries. I have asked some of the leaders of these churches, “Why don’t you contribute?” **The surprising answer is, “Because you don’t tell us what to give” or “You don’t invoice us, so we don’t send anything in.”** My response is always the same, “Our SDB beliefs encourage each individual and church to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their financial decisions of giving. As individuals and churches see the benefits from the ministries of the Conference, we ask that they put something in their budget that supports those efforts.”

There has been talk among the General Council that we might need to bring back the information once shared in the *Lead Line*, so that maybe it would get the attention of a church or its members. There has also been talk that we could share the names of the individuals along with their contributions (of course, with their permission to do so—many of these individuals like to remain anonymous and we will always honor that). For example, Cheri and I have consistently been in about the 20th position in giving over the past 10 plus years. Our giving to the Conference is above our tithe to the local churches we support and in addition to other ministries. We learned long ago that you cannot out-give God. In the past, I have written to you to try. Remember the 90-day challenge? God always blesses a tithed income!

So, having written all of this, we (myself and the General Council) would like to challenge every member to look at your personal finances and your church’s budget. Where could you do something? Let’s make a transformation in the ministry that we all do together! If a church needs an “invoice,” then please consider THIS your invoice without a dollar amount attached to it. If you need a suggested amount, start by studying the many Bible verses regarding tithing. What you give thereafter is up to your conscience with the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

Having titled this article “The Last Dance”—it’s time to waltz out of here. Once again, I would like to say, “Thank YOU!” for all of your support during my tenure. Additionally, I would say “Thank YOU!” in advance for your support of Carl Greene, your new incoming Executive Director. May God use Carl greatly, giving him many years of blessings and wise guidance during his tenure.

God bless you all! SR

*Carl Greene will start writing for the SR in October. Look for it!*

By Donna S. Bond  
Shiloh SDB Church, NJ

## Chasing Bubble Dreams

“Aw, Dave, let Grampa rest for a few minutes. Just till the big hand is on the 12.” With that request, Grampa leaned back on his recliner and closed his eyes.

Groan. That left Grandma to entertain our five-year-old grandson. Understand: I love, love, LOVE our little David Timothy. But he was headed outside. I don’t “do” outside. I don’t understand boy toys. Worst of all, his favorite outdoor activity is to race Grampa around the house and make a poster showing how many races David won and how many Grampa—a former jogger—lost. Not only that, when he races my arthritic knees, weary bones and heel spurs, he accuses me of being a CHEATER and a LIAR. All this injustice because I double back as soon as he rounds the corner, thereby reaching the starting point ahead of him. The nerve of that rascal!

So I dug out a pair of bubble wands that I had bought on a too-rainy day last year. “Will he say they are ‘baby toys’?” I wondered. He is not shy about telling us when he is bored!

The tubes of bubble soap are ten inches long and the wands are eight inches long, so each gentle wave produced numerous bubbles—some big and some smaller. David was delighted as he chased them (instead of me) in every direction, high and low. Some fell to the ground and were pierced by blades of grass. Some lofted into the trees and fell to their demise or were stabbed by leaves. One even floated over the neighbor’s garage. Each one that met David’s eager fingers was greeted with a giggle.

I thought about chasing dreams. Some are too lofty, some are beneath us and some are attainable. We crush some; some are crushed by others or by circumstance.

Then I handed the wand to David. His tendency was to blow through the wand, creating only one spit-full bubble, which popped immediately. He had not quite caught onto the idea of gently waving the whole wand through the air so the soap could be crafted into a dozen bubbles. How often do we crush a dream by blowing too hard? Conversely, how often do our dreams fail because they take us in too many directions?

*“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:33). Surely no one would pray for direction over which bubble to chase; however, we need God’s guidance in pursuing our dreams. SR



# Unity in the Philippine SDB Family of Churches

By Michael Pearl

I was contemplating the progress toward unity within the Philippine SDB family of churches as Pastor Andy Samuels and I flew into Dumaguete, in the province of Negros Oriental, on the afternoon of Thursday, April 4, 2019. Since the early 1980s, two separate SDB conferences have been active, leading souls to Christ, representing the SDB name in the Visayas and Mindanao regions of the Philippines. The United Seventh Day Baptist Churches Mission Conference (USDB) has been the recognized Conference for approximately two decades. The other conference, the Philippine SDB Conference (PSDB) has also done a good job representing the SDB name throughout the Central and Southern Philippines where Cebuano is the primary language. Both conferences had expressed the desire to move toward unity. The issues from the previous generation that always prevented unity no longer seemed insurmountable.

In 2013, the leaders of the two conferences met together to discuss the possibility of unity. I remember the meeting well. It was tense. Yet the meeting, at the home of Eleanor Fabillar, was a starting point—the ice was broken and a new relationship, although fledgling, gave hope for a new beginning. At a unity meeting in 2016, the Holy Spirit was moving when the presidents of both conferences embraced. Tears were flowing down the cheeks of those who were present. In 2017, the leadership of both conferences signed a commitment to move toward unity; the decision was made to keep the lines of communication open and to work on building an interconference relationship over the ensuing two years.

