


# Step Outside Your Comfort Zone!



June 2020

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication





This is my command—  
be strong and courageous!  
Do not be afraid or discouraged.  
For the Lord your God  
is with you wherever you go.

—Joshua 1:9 NLT

12	<b>Alliance in Ministry</b> <b>Partnering Beyond 1873</b> by Carl Greene
13	<b>Christian Education Council</b> <b>Soaked in the Gospel</b> by Nicholas J. Kersten
14	<b>Church Development and Pastoral Services</b> <b>Saturate Your Spheres of Influence in the Gospel</b>
15	<b>Pursue Christ-likeness</b> by John J. Pethtel
17	<b>President's Page</b> <b>More Calendars—and Lives—Changed</b> by Kevin Butler
18	<b>Everyday Theology</b> <b>5 Realities About Quarantine, Domestic Abuse, and the Church</b> by Phil Lawton
20	<b>FOCUS on Missions</b> <b>Persevering Through COVID-19!</b> by Andy Samuels
21	<b>Young Adult</b> <b>It's OK Not to Be OK</b> by Sarina Gumness
22	<b>Council On History</b> <b>Recording History Up Close &amp; Personal</b> by Nicholas J. Kersten
23	<b>Women's Society</b> <b>Discerning the Truth</b> by Katrina Goodrich
24	<b>Health News</b> <b>Inflammation</b> By Barb Green
25	<b>Reprints from <i>The Sabbath Recorder</i></b> <b>The Sabbath—Sacramental</b> by Rev. Ahva J. C. Bond
26	<b>Church News</b> <b>Obituaries</b>

5	<b>It's Meant to be Shared</b> By Rev. Chris Galarneau
7	<b>The Way You Walk Matters</b> By Pastor Michael Spearl
9	<b>Pursuing the Frontiers of Our Mission</b> By Pastor Steve Osborn
16	<b>Reintroducing SDB Conference President Kevin Butler</b> By General Council

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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.

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# It's Meant to be Shared!

By Rev. Chris Galarneau

What is one of the words most dreaded by people in the Church today? If you said, "Evangelism," I agree with you! As someone who is seriously introverted (and shy to boot), it is something that I have always struggled with, especially in the models I had been taught since becoming a Christian back in high school. I know I'm not alone—I have found that many shy believers struggle with knowing how to share our faith.

There may even be some who think evangelism isn't an important part of our life as a Christian! If you are someone who isn't convinced that evangelism needs to be a part of your life with Jesus, keep reading and see if you end up agreeing with me that it most definitely is something that should be a normal part of your walk. If you, like me, have struggled to find a way that works for you to share your faith, let me tell you about what I've learned— maybe it will help you.

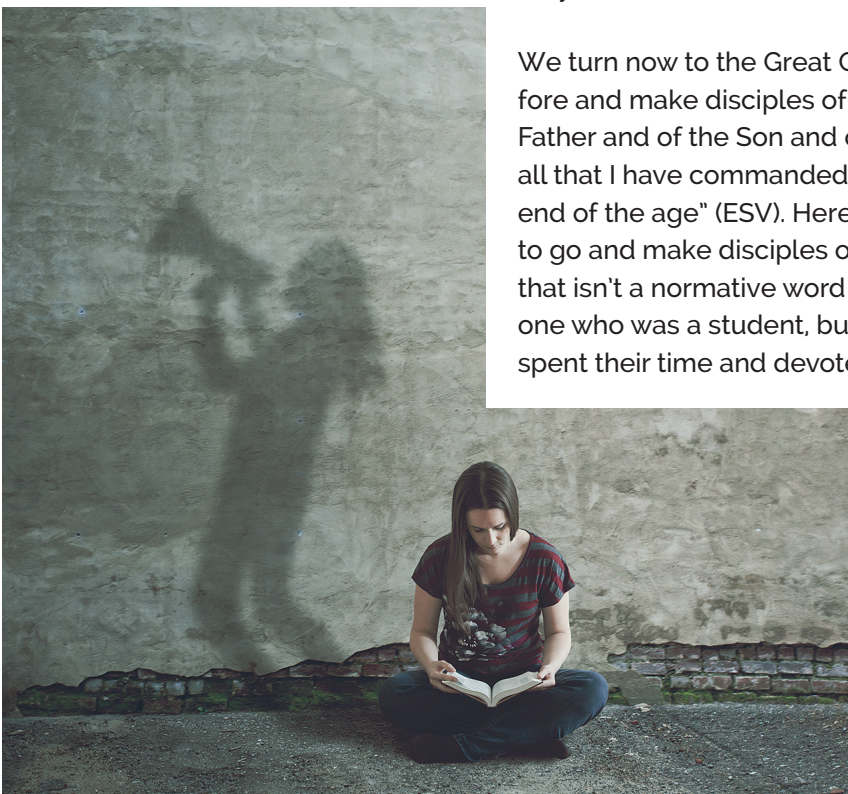
Scripture is pretty clear that we are called to share the Gospel. Most people would start with the Great Commission found in Matthew when talking about our mandate, and it is the first place we probably think of. But I like starting at Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (ESV).

Here we have Jesus speaking to His followers, right before He ascends, and they ask Him about when the end will come. His response to them is that it isn't for them to know the time. He goes on to tell them that they will be empowered with the Holy Spirit and then they will be witnesses. This mandate that He gives to them is the same for us—we are to be His witnesses as we go in the world; that His kingdom and the Good News will be made known to the ends of the earth. A witness testifies to what they have seen and heard. They tell their story and affirm it as true.

We turn now to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (ESV). Here we have Jesus telling His followers explicitly to go and make disciples of all nations. Disciple is one of those words that isn't a normative word in our vernacular today. A disciple was someone who was a student, but they also were followers of a teacher. They spent their time and devoted their lives to learning from that teacher. If

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of our comfort zones...*



## *God has placed you in a time and a place for a purpose.*

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we are called to make disciples, it would stand to reason that we are to introduce people to the teacher, to our master, to Jesus, and invite them to join us as fellow students. The way we invite people into journeying with us is by sharing our story and giving a reason for why we believe what we believe.

If you are someone who has been reluctant to jump into sharing your faith with both feet, I'm willing to bet there are reasons for that. Whether it is fear of being judged, not having all the answers, not wanting to face rejection, or whatever else, there is a reason. I've found for myself a lot of that fear and hesitation stem from evangelism models that seem catered to extroverted, outgoing people, who love to drive conversations. For an introvert like me, that is like asking a fish to fly. Whether you are an outgoing person or a shy reserved person, the command and expectation remains for all of us. I don't think that it is supposed to be a hard thing to do. It will require us to step outside of our comfort zones, but it doesn't have to demand we rewrite our personality.

Evangelism, first and foremost, has to stem out of a real concern and care for other people. It cannot be driven by mandate, obligation, and duty. We must learn to have a real love for other people and that comes from seeing them the way that God sees them. This is also how God chose to reach you with the Gospel, because someone cared for you and shared the Good News with you!

It also should be said that the Holy Spirit is crucial to this work. There is a reason why Jesus told the disciples to wait until they were filled with the Spirit. The Spirit prompts us and guides us in this process, if we listen. I was challenged in a class that I took to shift my prayers for my lost friends. I often prayed that God would draw them near and open their hearts to the Gospel—but I was challenged to add asking God to reveal to me where He was already at work in their lives and give me an opportunity to share. That simple shift brought many new opportunities for me to have faith conversations with my unbelieving friends and also my friends who had wandered from the Lord.