In 2016 a third conference formed in the Quezon Province area headed by Dr. Glenn Sales (Sa-les) and Pastor Teogenes Pestolante. This Conference's name is Grace Seventh Day Baptist Manila, Inc. These SDB churches are Tagalog speakers, they love the Sabbath and identify with the SDB family of churches in the Philippines. SDBs now have a viable presence in the Luzon region of the Philippines.

We, Pastor Samuels and I (Pastor Pearl), were scheduled to meet with the leadership of all three conferences. Our first stop was with the USDB Conference at Tabuan SDB Church in Negros. There we participated in the USDB annual Thanksgiving meetings. We were privileged to preach and teach and prepare the USDB leadership for a meeting that had been prayed and hoped for during the previous six years. We traveled with the USDB delegation to Cebu City, where a unification meeting was scheduled on April 8, 2019. Leaders from both the USDB conference and the PSDB conference had invited us, as leaders from the SDB World Federation, to facilitate the formation of a new umbrella organization. Since we both also represent the SDB Missionary Society, the two organizations collaborated to make the trip possible. They requested that we chair the meeting. I enthusiastically accepted the offer. After some wonderful praise and worship, with the Holy Spirit moving among us, those present were ready to forge a new way forward. A motion was presented that the USDB and PSDB conferences

unify through the formation of an umbrella association. The name of the new association would be the Philippine Seventh Day Baptist Association. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed by the voting delegates. PTL! The president of the new Association is Sister Nilda Albino; vice-president is Sister Marian Ferraren; secretary is Sister Lolette Pasturan; and treasurer is Sister Elizabeth Vinzon.

The following day, Pastor Samuels and I were privileged to lead a seminar teaching about spiritual leadership. Joy was on the faces of everyone present. We stayed in the area for three additional days for fellowship and encouragement. On Friday morning, we winged our way to Manila to meet with the leadership of the Grace SDB Churches, Manila Conference. Again, Pastor Samuels and I were privileged to preach and we were also invited to baptize two new believers.



*Pastors and Leaders at Cebu City Unity Meeting*

Dr. Sales, a doctor of alternative medicine, pastor, and the conference president has big plans. They plan to join the umbrella association as soon as procedures are in place for that to happen. This conference is also starting a Bible College. The name of the college is Grace Seventh Day Baptist Bible College, located at Tiaong, Quezon Province. Classes begin this summer with their first five students. The college is already recognized by the government and upon completion of the three-year Bible Course, a fourth year follows that will provide a teaching certificate allowing the graduates to teach in the Philippine elementary school system. This is exciting! Not only will the new college train future pastors, but it will enable them to have a job that allows them to earn a living while staying true to their Sabbath convictions. Please keep this wonderful new college in your prayers. God's Holy Spirit is moving greatly among the SDB brethren in the Philippines. [SR](#)



*Baptism at Tiaong  
Dr. Sales, left;  
Pastor Samuels, 2nd from left;  
Pastor Spearl, rear;  
Pastor Pestolante, right*



**FOCUS on  
Missions**

**Andy Samuels**

Chief Executive Director  
SDB Missionary Society

**Comfort Zone.** Everyone has one, however big or small. I'd like to encourage you to step out of yours, especially at Conference this year. I feel as though this year's General Conference is centered around doing things differently than before. The young people in the denomination are stepping out in faith this year—from preaching, to organizing different events, to helping with evening worship. So, join in on the fun! Get involved in something you haven't before. Eat ice cream for breakfast. Do an act in the coffee house. Say "Hi" to someone new. Dance during evening worship. Raise your hands high. Offer to pray with someone. Ask for prayer if you need it. Sit with someone different during a meal. Get to know one of the kids, ask them about their time at Conference. There are so many ways to step out of your comfort zone, even during one week at Conference. I would encourage you to try it—and continue to throughout the rest of your year—because in order to spread the Gospel, you have to step out in faith. SR

—Holly Probasco  
Shiloh Seventh Day Baptist Church

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**I've always looked forward to Conference** every year. The laughter, the people, and the fun. But most importantly, so many people coming together for one purpose: Jesus. There are a lot of religious beliefs, but no other religion is like Christianity. Christianity is the only religion where you are saved, not by your works, but by grace. That is the unique kindness of Jesus Christ. There has been a lot that has happened in my life (and I'm not one to write paragraphs about what has happened—that's not the point of this article). But if I've learned anything, it's that I should never doubt my God. In the end, He has a plan, and that plan is in ordinance with His perfect will. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them." Whatever those good works may be, whether I am prepared for them or they are for me, it is intended that I walk in them. I'm perfectly willing to do so, not because I want to try and work for my salvation, but because I already have it. SR

—Isaac Floyd  
All Nations Seventh Day Baptist Church



## THE BEACON

By Holly Probasco  
and  
Isaac Floyd

Get UNcomfortable!

One of the hard challenges God puts into our journey is to step out of our comfort zone. God wants us to be uncomfortable. To be uncomfortable is how we grow. It's how we continue God's journey. We are to abandon our comfort zones and step out into faith.

When talking about stepping out of our comfort zone the book of Esther is one that can be looked at. Esther was a Jewish exile living in Persia. She was an orphan brought up by her cousin Mordecai. A royal decree was sent out to find a new queen and all the beautiful women were brought to the royal palace. Out of all the women, King Ahasuerus choose Esther. When looking at Esther it's important to consider how she felt through this. Because she was a young Jewish girl, away from her family, she must have been out of her comfort zone. She couldn't have known how things were going to go, but she trusted God and knew He was behind the scenes. He had a mission for her, and that meant she needed to get uncomfortable.

Mordecai had fallen out of favor with a man who had a lot of power in the kingdom of Ahasuerus. The end result was that a man named Haman was so enraged that he convinced the king that all the Jews in the kingdom needed to be destroyed. The king was unaware that Esther was Jewish. But God set up a chain of events in this story and positioned Esther and Mordecai where He needed them in order to use them to save his people.



It's hard for us to see God's big picture. Jesus says that a sparrow does not fall from the sky without God knowing in Matthew 10:29. It's impossible to believe, then, that anything that happens to us is not watched over. He carefully makes sure that we have exactly what we need to fulfill His plan for our lives (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Esther and Mordecai came up with a plan that involved putting Esther's life at risk. She would go to the king and plead before him for her people. The law said that if someone were to approach the king without being summoned, they would be put to death—and this is exactly what Esther was doing. Esther was an orphan who became queen of a kingdom. It took boldness for her to fight for her people. It couldn't have been easy. She fasted and prayed for three days before putting the plan into action. And then she was obedient, not knowing what the outcome would be. But it was more important for her to do what she needed to do, even if she was uncomfortable, because she trusted God and God was in control.

In the end, because of Esther's trust and boldness, Ahasuerus welcomed her when she approached him, listened to her pleading, and the Jewish people were saved from destruction. Haman was hanged on the gallows that he built specifically for Mordecai.

It is time for us to get uncomfortable! We need to learn to trust God unquestioningly. We are all guilty of it. I definitely am. Believe that He loves you so much that you can rest in His perfect guidance and wisdom for your life. Esther did it simply, and it went more than well for her. You can trust just as simply and take the step of faith. Be obedient to do the things that God asks of you. Step outside of your comfort zone and live a life of faith.

I battled my fears. I knew I had to stand on God's truth and you do, too. The fear I felt was not from God, so every time it crept into my thinking, I had to remind myself, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline."

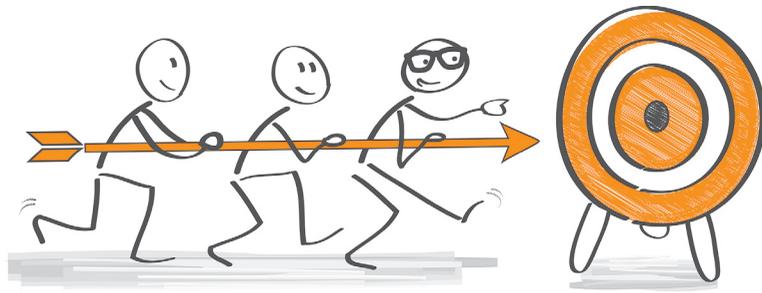
—2 Timothy 1:7 SR

Young Adult

By Sarina Villalpando

Maranatha Community  
Church, Colton, CA

# Effective Outreach



With so much focus on outreach and discussion on different ways to be involved in your community, I think it's important to take a small step back and look at our individual church and community situations because not everything that has succeeded in one place is going to work in another. We need to be mindful of the fact that just because something works well in one community doesn't mean it will work in another. Furthermore, even if a particular sort of outreach works for your church, is it truly working in your community or is it an *inreach*?

Make no mistake, even in "inreaching" there are many important things that we do together as a church family. It is super important to have that sweet fellowship together. However, it is a problem when inreaching is mistakenly identified as outreach. Both things are very important to the ultimate health and stability of your church. In fact, forming relationships with the members of your church is critical for both women and men, it becomes a problem when that is all a church ever does. Most importantly we cease to fulfill our call to the Great Commission if there is no outward movement. If our purpose is not to carry out the commandments of Christ, then we should seriously consider revisiting this propensity we have for calling ourselves Christians.

OK—so the last paragraph is pretty harsh and extremely uncomfortable for me to write. People in glass houses should definitely not be throwing stones. But I did it and I'm getting ready to reload.

We need to be mindful of the goals of our outreach and critically assess the effectiveness of those goals. How uncomfortable did that sentence make you feel—and when exactly did that feeling start?

If it began at the word "goals," my questions for you are: Does your church have goals for your outreach program? Are the people involved in outreach aware of these goals? What about short-term vs. long-term goals? What about SMART goals?

If you started getting antsy when the phrase "critically assessing the effectiveness" appeared, you might have goals made—but are you looking at them and using them when your outreach team gets together? Are you making sure that those goals fit your service and time frame?

Having goals can be scary because you can fail to meet them. But goals increase effectiveness by making sure everyone is moving in the same direction with purpose. And when failure happens, a goal prepares you to try again with new information in hand about how you can change what you are doing to meet it. Without a goal, that process is a lot more difficult to manage.