God has placed you in a time and a place for a purpose. You are surrounded by a circle of people with whom only you have unique connections. If we were to approach sharing our faith with our family, friends, and acquaintances, as inviting them on a journey with us rather than a sales pitch to give, we may have less anxiety about it and see more success from it.

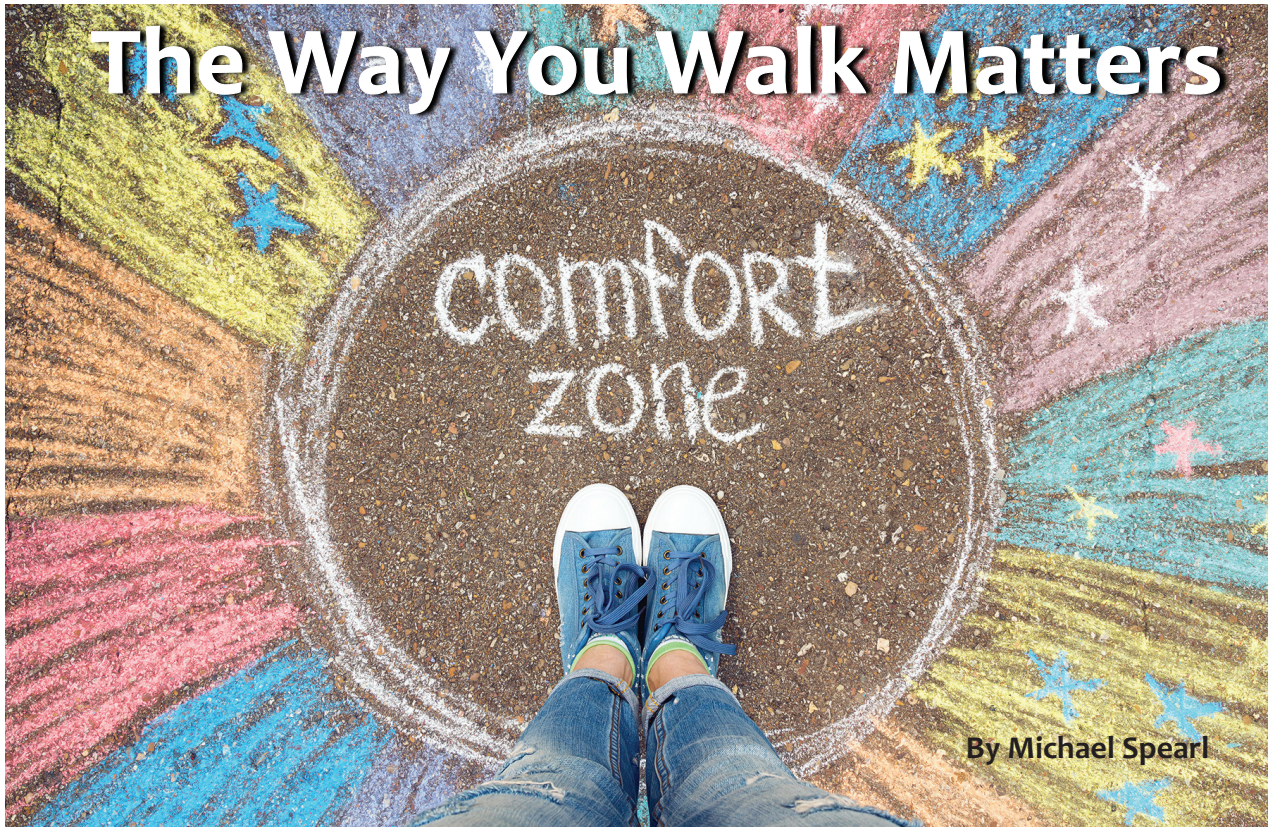
What I have found in my 24 years as a follower of Christ is that when I have had the best opportunities to share my faith, it has been simply sharing my story of what God has done in my life. Sharing your story is one of the easiest ways to share your faith. Your stories and your experiences are unique to you and people are looking for an experience of their own. Read John 9 and focus on verse 25. We do not have to have all the answers! We are told to be witnesses—to simply share our stories and invite people to start their own stories with God.

I have also learned that asking good questions, along with prayer, can create opportunity. People have questions. They are looking to fill the hole in their hearts, but they often don't know how to talk about it, nor do they realize how the pain in their lives ties to that God-shaped hole in their hearts. This can sound a little bit like I'm advocating turning your friends' pain points into opportunities to pummel them with a salvation formula. Rather, what if we were to be seeing and knowing our friends so well that we know their hurts and can walk with them in those hurts and share our stories of how God has been there in our pain and hurts?

We can and should share our faith, but we should do so in genuine ways. Some of you are fantastic at this and it comes naturally. But for many, there is a lot of anxiety around it. If we are going to be people who are seeking to partner with God and actively advance His kingdom, then we need to be willing to step out in faith and try some new things. Healthy churches start with healthy disciples who make disciples. Even though sharing our faith can seem intimidating, it is a vital part of being a fully formed disciple of Jesus and this is how the Church grows and spreads. Are you all in for Jesus? [SR](#)



# The Way You Walk Matters



By Michael Spearl

Modern culture has altered the way many Christians live their faith. Christianity has been removed from many of our social structures, sometimes politely, sometimes with disdain. It's true. Mentioning the name of Jesus in a public forum usually brings some funny looks at a minimum, other times a quick rebuke. Christians are expected to keep their beliefs private. The name of Jesus is no longer allowed in public venues. Popular culture says that because He was exclusive, His name is no longer acceptable, and Christians are often viewed negatively. One hears words like intolerant and judgmental when Christianity is mentioned in public. Yet, we know that Jesus embodies love and we love Him in return for transforming us from the inside out. We love Jesus with great passion, and we want to share His gospel message with others. We see that the church has declined in popularity and as followers of Jesus, we sometimes wonder why our gospel message is a hard sell.

One big issue I have with the Christian world is that it is obsessed with production and member satisfaction. Yet, for Jesus, it was obedience, not mega-sized congregations. He was concerned about the few, the small, the overlooked, the people who were marginalized by society. He had a soft spot for the outsider, and He honored children and women; He was never about religion; religion teaches people to try harder to gain God's approval; Jesus never taught religion.

One thing I can say for sure is that Jesus is all about life. He said plainly, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10). The full life Jesus mentioned is an abundant life that is far better than any life

focused on wealth or popularity or about living a balanced life. Please, don't ever ask me to read a book that promotes living a balanced life. After a chapter or two, I'll most likely toss the book into the recycle bin. Why? Because Jesus never taught us to live a balanced life. Jesus taught us to live a "full life."

Uh oh. What are you talking about Pastor Michael? Listen, most Christians are looking for more out of life and they've read the words of Jesus when He said, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6), but their problem is this: they only look at the middle word of what Jesus said. They care about truth, which is important, but Jesus never wanted us to neglect His way or His life. Christians argue over doctrine; they insist that believing their doctrinal interpretations will yield the right life. That is also what the Pharisees taught in Jesus' day. But it doesn't matter how many sermons you've listened to or how much Bible knowledge you have—none of that leads to life transformation. Life transformation does not happen because of the Bible knowledge a person has. Rather, life transformation is an experience. Jesus didn't come only to teach us His truths; He also came to show us how to live His way.