Failure is not something to be afraid of, especially in this context, because failure doesn't always mean that something is a lost cause. This might have to be my mantra going forward because I have an extreme aversion to failure. I really don't like it when plans don't work out, but that happens often and frequently. So what! If one thing you tried didn't work out, try something else to reach that goal. Check to see if there was growth even though you didn't do exactly what you wanted. Partial success is still success even if overall failure occurred.

Growth isn't always steady and it certainly isn't easy, but setting goals can give us a place to start and a purpose to reach for when things get difficult and failure occurs. Find your purpose. Set some goals. 



Women's  
Society

By Katrina Goodrich

# Exploring “The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations”

By Marqueta Aiken  
Philadelphia SDB Church

As you grow in the Lord you come to realize that your greatest blessings follow a difficult journey. That’s how it was with “*The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations*”<sup>1</sup>—fortunately God’s grace truly is amazing.

On September 23, 2019, a group of twelve members and soon-to-be members of the Philadelphia SDB Church began a 13-week journey through “*The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations*” by Mary Schaller and John Crilly. During that time, we discovered strengths and weaknesses in ourselves, each other, and the church. We became more aware of what God was doing around us and sought to become part of His plan, which opened our eyes to many things. For those seeking to make the principles presented in the book a part of our lives, we were able to see that the obstacles we were encountering at work and at home were the same as the ones we were encountering at church: that the people God called to our attention to talk to and pray for had the same personality type, no matter where we were. This led us to see that when we attempt to walk like Jesus, to talk like Jesus, and to meet immediate needs like Jesus, the ultimate help is for ourselves.

The willingness to let God guide in this way brought immense blessings in the area of Christian maturity. However, it also brought a heightened awareness to the struggles of others, and how often we turn a blind eye or deaf ear to the needs of those around us. For us, this was the point where we had the most difficulty and where a focused study (before or at the same time) of the three-year ministry of Jesus Christ would have been most beneficial.

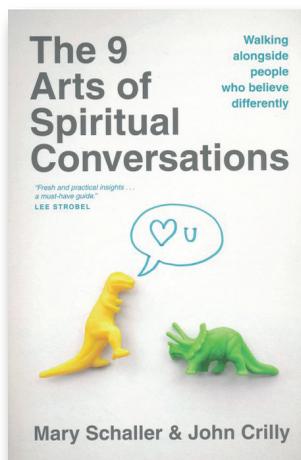
Knowing that Jesus knew and accepted that the poor will be with you always,<sup>2</sup> that the fields are white but the laborers are few,<sup>3</sup> that there are rewards for even a cup of water given in His name<sup>4</sup>...makes it easier to accept that God’s grace for our imperfections extends to this area as well. After all, all He has asked is that we show love—He can and will do the rest.

Just as Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God provided the increase,<sup>5</sup> there was no reason to force, drag or hold back anyone as we walked our path of discovery. So rather than pushing to read the entire book at the same pace, we reviewed and discussed each chapter on the scheduled date, and everyone was encouraged to read the book at their own pace and at times that were convenient for them. In this way, seeds were planted for some, and watered for others in and outside of the group, and an increase was experienced by all.



Everyone became more sensitive to the needs and hurts of those around them. Twenty-five percent of the group became more comfortable taking a more active approach in opening a dialog about God and/or offering a helping hand. Everyone expressed a desire to do group activities that gave us an opportunity to use what we were learning. Fifty percent of the group has already organized and/or participated in youth movie nights with the goal of creating a non-threatening environment for youth to express their beliefs about God and the world they are living in. As time goes on, it is our hope to continue to find activities and opportunities that will allow us to use our natural gifts and abilities to put “*The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations*” into practice.

It is amazing how a simple book, explaining how nine simple practices of a man who lived over two thousand years ago, could change the lives of anyone. Yet just as there were people then, there are people now, who hear, who believe, and who are changed. If you haven’t done so recently, read about the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ in the Gospels and grab a copy of “*The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations*,” so you can have a fresh encounter with God’s amazing grace, too. [SR](#)



**If you or your church would like to hear more about this book or receive a sample copy, please contact Nick at the SDB Center!**



Christian  
Education  
Council

Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten  
Director of Education  
and History

<sup>1</sup> *The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations: Walking Alongside People Who Believe Differently*,

by Mary Schaller and John Crilly, 2016. Tyndale House: Carol Stream, IL.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 14:7-8a

<sup>3</sup> Luke 10:2, Matthew 9:36-38

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 10:42

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:6



## PEOPLE GET READY

It is almost time to welcome you to Lancaster, PA, Conference 2019!

This has been a very enlightening year for Doug and me as we have traveled around this nation visiting with many of you. We have enjoyed meeting new people and having a reunion with long-time friends. You have welcomed us and for that we are very grateful to know we are part of a larger SDB family. We look forward to connecting with many of you at Conference.

There have been some hard things that we have learned in our travels—the consolation I have in this is that God is getting us ready as a denomination for what He has for us. I mentioned originally that I believe God has clearly said, “The Church is returning to the Sabbath!” My admonition for all of us was: People Get Ready. I do believe Seventh Day Baptists have been preserved for the purpose of teaching the rest of the Church about the Sabbath, and that in order for us to fulfill our calling as a denomination, we have to get ready.

We have learned of some sin patterns among us SDBs, some of them decades old, that have needed exposure so that our “house” could get cleaned. I am not discouraged by this, rather encouraged, because God only disciplines His kids—that is because He loves us. I think as a denomination we have needed some serious discipline. We cannot let the enemy have access to the “holes” in us, and as long as those “holes” remain unhealed, we are sitting ducks waiting for the enemy to shoot us. Those who get caught up in sin are really little wounded boys and girls in grown-up bodies with unhealed areas who have had their holes exposed. We dare not sit in judgment, but we also cannot allow sin to fester and grow and wound everyone. We, in the independent Western Civilization, have a very mixed-up idea about the effects of sin. We believe the lie that my sin only affects me, when in reality sin is like throwing a rock in a pond where the ripple effect goes on and on and on. Sin affects us all and never happens in a vacuum and we need to quit believing this lie. We need mercy and firmness to call what is sin: Sin. We need to find ways to help restore the ones caught in sin and its effects with love and grace where it is received and a firm boot where there is staunch resistance. Sometimes a boot is the instrument of love and mercy and grace.

We need to grow up and realize that love sometimes has to be very tough. I suspect the exposure of sin in our denomination has only begun, so we need to not despair as we see God at work cleaning our “house.” Rather, we need to realize that what is, is—and denying it doesn’t do any more for us than the little child who covers his eyes believing if he cannot see you, then you cannot see him. We must become mature and act like it! And we must remember that God only disciplines those who are His!

God is at work among Seventh Day Baptists. At Conference, you will get a chance to see and support the youngest of us as they step out in leadership. We hope to see you in Lancaster, PA, July 28-August 3! A team has been praying faithfully for this Conference over the past year and you have been included in that prayer! [SR](#)



By Jane Mackintosh  
Conference President

The Council on History met in Janesville, WI, at the SDB Center the weekend of May 4-5, 2019. Council members Janet Thorngate (chair), Judy Parrish, Kim Merchant, Tim Lawton, and Elon Sinclair, as well as consultant Elizabeth Camenga and Director Nick Kersten, met to evaluate and organize the work of SDB preservation and communication over the past year, to assess progress on goals, and to make new goals related to the vision of the Council: “to remember our past to inform the present and envision the future.”

The Council considered...

- The progress in our recent digitization projects and our progress on digitizing library holdings moving forward. Digital versions of the *Sabbath Recorder* are already available at [www.sdbhistory.org](http://www.sdbhistory.org). Digital versions of other SDB publications, including General Conference Yearbooks, the *Protestant Sentinel*, the *SDB Register*, and other publications will be added to the website after successfully scanning since last year’s General Conference sessions. We also made plans for the scanning of additional materials moving forward which will also be added to our website.
- The progress in our volunteer project to connect our various indexes to our online searchable library database. Kim Merchant, our manager for this project, reported incredible progress in the project based on the work being accomplished by many volunteers. Based on this, we are moving into a new stage of the project sooner than anticipated. When completed, this project will lead to all our surname and church indexes being searchable in a single database, as opposed to the several systems required to search for material now.
- Plans for General Conference, including the nature of our Conference presentation, the honoring of a new recipient of the Gold-Headed Cane Award, and the sale of Council publications at General Conference.
- The current state of our website, including plans to continue to build and add to the material there, even as we anticipate needing to redesign the website within a few years.
- The progress in our deaccessioning project, which is helping to alleviate space concerns at the library by removing material which does not fit the scope or purpose of our collection. We aim to have the material being removed from our collection in its new home by the end of the year, freeing space for more important materials.
- The sabbatical of Director Kersten, and its effect on the work of the Council. Because of the good work of many volunteers and staff people, happily Nick was able to take a sabbatical without our work stalling out or losing momentum.
- Our planning for the upcoming 350th anniversary of the founding of the Newport Seventh Day Baptist church in Newport, RI, in 1671. Plans are being made to produce new material to promote this important anniversary. The possibility of some sort of service in Newport at the SDB Meetinghouse in commemoration of the occasion is also being explored.
- Our reference assistance work and the requests which we have responded to in the last year.
- Voting on the induction of new patrons to the supporter group of our Library. Patrons are recognized on a gift of \$250 dollars or more to the Library and its preservation. Other opportunities to seek partners and contributions to our work were also considered.
- Changes to our policies after recent review processes.
- The work of library assistant, Rinald Kersten, (including significant progress on the preservation and cataloging of our extensive and unwieldy photo collection!) and genealogy volunteer, Gay McRoberts, (who is doing an excellent job in aiding those seeking genealogical information from the collection!).
- How we can aid local churches in the preservation of their history, including church records and other important documents and artifacts. Plans continue to deliver a survey to local churches before the end of the year to evaluate the depth of the need in local churches for assistance and/or training in this important work.

We are grateful for the support of SDBs throughout the past year and look forward to continuing in our work as we do our part to actively advance God’s kingdom. SR

# Updates!



Council  
on History

Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten  
Director of Education  
and History

# What's a CRM?

## (And why should I care?)

By Patty Petersen

In business circles, a CRM is the main storage system for all things customer-related. For our Conference, it's a central database for all things church-related, a "Church Relationship Management" tool. Churches are made up of people, so we also have information on individual Seventh Day Baptists, as well as those connected to us through subscribing to the *Sabbath Recorder* or having contacted the Conference in the past.