If you want to live the life that Jesus said you could have, then the way you walk matters...a lot. You need to adopt His ways. His life wasn't a set of doctrines or a list of rules to be followed. His life was direct and uninhibited, sincere; it was non-institutional. Following the ways of Jesus without all the trappings of religion will make your life better than anything you've ever dreamed.

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Let me say it again. The way you live your life matters; it mattered to Jesus. One day an expert in the religious law asked Jesus: “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answered with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The usual message we are taught from this parable is that we need to be like the Good Samaritan. In Jesus’ day the Good Samaritan story was a shocking story because the Samaritan was considered to be a bad guy; he was despised and rejected by the religious Jews. The almost-dead guy along the road was a Jewish person whom the despised Samaritan helped. Now put this parable into our cultural setting. If Jesus were telling this parable to a Christian audience today in the United States, the Samaritan might be an unkempt drug addict, homeless person, or maybe an atheist. You are not the Samaritan. The person who brings goodness and healing to a broken, almost-dead guy is the person most Christians would least expect. In the parable, you are the broken, almost-dead guy. Jesus was making a point about how we interact with non-believers. If the despised addict/atheist could do something good and honorable, how much more should we, who are called out of this world to be conformed to His image, be perceived as promoting love to our neighbor. Besides believing the truth, love must take deep root within us; we need to live out that love.

I doubt that Jesus would have named His parable the Good Samaritan. His parable was a countercultural tsunami that pointed the finger at the hypocrites hiding behind their religion. The world sees what we do. Whether we like it or not, we are walking, talking advertisements for Jesus. What message do you promote? Is your life a reflection of our culture’s morality or the Way of Jesus?

In a Barna OmniPoll dated August 2015, 91% of US adults and 76% of practicing Christians responded by saying that the best way to find yourself is by looking within. An astounding 84% of US adults and 67% of practicing Christians said that the highest goal in life is to enjoy life.<sup>1</sup> It’s easy to conclude from the data and our own experiences that our culture has a me-first focus. Sadly, this self-ism has become a *de facto* religion and far too many Christians have confused comfortable living with following Jesus.

In that same OmniPoll, 31% of US adults and only 40% of practicing Christians felt that their faith was countercultural—yet they overwhelmingly felt their faith was a force for good.<sup>2</sup> The data tells me that modern Christianity is moving in the direction of our culture’s morality. Hopefully, this trend will reverse—but for that to happen, the Church, those who follow Jesus, must learn to live His way.

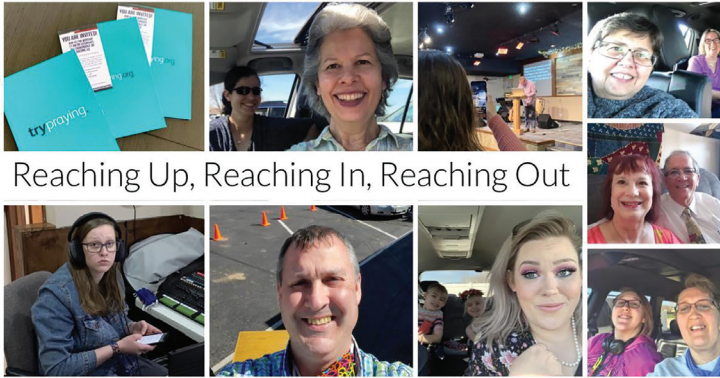
I have one more verse, often quoted, to consider. It comes from a story in Luke chapter four, early in His ministry when Jesus taught a loose woman that: “*true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks*” (John 4: 23). I know, you’ve read this verse many times. But the “truth” in this verse is far more than doctrine. The word “truth” (*aletheia* in the Greek) connotes truth, not simply spoken, but truth in reality, truth with sincerity. In the ancient Greek world, *aletheia* was synonymous with reality. This is why I prefer to substitute truth-being for truth in John 4:23. Jesus directs us to worship Him in truth-being. His life represented the truth. Truth-being was how He lived. Worship in truth-being is when your life is on display demonstrating not only love for God with passion, with words of joy and adoration, but more important, worshiping in truth-being is living His way. True worship allows His commands to penetrate your motives and your values and become the priority in your life. Worship in truth-being is when your faith becomes synonymous with reality. This is the fundamental starting point for a follower of Jesus to disciple others in a society that no longer appreciates the name of Jesus. Only when you worship Him in truth-being can your life be full. And when your life is full, people will take notice and see the reality of your faith and then you will have many opportunities to share His gospel message. <sup>SR</sup>

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1. “The End of Absolutes: America’s New Moral Code,” Barna, May 25, 2016, <https://www.barna.com/research/the-end-of-absolutes-americas-new-moral-code/>

2. David Kinnaman, Gabe Lyons, *Good Faith: Being a Christian When Society Thinks You’re Irrelevant and Extreme* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2017), 76





Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out

## Pursuing the Frontiers of Our Mission

By Steve Osborn

We were not a bad church. In fact, we were a pretty good church. We had been serving the Lord for 125 years in Boulder, Colorado, since a small gathering of individuals had the vision to plant a new church on this frontier and set their minds to doing it. Over the years, the church had twice relocated to new frontiers within the city of Boulder, as need and opportunity arose. We had also helped in getting two sister churches planted in other frontiers—one in Denver and one in Colorado Springs. We had, by SDB standards, an average membership and attendance. Our meeting house and parsonage, initiated as part of the most recent relocation, were paid for and in decent condition. We were blessed to be able to afford a full-time pastor. We enjoyed spending time and doing ministry together as a church family. Like I said, from all appearances, we were a pretty good church.

But therein lay the problem. Did you know that nowhere in Scripture did Jesus call us to be a pretty good church? As we began to take a closer look, with some help from the SDB PULSE process (shameless plug alert), we started noticing some troubling signs. Our active membership was shrinking. The average age of our church family was increasing. We had “graduated” a lot of our senior saints over the previous decade. Our working families were retiring. Our families with children had moved far enough away that regular attendance was difficult. Our giving was not keeping up with our budget. A high percentage of our budget and manpower was required just to maintain our facility. We had become a regional church, with the majority of our program focused on what we could do together on Sabbaths. Most alarming, we had a difficult time identifying new believers who had been introduced to Christ through our ministry. Given the fact that few of our members still lived in Boulder, it was difficult to envision how we could make much of an impact for Christ on our current community. It would have been difficult to say we were “actively advancing God’s Kingdom.”

We were faced with a difficult choice: A) Congratulate each other for being a pretty good church and ride off into the sunset, praying that Jesus would return before we had to close our doors; OR B) Rally our troops in a joint effort to pursue what we believed was God’s vision for a more preferable future (thanks, Pastor Rod Henry). Like good SDBs, we prayed and we talked, and we talked and we prayed, and then we

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prayed and talked some more. Finally, we chose option B. It was a drastic measure. It would require stepping out in faith and a lot of hard work. We had no guarantee it would succeed in turning our church around. But we knew it put us in the center of God's will, which is always the best place to be.

The basic gist of the vision was to sell our Boulder property and head out onto the frontier again—this time actually leaving Boulder behind and relocating to a new, growing community (made up of three connected small towns—Frederick, Firestone, and Dacono—known collectively as Carbon Valley) where a number of our member families lived and that was a better “fit” for our style of ministry. We had already recognized the purpose of our church as “Reaching Up” (in our relationship with God), “Reaching In” (in our relationship with each other) and “Reaching Out” (in our relationship with the world). And since we felt we were already emphasizing the first two, we set to work on pursuing the third with a goal of becoming a more community-based church—looking for ways to actively advance God's Kingdom by loving, serving, and reaching our new community. We even adopted a new name—Frontier Church-Carbon Valley, a Ministry of Seventh Day Baptists—to communicate our desire to help others in our new community push into new frontiers in their own relationship with God, the Church, and the world.

Of course, we knew that simply moving to a new location would not change anything. We, the church, had to change as well. And that is where we are currently working in equipping our church for our mission together—to grow a church of committed, multiplying followers of Jesus Christ who are Reaching UP, Reaching IN and Reaching OUT. Our basic philosophy is founded on the individual responsibility of each believer to be, at the same time, pursuing growth in their own discipleship, while at the same time trying to allow God to make an impact on the discipleship of others through us—from pre-Christian searching, to conversion, to maturity. The role of the church lies in equipping, encouraging and providing opportunities.

Part of the way we have done this is by looking for ways to love and serve our community. We have participated in community events in order to get to know and be known by our community. These have included having booths at the local farmers' market, 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival, Food and Flicks, etc. At these booths, we are offering free Bibles and Christian books, tracts, games and prizes for the kids, and most importantly an opportunity to engage in conversation with those who are looking for that. We have also partnered with the church whose building we are renting for our Sabbath gatherings in services to the needy, such as surplus food distribution, summer lunch at the park program, and Christmas food boxes. In the near future, we hope to adopt a school that we can love and serve. None of these have resulted directly in people giving their lives to Christ. But they have helped us get to know and be known by our new community.





Our equipping has taken a variety of forms—we like to think of it as putting tools in our toolboxes that can be pulled out at appropriate times. We have reviewed a few different approaches to presenting the gospel and sharing our testimony and faith. We have made available books and materials for use and distribution. One of the most recent efforts, which was pre-empted by the recent quarantine, was a small booklet titled, “Try Praying” which encourages people who are searching to try reaching out to God for one week through guided devotions to see what they might experience. We have also provided classes in discipling others and faith-sharing, including our current study of Kevin Harney’s *Organic Outreach for Ordinary Christians*.

In terms of the individual responsibility, we have developed Impact cards, based on ideas we gleaned from our study of the book *Life on Mission* by Aaron Coe and Dustin Willis. We are asking everyone in our church to prayerfully consider which individuals God may be looking to impact through them. They first **Identify** these individuals in their circle of influence and begin praying regularly for God to continue to work in their lives and to open opportunities for spiritual conversations, hopefully leading up to gospel presentations. Next, they look to **Invest** in the lives of these individuals, **Invite** them to become committed, multiplying followers of Jesus and **Include** them in their journey.

We are still a pretty good church. But with God’s help, we hope to be a great church—for His glory. We have a long way to go in becoming the church we believe God wants us to be. Our dream is to also help plant other churches with the same heart in other communities in our region. We would love it if you would continue to pray along with us on this journey. Our firm belief is that by following God’s vision, we have set ourselves on a course to actively advance God’s Kingdom. We pray that you and your church are also praying for and pursuing the vision God has for you so that we can, together, pursue the mission He has given us as Seventh Day Baptists. [SR](#)

# Partnering Beyond 1873

**10 CENTS.—HOW 'TIS DONE;  
OR, THE SECRET OUT.** An illustrated book of 64 pages, that every one should have. Now is the time for those who wish to make money. Send 10c. for postage and packing. **BOND, MARTON & CO., Springfield, Mass.**

This helpful advertisement was offered in the April 17, 1873, *Sabbath Recorder*.<sup>1</sup> If only I had responded sooner, maybe I could have discovered the secret to making quick money. This particular *Recorder* also had the opportunity to purchase a cure for rheumatism—a cure which also served as a great air freshener:

**CAMPHORINE. PAIN! PAIN!  
PAIN!**—The Great Discovery for the relief of pain and a sure and immediate cure for Rheumatism, chronic and acute, Sprains, &c. It has a pleasant and refreshing odor, and will not grease or stain the most delicate fabric, which makes it a luxury in every family. Price 25 cts. per bottle. For sale by all druggists. **REUBEN HOYT, Proprietor, New York.**

Amazing! Opportunities to be happier by making money while also getting rid of pain. But there was more! There were even tablets sold in blue boxes that can cure what I cannot see is wrong with me. These Carbolic Tablets

(which should be “promptly and freely used”) promised to “equalize the circulation of the blood” and “restore healthy action to the affected organs.”

These advertisements offer three quick cures for our ongoing appetite for: personal comfort, freedom from pain, and effortless good health. Is it possible that we can treat our collective mission as a quick fix rather than an ongoing journey?



By Carl Greene  
Executive Director

<sup>1</sup> Check out the *Sabbath Recorder* archives provided by the SDB Council on History at <https://www.sdbhistory.org/resources/sabbath-recorder-archives/>

## Our Mission: More Than a Quick Cure

The SDB General Conference and local churches have the opportunity for unique partnerships in this challenging year of 2020. The mission of the General Conference is to equip our churches to actively advance God’s Kingdom—to boldly share the gospel message, to sustainably train new disciples, and to be available for God to transform us individually and collectively into greater Christ-likeness. On the one hand, we can simply look at ways to roll out a program, or some sort of quick fix technique. However, that sounds more like a search for comfort or effortless good church/Conference health.

We are in search of a healthy process—a sustainable pattern that encourages good church health no matter the season. This is the key behind the SDB Church Revitalization process, or Pulse. This is not a quick fix, it is not a miracle cure—it is a sustainable process for churches and the Conference to continuously examine our expectations, our discipleship process, our outward focus, and our leadership development. If you would like to find out more about Pulse, please contact John Pethtel, SDB Director of Church Development—this is really a great opportunity to develop healthy ministry and fellowship within the specifics of your own community rather than being handed the latest fad to implement. Even if the fad happens to come in fancy blue boxes like the Carbolic Tablets, it is still a fading fad.

## Our Mission: Partnership

A key piece of our mission is working together—as a Conference of churches seeking to actively advance God’s Kingdom. An exciting thing about partnership is finding ways that we can come together. This is a piece that is definitely worth reading more about.

I am really excited about another way that the SDB Memorial Board has partnered with the SDB General Conference. Together, we are providing church revitalization grants to foster ministry response to specific opportunities in your community. We are definitely in a unique season of ministry, and there are new and dynamic opportunities to bring the gospel message. The intent of this grant opportunity is to provide encouragement to look closely at how God has been at work over recent months through your church, and then implement next ministry steps that God is calling you into. Many of these next steps can be relatively low-cost opportunities that God has been opening for your church in 2020. Seventh Day Baptist Churches are eligible to apply for up to \$1,000 each—and encouraged to actively pray about this partnership opportunity provided by these grants.