So how is the CRM useful to you? We are gathering information on people's skill sets and experience that you can tap into. Say you are planning an event on missions and you want to know which of our people have served as missionaries so you could invite them to share their experiences. You would contact me or Pastor John Pethtel to request that list from the CRM.

Say you want some new ideas for summer camps. Who are the people in our denomination with previous experience leading camping programs? We can send you a list (once we have assigned skills to all the people in the CRM). What if you want to start a new prayer ministry in your church but no one has previous experience leading that kind of effort? You could use the CRM to find SDBs who can be a resource for you.

What if your church wants to help start a new church somewhere in your region? You can contact us for a list of remote Sabbath-keepers in the area to help you consider where might be a good place to plant. I recently supplied a list of people in the Phoenix area to someone wanting to lead a church-planting effort there.

Since creating this database two years ago, we've seen its usefulness in tracking contacts with new people. Last summer a Florida man leading a small Sabbath group



contacted Pastor Norman Fearon of the Fort Lauderdale Church, who passed the contact on to us. I entered him in our CRM as a "lead" and sent him information about SDBs. He wanted to get to know us, so he came to General Conference in July and attended the Southeast Association in November. Now he is returning to his home in Argentina armed with SDB tracts in Spanish and an additional contact in Argentina through Pastor Ben Figueroa of the Hispanic SDB church near Seattle. All these details are saved in the CRM for future reference.

In the past, if we received an inquiry by letter to the SDB Center, someone would answer it and it would be stored away in a file. Now we have the information in our CRM and can follow up on that person through running reports on our recent "leads." Several times a year we receive letters from prison inmates who are Sabbath-keepers. They are very appreciative of a reply and would welcome ongoing correspondence with an SDB brother. Please contact me if you would like to be a friend to one of these inmates. Email: [ppetersen@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:ppetersen@seventhdaybaptist.org)

God is at work through SDBs in many ways! One of the new ways is through our CRM database that helps us stay better connected to new people as they build relationships with us and provides resources to our churches through this central store of SDB people. We are hard at work adding more data to the CRM to make it a great tool to support your church's ministries. SR

Church  
Development &  
Pastoral Services

By John J. Pethtel  
Director

### Wanted: Dynamic Pastor For a Culturally Diverse Church

With Pastor Andrew Samuels called to a new ministry with the SDB Missionary Society, the Miami SDB Church is seeking a pastor who will mentor and encourage the congregation spiritually, dynamically preach and teach the Word, shepherd a geographically and culturally diverse group throughout South Florida, and help us fulfill the vision that God has for the church.

We covet your prayers as we ask God to reveal to us the Pastor that He already has in mind for our church.

Please send any suggestions, resumes, and questions to the Miami SDB Pastor Search Team at [MiamiSDB.PastorSearch@yahoo.com](mailto:MiamiSDB.PastorSearch@yahoo.com)

# Summer Institute 2019



Fourteen students began their studies on SDB Polity & Applied Ecclesiology in February 2019 by responding to reading and discussion posts in our 2019 Summer Institute class. Teachers Carl Greene and John Pethtel (assisted by Nick Kersten and Jim Skaggs) met with nine of the students from June 9-14 in Janesville, WI. Some of the others were not able to attend due to work or illness issues.

If you have questions about Seventh Day Baptist University or want to pursue training for ministry leadership in your SDB church, please contact:

Director of Education or  
visit [seventhdaybaptist.org/sdbu](http://seventhdaybaptist.org/sdbu)  
for more information.

## PASTOR SEARCH

The following SDB churches or groups are looking for pastoral leadership. Please keep them in prayer as they search for their churches' next leaders.

Shepherd's Fold SDB Church (Johnson City, TN)

Assistant

Bay Area SDB Church (Pinole, CA)

Covenant SDB Fellowship (Hungry Horse, MT)

Pataskala SDB Church (Pataskala, OH)

Miami SDB Church (Miami, FL)

Remembrance SDB Church (Ft. Worth, TX)

There are other potential vacancies in the near future. If you are interested in one of these vacancies, if you are called to pastoral ministry, or if you know someone who might be interested in pastoral ministry, please contact the Director of Pastoral Services by email at [jpethtel@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:jpethtel@seventhdaybaptist.org) or call 608-752-5055 ext. 1009.

We want to know!  
How does your church  
do outreach?

Take 5 minutes  
and help us help churches  
throughout the Conference  
with your creative ideas!

Go to:

<https://bit.ly/2UrL8fo>



We recently had a cooking class held at our church on Sundays. The class was geared towards youth, but a few young dads joined in as well.



For the final project of the cooking class, they held a family-style dinner for their friends and families (and it was delicious).



*By Sarah Uhlich  
Sabbath Recorder Ambassador*



Our weekly walking group. A bunch of (mostly) ladies get together on Thursday mornings and take a walk around Wilcox Park in Westerly, RI, and then go grab coffee afterwards.