Want to know more? Please contact us to receive more information and an application for your church: [grants@seventhdaybaptist.org](mailto:grants@seventhdaybaptist.org). We are looking forward to hearing from you! SR



The mission that Jesus gave to his disciples after His resurrection was to “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20). The message of His saving death, miraculous bodily resurrection, and ascension to heaven are signs that the Kingdom of God has broken back into our world and that the program to reclaim the world from sin and death is underway.

That was the “good news” which those disciples preached and has been preached by disciples since. But what does it mean to “make disciples?”

There are entire tomes about making disciples and I have limited space, but it seems to me that there are at least two tasks implicit in the command to make disciples. First, those who follow Jesus are to make new disciples—to aid those who have not responded to Jesus’ call to hear and follow Him. This, we usually call evangelism: aiding those who are not disciples to take the first step in following Jesus. The second part of making disciples, which we usually call discipleship, is to aid every disciple towards maturity. Both activities are the proper responses to Jesus’ command. Making disciples is to aid people in following Jesus, from the first step they take to follow Him in faith to the last one where their faith is made sight.

In this month’s *Recorder*, you have seen a focus on the preaching of the Gospel, especially as it relates to sharing it with those who have not heard it. I hope you have paid careful attention to that message: it is a critical part of our work as those who follow Jesus as His disciples to witness to a watching world in our actions and our words. But if we focus on the Gospel as a thing that is only needed by those who have never followed Jesus, we miss a significant part of what Jesus is teaching about “making disciples:” the role of the Gospel in making us mature.

Every person who follows Jesus needs to regularly bathe in the good news that God created us, loves us, justifies us, calls us, empowers us, and sanctifies us—and sent His son Jesus Christ to open the way for us to enter into the presence of God and into fellowship with Him as though we have never sinned, even though we all sin in many ways. Failure to engage the Gospel we would prescribe to “sinners” without soaking in it ourselves undermines our message that the news is good—real good news is news you never get tired of hearing! If you are no longer thrilled by the Gospel or by focusing on Jesus and keeping your eyes locked on Him, then you need to pray for God to spark new life in you and prune you so that you can be fruitful and grow in new love for the message of the Kingdom.

Our Kingdom advance as Seventh Day Baptists depends on our saturation—how soaked we are—in the good news of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. So...how soaked are you? Are you taking the opportunities you have daily to preach this message of salvation and freedom and eternal life with God to yourself?

A few tips as you soak:

1. Take some time to gratefully remember what God has, and is, saving you **from**. You still need Him today!
2. Consider what God has saved you **to** in Christ: what Kingdom resources are available to you now because you are in Christ?
3. Ask yourself what God has saved you **for** today: how are you needing to engage our world? What responsibilities do you have? Who do you need to engage? Pray specifically for opportunities and that God will make you both sensitive and bold in taking the chances He provides.
4. Prayerfully consider how God is bringing the eternal into your everyday life. What good things in your life are foretastes of what is coming? Are you thanking God for those?

The Gospel isn’t “just” God’s one-time gift to the unsaved—it’s His continuing provision for the people who are called by His name. Soak yourself in the Gospel today and watch God bring you to maturity as you walk and lead others towards life in Christ! SR

## Soaked in the Gospel



Christian  
Education  
Council

By Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten  
Director of Education  
and History



# Saturate Your Spheres of Influence in the Gospel

By John J. Pethtel



Something that I often say while preaching—and why the gospel must be shared in ways that all can understand it—is, “The gospel is for believers and unbelievers.” The gospel for unbelievers is meant to offer conviction of sin and/or hope for the future. The gospel for believers is for confession of sin and a reminder of purpose.

This is why our lives, as believers, and our spheres of influence need to be saturated with the gospel. What are our spheres of influence? Your spheres of influence are the locations and the people that God has given you to minister to through your words, your living, and your presence.

What happens if we don't saturate our spheres of influence with the true gospel? To put it simply, lives will be eternally lost. To put it more bluntly, the enemy gains the ground that is not saturated with the true gospel.

If we do not saturate our spheres of influence with the true gospel, the gospel will be assumed.

What does it mean to assume the gospel? It means that we take it for granted that the people that are around us believe and know the gospel. Why is that bad? Because even if we believe and know and even live the gospel, we need to hear it again and again and again for it to truly take root. We need to be reminded of its power in salvation and in sanctification.

Assuming the gospel is the quickest route to kill a church in a couple of generations. An assumed gospel leads to a twisted gospel, which leads to a lost gospel. And when the gospel is lost, the lifeblood of the church is drained out. Was the gospel clearly preached in the sermon and teaching that was delivered? Was the gospel clearly present in the lyrics and theology of the songs that we sing? Is the gospel clearly evident in the words that we pray?

Have you ever asked someone in your church to explain the gospel to you? Many people who hold membership in the church of God struggle with not just living the gospel but merely explaining it.

Churches with an incomplete, different, or false gospel are gaining space and influence in communities around the world where the true gospel is not clearly communicated. Do NOT assume the gospel or that someone knows the gospel.

Know how to say the message of the gospel in clear and unassuming language, and make sure members of your congregation know how to say the gospel in a minute or two in their own words.

Share the gospel with others in your words. The gospel must be boldly spoken and winsomely lived. If you do not share the gospel regularly, it will start to become fuzzy and unfamiliar to you. To employ a cliché: use it or lose it.

Apply the gospel in your life by using it to kill sin and to bring repentance, forgiveness, and holiness. The gospel is not just what gets us saved. It is a deep well to be drawn from and learned from daily.

If the true gospel becomes assumed, it will quickly become confused, replaced, and possibly lost. Don't let this happen on our watch in our churches and in our communities. Saturate your life, your family, your church, and your community (your spheres of influence) with the true gospel and watch what God will do. SR

## Pursue Christ-likeness

Christ-likeness is both the goal and the promise given to all disciples of Christ. Our path to Christ-likeness begins in recognizing who Christ is and what He has done for us. He then becomes our example for how to live out the faith that we have been entrusted with. It is also His promise to us that we will become like Him (partially in this world due to the Holy Spirit and fully in the world to come).

In our pursuit of Christ, and therefore, Christ-likeness, what are some qualities to focus on in particular? Sam Crabtree in his book, *Practicing Affirmation*, gives us some targets to aim at in our Christian walk.

### 1. Truthfulness.

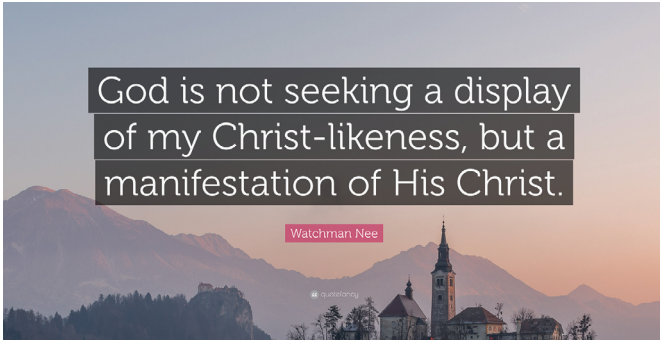
Jesus is the faithful witness (Revelation 1:5), the most truthful being in existence, the One for whom it is impossible to lie (Titus 1:2). What truths have you been believing or sharing that have no heavenly value and only serve as witness to your personal preferences or ideologies?

### 2. Obedience.

Jesus is the most obedient being ever to live, having never once disobeyed the Father in thought, word, or deed.

### 3. Forgiveness.

Jesus is the most forgiving being in existence. He extends mercy to every sinner who confesses his sinfulness to God and trusts in Jesus to pay the penalty for his indifference and rebellion.



God is not seeking a display  
of my Christ-likeness, but a  
manifestation of His Christ.

Watchman Nee

### 4. Awareness.

No one is more woke than Jesus. Being aware of what's going on around Him and responding to each event and each person in each and every instance, He is aware of how He presents Himself to others.

### 5. Hospitality.

Jesus is the prince of hospitality as He has gone to prepare dwelling places for every believer.

### 6. Diligence.

No one surpasses Jesus in applying all His energies to accomplish what the Father has given Him to do.

### 7. Initiative.

Jesus acts. He does not idly watch injustice happen. He does not wait to be cajoled, recruited, or talked into doing what needs to be done.

### 8. Dependability.

Nobody is more dependable than Jesus, for all the promises of God are “yes” and “amen” in Him (2 Corinthians 1:20).

In every believer, there's going to be a shortfall in your truthfulness, obedience, forgiveness, awareness, hospitality, diligence, initiative, and dependability compared to Christ. However, with God's grace and the Holy Spirit saturating the gospel of Jesus in and throughout your life, you can more faithfully represent these qualities in your witness of Jesus. <sup>[SR]</sup>

## PASTOR SEARCH

The following SDB churches or groups have called new pastoral leadership:

**Remembrance SDB Church (Ft. Worth, TX) — Stephan Saunders, Pastor**

The following SDB churches or groups are actively looking for pastoral leadership. Please keep them in prayer as they search for their church's next leader:

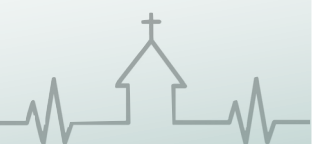
**Shepherd's Fold SDB Church (Johnson City, TN) — Assistant**

**Bay Area SDB Church (Pinole, CA)**

**Covenant SDB Fellowship (Hungry Horse, MT)**

**Central SDB Church (Mitchellville, MD)**

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. 702.



Church  
Development &  
Pastoral Services

By John J. Pethtel  
Director





## Reintroducing SDB Conference President Kevin Butler

The Seventh Day Baptist General Council is pleased to announce that Rev. Kevin Butler has agreed to serve as SDB Conference President and Charlotte Chroniger as President-elect for the 2021 General Conference session. In light of the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 General Conference session, the willingness of Kevin and Charlotte to provide consistency going into the 2020-2021 ministry year is deeply appreciated—and a wonderful blessing. Over the coming days, you will also be hearing more about “Virtual” Conference Week 2020—ways in which we will be able to provide for a Conference Week “experience” although not meeting in person.

As we celebrate these opportunities in the midst of change and disruption, we also want to pause and take this opportunity to reintroduce President Butler. While he is a wonderfully familiar face and has been consistently engaged in the work of the Conference, there is always more we can get to know about Kevin. Hope that you enjoy his reintroduction bio that follows.

**Hometown:** Grew up in Vernon, NY, right next to Verona.

**Favorite childhood memory:** Besides all of the goodies I got being the only boy (two sisters), I really cherish having had loving, faithful, respected, church-going parents.

**How you were introduced to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord:** His Word opened my eyes. After a frightening spiritual confrontation in high school, I was driven to ask questions of my mom and pastor, then read the Bible and prayed. All those years of Sunday School classes and VBS and children’s sermons about Jesus came together and made absolute sense! The scales fell off!

**First date with Janet:** We went mini-golfing and got rained out halfway through the course. On the way to “plan B” (seeing the movie “Earthquake” at

the mall) we saw a perfect double rainbow. Have taken that as a sign for us ever since—the rainbow, not the shaky movie theater.

**What is Moxie?:** Only the official drink for the state of Maine! If you enjoy a good carbonated soft drink, you probably won’t like Moxie. This character (who I met in Maine) captures it so well: <https://youtu.be/D6heTaAxOEY>.

**Memorable Conference Week Memory:** So many! Sharing belly laughs and tears with friends from all over, being lovingly prayed for... Our kids still call the drive across the northern U.S. to the 1996 Conference in Washington state “the best family trip ever.”

**How has God been at work in and through you amidst the disruption and disappointment of Conference Week 2020 needing to be canceled?:** Lessons learned during the complete calendar overhaul and times of isolation while battling cancer in 2018 have certainly prepared me to go with the flow of this year. I am disappointed for those who were looking forward to serving the Lord in Grand Rapids, and I thank them for their willing spirits. There is a greater purpose in all this.

**What is something that you are looking forward to as Conference President across the months ahead?:** Continuing to encourage SDBs to fix our eyes on Jesus and trusting His plans for what He has next for us. SR

Blessings,

Ralph Mackintosh, Chairman  
Andrew Camenga, Vice-Chairman  
Ericessen Cooper  
Steve Osborn  
Patti Wethington

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



## More Calendars—and Lives—Changed

If there was ever a time to “Fix Your Eyes on Jesus,” it was this spring. What began as a word play on the aspect of 20/20 vision, became a clarion call.

While an in-person gathering of our Conference faithful is a no-go, we still want to provide a taste of a virtual Conference experience during that last week of July. Details are coming.

A special treat that I’m looking forward to: our son Matthew Butler has agreed to lead our daily on-line Bible studies. The Air Force took Matt and his family to Las Vegas, Nevada, several years ago. He excelled in his duties and had his eye on the military as a career. God had other plans.

Matt still serves in the Air Force Reserves, but has followed the Lord’s call to serve Him at Grace Point Church in North Las Vegas. He is Pastor of Liturgy at their main campus (they just planted another church last spring), plans and leads their modern worship with intentional liturgy, and preaches occasionally. The church hosts over 900 people at their three gatherings each Sunday. Matt is married to Danny and Danita Lee’s daughter, Danielle, and they have four super children.

So, it’s good to know that some plans are going forward. Others were totally changed this spring.

My wife Janet serves as the administrator for The Connecting Church (SDB) in Milton, WI. Among her many jobs (church treasurer, newsletter editor, camp business manager, general go-to person) is to assist with weddings. Janet was helping Jared Osborn—son of Joel and Doneta—and his fiancée, Heather Riley, with their plans to get married in Milton on March 28. They expected around 200 to attend. With about two weeks to go, our governor imposed a “safer at home” order that barred any public event of over 50 people.

Jared and Heather’s plans changed with lightning speed. For an extra fee, they got their marriage license on the same day of the state shutdown (March 16), and tied the knot two days later! How in the world...

Contacting the pastor of Heather’s home church in Watertown, WI, they worked out a way to get hitched there on that Wednesday evening. Can you imagine?

And what about giving away the bride? A cell phone, propped up on a music stand, allowed that tradition to be kept. Heather’s father remained in Texas (dealing with stage 4 lung cancer), and her mom and siblings were in Michigan. The somewhat shortened ceremony took place with exactly 10 people in the room. And Doneta, an experienced cake decorator, went ahead and created a sweet masterpiece.