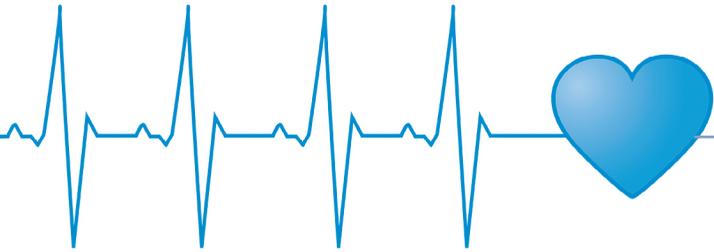


Our youth group went to see the movie *Breakthrough* in April.



A youth yard work day in April. They asked on their own if there was anything they could do around the church to help out. We've got some great youth here!





## Chronic Pain: Genuine Ways the Church Can Help

People who suffer from chronic pain often receive well-meaning advice that quite frankly is not helpful. They may feel isolated and depressed because they cannot participate in activities as they once did. At the same time they may smile, laugh, and praise God while not looking sick at all. This causes others to misunderstand their pain and ignore them, leaving them with the idea that no one cares. Someone with chronic pain often would like help but may not know what they want or how to ask for assistance. How can any of us help someone who doesn't know what they need? In the midst of this pain and misunderstanding the church can be a healing presence. Here are some ways that we as a church body can be helpful.

1. **Create awareness.** Educating members helps them be more mindful of those who are suffering from ongoing pain. Teaching how to offer loving prayers and encouraging support instead of medical advice and criticism helps avoid hurtful interactions.
2. **Establish accountability.** A team of greeters, ushers, deacons, or a hospitality group can reach out to those who miss consecutive Sabbaths.
3. **Organize a Helping Hands ministry** with one team leader who serves as a liaison to mobilize volunteers and assess needs. This team can provide help with meals, housecleaning and landscaping. Running errands, babysitting, and sending cards of encouragement are also helpful.
4. **Offer specific help.** Instead of waiting to be asked to help, suggest specific tasks that can be done on a regular basis. This helps create a safe zone for those who need assistance but don't want to risk rejection by asking or feeling like a burden. Suggestions include: "I made dinner/grabbed a latte for you. It's on your front porch." "Can I come over and pray for you or with you? I won't stay." "I paid for a housecleaner to come to your house this week."
5. **Affirm the usefulness of each member of the body of Christ.** Missing church often means missing announcements, events, and service opportunities. Invite those who are home-bound to serve from home, provide a website with updated information, use weekly email blasts to help them stay connected.
6. **Be flexible and extend grace.** For those who suffer from chronic pain, having a good day can morph into a crummy day within minutes. Knowing volunteers are flexible and understanding can help ease the stress and embarrassment when they need to cancel at the last minute.
7. **Give presence.** Offer hugs, meals, regular visits, home Communion. Listen without needing to fix the problem. Provide company to doctor's visits or treatments. Regularly remind them that they are not alone, they are seen, they have dignity, and that they do not have to hide. Sit beside them as they cry or listen while they talk about their loss.
8. **Offer to host a support group** for those with chronic illness in your community.

*God came not to save his people from storm and suffering but to save them through storm and suffering* (Lesley Leland Fields). What if we actually took our place as the body of Christ and helped bring healing and wholeness into the lives of those who suffer chronic pain? What if we took it upon ourselves to help strengthen their faith in their long, dark days of suffering? This would minister with *dunamis*<sup>1</sup> to their weary souls. This would powerfully declare the gospel to a hurting world.

This is part of our mission—not to provide advice or well-meaning reasons for pain—but to assure the hurting that God has not forgotten them and that we have not either.

*(Adapted from Church Health Reader Winter 2019)*

<sup>1</sup> Greek *dunamis* 'power'

## OBITUARY

**JACOB**—Marjorie Fern (Severance) Jacob, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, age 84, of Pomona Park, FL, went to be with our Lord on Saturday, May 25, 2019.

Marjorie died in Haven Hospice care, Palatka, FL, after a brief illness. Marjorie was born October 7, 1934, in Battle Creek, MI, and married her high school sweetheart, James Glen Jacob, in Battle Creek on August 12, 1951. They enjoyed 67 years of wedded bliss. Marjorie and James moved to Pomona Park in February 1954 with their 6-month old baby, Janice Ann Jacob, who was born in Battle Creek, MI, on July 24, 1953. They had four more children in Florida: John Maxson was born August 24, 1954; Marian Ruth was born January 10, 1957; Mark Henry was born March 12, 1960; and Matthew Worth was born October 24, 1963.

Margie attended schools in Battle Creek, MI, before moving to Athens, MI, where she graduated in the top ten in her class in 1952 from Athens Agriculture High School and was listed in "Who's Who." Later, she graduated from the Palatka (FL) Junior College, *cum laude*, with an AA degree. In her younger years she loved to sing, travel, and tap and ballet dance. She taught tap dancing during her junior and senior years in high school. Following her graduation from high school, she was a telephone operator in Battle Creek, MI, for a few months before she joined her Army husband in Livorno (Leghorn), Italy, for 10 months before returning home. She and James lived in Colorado Springs, CO, for a few months, where he received his Honorable Discharge in January 1954.