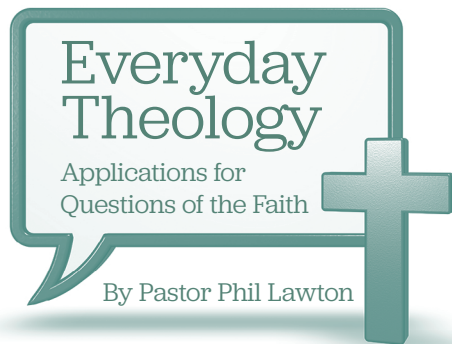
Plans are in the works to hold what they’re calling a “sequel.” A video of the intimate “prequel” will be shared among many more family members and friends in the near future.



*Heather and Jared Osborn on their socially-distanced wedding day.*

One bittersweet addendum. Heather posted a picture of her and her dad on Facebook on March 29, the day following their original wedding date: “This photo was taken on Thanksgiving 2019. It was the week that changed everything. My dad was diagnosed with lung cancer, and today he lost that battle. I pray that he is at peace and pain free. Thank you for all those who have been praying and those who donated and allowed me and my siblings to see him again one last time during Christmas! I also thank God for allowing Dad to be alert enough to give me away on the 18th, as he wouldn’t have been able to if we were married on the 28th like we planned. God is good!”

May we continue to trust as we fix our eyes on His calendar, not ours. SR



## 5 Realities About Quarantine, Domestic Abuse, and the Church

My heart has been heavy of late. I have been thinking of the consequences of the quarantine. Not the economic ones. The domestic ones. Though it has been on my mind since this lockdown started, the recent news involving Tara Reed and Joe Biden has brought it back to the forefront of my mind.

If you don't know what I'm talking about, I encourage you to do a Google search about domestic abuse and quarantine. What you will find is that calls to the National Domestic Violence Hotline have gone up.<sup>1</sup> In my home state of New Jersey, reports of child abuse in March are lower than they were last year.<sup>2</sup> But that doesn't mean it's not happening. It's still happening. Children are just not going to school where these things are reported. Which leads me to the first reality about our current situation.

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### 1. There are No Longer any Safe Spaces

I know for some of you the term “safe spaces” is grating. But there is no better term for a place where victims of abuse can go to be safe from their abusers. Prior to this quarantine, schools were a place where children could receive help and support. This is not just a respite from an abusive home—it also meant at least one meal a day. Because of the current measures all around our country this regular safe space is gone.

Schools were not the only safe spaces for children. After-school activities at community centers provided that respite and support. There were safe spaces for adults of domestic abuse. Churches have historically been a place that people think of as a place of safety. But the sad truth is that for many it is not the case.

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### 2. Abuse is a Church Problem Too

Abuse is not just a problem of Hollywood, the media, or politicians. When the news came out about priests in Boston, the response of much of the Protestant church was not to look inward at their own problems, but rather to condemn this as yet another corruption of the Catholic Church. For too long the church has tried to ignore the fact that these kinds of problems exist. We think that we are immune or we only talk about it in hushed corners of the church. Wake up, Church! Silence is not spiritual.

Why are we spending time trying to curate the image the world has of us? Why do we think that we are not affected by the common sins of humanity? Jesus told us that we will have tribulations (John 16:33). We know that the world does not understand the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). We know that all have sinned (Romans 3:23) and that we will continue to do things that we do not want to do (Romans 7:19). We know all this and we see how the world still sees us as hypocrites. Church, we are failing at curating our image.

But that's not really the problem. The problem is we care more about the image we project than the truth of who we are. Let's be brutally honest. Sexual sin affects all of humanity, even the church. We can no longer ignore that. We can no longer pretend we are unaffected by the very same sins that the world has. Rather than set ourselves up as above the world, we need to show that we are no better than the rest of the world. The church is not perfect. Only Jesus is perfect.



### 3. Churches Need to Address Their Policies

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Often churches only think about what to do after an assault takes place. This is an important discussion and churches need to be aware that many times the church has failed. But this should also be a time to assess how we prevent this from happening.

In my church, we have a policy that an adult is never alone with children. Currently that means that any video calls are attended by at least two adults and often include parents. **IF YOUR CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE SOME KIND OF PROTECTION POLICY FOR CHILDREN YOU NEED TO DO THAT NOW!** There need to be background checks. There needs to be training on how to treat children and how to deal with social media.

Too often the church is late to the game when it comes to protecting those we are entrusted with. Your personal feelings about the trustworthiness of a person are not enough to qualify them to work with youth. We must be vigilant. We have to accept that this is a common problem in our churches.

In the event that something does happen, we need to have procedures in place to report abuse and protect victims. Though we never wish for something to happen in our churches we need to know what we would do if something did happen. Church, we need to wake up! Churches should be a safe harbor from the evils of the world. Too often churches are the center of that evil.

### 4. Churches Can Still Provide Support at a Distance

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I saw an image going around Facebook that encouraged people living with abuse to reach out in code by asking for homemade soap. Though churches can't be a physical safe place right now, we can be a place to confide in. We can be a place that reaches out to authorities on behalf of survivors.

Many churches are continuing to hold youth group or Sabbath school on video conferencing apps. Though I am sure you started these to provide a way to keep connected to others in your congregations, these provide a way for you to check in on other members of your church who might be at risk of abuse. A text message or a phone call can also be a way that you can support adults at risk. You still can be a safe person even if your building is not a safe space right now.

### 5. We Need to Give Voice to Survivors

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This is perhaps the most important thing that any church can do. We need to listen to survivors whenever they step forward. In every case, it takes courage and vulnerability to come forward. Church, when we hear from survivors, we must NEVER minimize what they are saying. We must give them voice and space. We must work with them to seek justice.

The church exists to bring healing and repentance, not to decide the legality of assault. I know of too many cases where a church responded poorly to a survivor. When someone comes to you with their story of abuse, BELIEVE THEM. You are not trained or equipped to know if someone is lying—and it's not your job to determine guilt or innocence. When we hear the stories of survivors, it is our duty to them to report what they say. They come to us because they want help—not apathy, condemnation, and silence. SR

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelsandler/2020/04/06/domestic-violence-hotline-reports-surge-in-coronavirus-related-calls-as-shelter-in-place-leads-to-isolation-abuse/#626c6d3d793a>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/coronavirus/2020/04/14/coronavirus-unprecedented-challenge-nj-child-protection-system/5133057002/>



## Persevering Through COVID-19!

When will we get back to normal? When will this pandemic be over? How will life be after all of this? Most of us have asked those questions at some time in the past two to three months. And there are no clear answers. Within our family of faith, many have also asked, “How are Seventh Day Baptists doing around the world?”

By no means is this an exhaustive report, but here is some of what we’ve been hearing from different regions around the globe:

**Africa** Fewer cases are reported than in some other parts of the world. The lockdown of countries has put a huge burden on the poor with elevated food prices, scarcities, inability to work and earn a living. Not all countries instituted a lockdown, but those that continue to meet do practice social distancing and other safety measures. South Africa has had the most cases in Africa, but so far we have not had any direct word from Seventh Day Baptists there. Malawi, which is the country that has the most Seventh Day Baptists in the world, also has one of the lowest counts of corona cases of all the African countries.

**Asia** Lockdowns in the Philippines and in India created great hardship for many of our people. Prices for basic food items skyrocketed, and opportunities for earning an income became very limited, especially for day-laborers.