Margie and Jim sang in the Pomona Park Congregational Church choir for many years. In 1971, Marjorie and her mother, Fern Mildred Maxson Severance Cook, helped organize South Putnam Grange #206 in Pomona Park where Margie held many offices on the local and state levels. Margie was a lifetime member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion Bert Hodge Post #45 in Palatka; a charter member of the William Bartram Chapter in Palatka, FL; a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution; and a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, FL, where she served as deaconess and on many of the church's committees. She also served on the Seventh Day Baptist's denominational

Christian Social Action committee; as President of the Seventh Day Baptist Women's Society of U.S.A and Canada for 9 years; on General Council; and on the Coordinating Leadership Team. On August 5, during the annual SDB General Conference in Buckhannon, WV, she was awarded the Women's Society "Robe of Achievement."

While raising her family and going to college to earn her AA degree, Margie also worked in Crescent City, FL, for Attorneys Kirk White, Bruce Davis, and Jay Asbury; for Optometrist Robley Miles; for Grover L. Clingman Accounting/Bookkeeping Service; and for the Crescent City Elementary and Junior/Senior High Schools as a substitute school teacher. Margie served as the Pomona Park Town Clerk/Treasurer/Elections Supervisor for 28 years before retiring in November 2001.

She was preceded in death by her daughter, Janice Ann (Jacob) Mathis of Jacksonville, FL; mother, Fern Mildred (Maxson) (Severance) Cook; stepfather, David Rench Cook, of Pomona Park; maternal grandparents: Edwin Russell and Grace Jessie (Eaglesfield) Maxson, of Pomona Park, FL; her father, Leonard Ozora Severance; stepmother Donna (Northrup Fancher) Severance of Battle Creek, MI.; fraternal grandparents: Edward C. and Graca (Babcock) Severance of Milton, WI; and 2 stepsisters: Frances (Cook) Crow of Nokomis, IL, Norma (Cook) Priest of Battle Creek, MI.

Margie is survived by her devoted and loving husband of 67 years, James Jacob of Pomona Park, FL; daughter, Marian Ruth (Ewald A.) Fick, of Port Orange, FL; son, John Maxson (Tina) Jacob of La Vergne, TN; son, Mark Henry (Carla) Jacob of Houma, LA; son, Matthew Worth (Carolyn) Jacob of Jacksonville, FL; former daughter-in-law, Sandra (Rock) (Jacob) Polke and husband, Russell, of Lake Mary, FL; stepsister, Barbara Bartholomew of Battle Creek, MI; fourteen grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; and many cousins and friends.

Marjorie was a devoted, loving, and caring wife, mother, grandma, great-grandma, and great-great-grandma, and a friend to all. Margie loved to travel and she enjoyed the friendship, fellowship, and love of her many relatives, church family, and friends. She loved and cared for everyone she met. Most of all she loved her Heavenly Father.



For access to the library of current and past issues of the *Sabbath Recorder*, go to your App Store and download the **FREE SDB LINK** app.

## NEW MEMBER

### ALFRED STATION SDB CHURCH

Alfred Station, NY  
Rev. Dr. Kenneth Chroniger, Pastor

Joined by Testimony  
William Ormsby



## IT'S ALMOST HERE!!

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference

July 28 – August 3, 2019

Lancaster Bible College  
Lancaster, PA

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

### CHURCH DEVELOPMENT & PASTORAL SERVICES

Rev. John J. Pethtel, Director  
[jphtel@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:jphtel@seventhdaybaptist.org)  
cell: (304) 629-9823

### COMMUNICATIONS

Jeremiah Owen, Director  
[jowen@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:jowen@seventhdaybaptist.org)  
cell: (818) 468-9077

### EDUCATION & HISTORY

Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten, Director  
[nkersten@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:nkersten@seventhdaybaptist.org)  
office: (608) 752-5055  
cell: (608) 201-4850

### SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST GENERAL CONFERENCE

Robert Appel, Executive Director  
3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678,  
Janesville, WI 53547-1678  
[robappel@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:robappel@seventhdaybaptist.org)  
Phone: (608) 752-5055

### SEVENTH DAY BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Andrew O. Samuels, Chief Executive Director  
129 Main St. #156, Ashaway, RI 02804  
[info@sdbmissions.org](mailto:info@sdbmissions.org)  
office: (401) 596-4326

## Team Members Requested!



Would you like to be part of a team that has a lasting  
impact on the future of Seventh Day Baptists?

We are currently seeking enthusiastic,  
nurturing and loving brothers and sisters to support  
**Children's Conference for 2019**  
in Lancaster, PA.

Please consider joining this teaching, singing, dancing,  
loving and laughing group by spending your mornings  
making a difference in the lives of the children (ages 4 –  
sixth grade) in our denomination.

Please contact Emily Watt Arnold  
at 240-393-6294 or [ew9@hood.edu](mailto:ew9@hood.edu)  
if you are interested in working  
with this amazing program.



Search me, O God, and know my heart;

test me and know my anxious thoughts.

Point out anything in me that offends you,

and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

—Psalm 139:23-24

Periodicals postage paid  
at Janesville, WI  
and additional offices

# The Ultimate Road Trip!

But the gateway to life is very narrow  
and the road is difficult,  
and only a few ever find it.

—Matthew 7:14 NLT