**Australia** Government acted early to restrict travel into the country, so that significantly limited the number of virus cases. Churches could not gather to meet, but have been connecting by other means.

**Brazil** Many corona cases in the country; no church gatherings, but alternate ways of communing as the church have been adopted.

**Europe** This is one of the hardest hit regions of the world, in terms of the virus. In the Netherlands, all large public gatherings have been canceled until September 1, 2020. Our brethren in the United Kingdom have been faithfully meeting on Zoom for worship services, prayer meetings, and Bible Study.



### FOCUS on Missions

Andy Samuels

Chief Executive Director  
SDB Missionary Society

**Jamaica** There was a spike in virus cases after the first month of relatively effective containment. Our churches have thrived on Zoom and WhatsApp, since they are unable to meet physically.

**USA & Canada** Overall, the United States has the highest number of COVID-19 cases and deaths. The pandemic has shut down the country on so many levels. Our SDB Churches in North America have shown tremendous resilience, ingenuity, and receptivity to novel ways of doing church. Zoom, GoToMeeting, Facebook, YouTube, Free Conference Call, and other platforms have become the new paradigm for church gatherings and ministries.

In spite of all the tragedy, hurt, upheaval, chaos, and financial distress brought on by the corona pandemic, I have not heard of a Seventh Day Baptist member dying from the virus anywhere in the world. We give the Lord thanks for His incredible mercy.



**5K Event** One of the fallout from this dreaded pandemic is the cancellation of the annual summer gathering of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference of the USA & Canada. That is a huge disappointment for many, and it will be missed. For the last few years, during that annual gathering, the Missionary Society has orchestrated a 5K event to raise funds for specific global ministries. This year, although there will be no Conference gathering, there will be a 5K event—virtually. Participants may run or walk the distance anywhere, with anyone, and anytime, although we are designating Friday, July 31, as the date for the “official” event. Registration details will be available and publicized soon. All proceeds from the event will go towards helping our overseas conferences with their COVID-19 relief efforts.

**Directors’ Availability** While we’re in this pandemic period, the Directors of the Missionary Society, Pastor Andy Samuels and Pastor Garfield Miller, are available to visit and share with your church virtually. We are willing to preach to, teach, meet with, and encourage your church for the present time—and the days ahead. Send us an email at [info@sdbmissions.org](mailto:info@sdbmissions.org) with your request. May the Lord’s grace be upon us all, so that as His people, we come out of this season stronger and wiser than ever before. SR



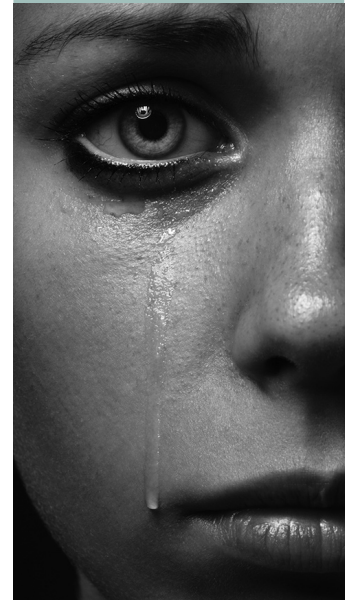
Sometimes I think God speaks to us through songs. I find on many of my drives to work, God just knows how I'm feeling and He will in some way command the radio to play just exactly the words I need to hear.

The past couple of times in the car, the song He's played to me is "OK" by Josh Wilson. I think the lyrics in the song are just so perfect and I wanted to share them with you to remind you that...

### IT'S OK TO NOT BE OK

"Shame says you've gone too far this time  
Shame says you've finally crossed the line  
Shame says you have to hide away  
But shame is shattered by amazing grace  
So come just as you are  
Bring your broken heart  
Your secrets and your scars  
You were never meant to carry all this weight  
Let your walls come down  
And let the tears fall out  
And know that Jesus loves you just the same  
It's ok not to be ok  
It's ok not to be ok  
This, this is where the healing starts  
This is where the light can crush the dark  
Here, inside your pain, inside your doubts  
Here is where He's gonna meet you now  
Bring your broken heart  
Your secrets and your scars  
You were never meant to carry all this weight  
Let your walls come down  
And let the tears fall out  
And know that Jesus loves you just the same  
It's ok not to be ok  
It's ok not to be ok  
You don't have to have it all together  
You don't have to have it all together  
You don't have to have it all together  
So come just as you are  
Bring your broken heart  
Your secrets and your scars  
You were never meant to carry all this weight  
Let your walls come down  
And let the tears fall out  
And know that Jesus loves you just the same  
It's ok not to be ok  
It's ok not to be ok  
It's ok  
It's ok not to be ok"

LLC#1625098



YOUNG ADULT

By Sarina Gumness

# Recording History Up Close & Personal



*History is best kept as it is made.*

In this month's column, I'd like to gently nudge all of you. In this COVID season, things are moving both very quickly and exceedingly slowly, depending on your vantage. Because of a lack of good information, the situation around medical, governmental and economic reactions to the pandemic seemingly changes by the day. At the same time, many things seem to be stuck in suspended animation as we wait, many of us staying at home for much of the past several weeks, socially distancing and waiting for things to return to normal.

That leads to my nudge. All of our churches and lives have undergone a variety of adjustments over this past couple of months. Whole systems and ways of being have been set aside and new things have been taken up. Many of our churches have leaped to the world of broadcasting or recording services and regular Zoom meetings. (How many of us even knew what that meant 3 months ago?) The speed of change at this point and the issues that so many of our churches have addressed in those changes is unprecedented. Future generations will undoubtedly want to know about our actions in this time. If they went to look for some record of the way your church has traversed these times, what would they find? If you haven't taken a moment to record and preserve the record of how your church has responded in this time, it's time to start thinking about that.

History is best kept as it is made. The most evocative and useful pieces for recording history are those records and artifacts which are closest to the events. If you and your church are not keeping copies of communications about

the crisis, records of the meetings where the important decisions were made, and copies of the digital things you are now producing, the time to think about that is now, before the memories are lost or the hard drives are fried or discarded. Here are a few suggestions for you as you gather resources to tell the story of how SDBs responded to COVID-19 in this season.

**Council on History**  
Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten  
Director of Education and History

1. **Create a file or depository for important material.** This doesn't need to be fancy. At this point, as I am doing this for our Conference, I have a paper file folder where I am just shoving

copies of things I am encountering. I also have a tag in my email for COVID-19, and if anything comes through that relates to it, I am tagging it so I can go back and find it later. I have a file in the cloud for digital material similarly titled. If you have a place to keep it, you can start collecting.

2. **Keep things even if you're not sure they're important. Don't worry about sorting right now.** In this season, it's hard to know what might be useful or important. Some meetings that seem important may not be in the long term. Some things that happened quietly by email may end up being important later! Just collect it all in your containers, and you can sort it later. If you don't save it, there will be nothing TO sort later!
3. **Tangle with the digital monster.** At archives all across the country for the last decade, trained archivists have been asking about how they can preserve things like streamed Facebook videos and websites. They don't have answers, and I don't either. But what I know is if you never think about trying to preserve some of these things, there will be nothing for future generations to access. Think carefully about trying to save digital things and take some steps to save at least what you can.
4. **Be objective and save things across different perspectives.** With the stress and varied information being circulated in these times, it's inevitable that there may be some differences of opinion about "what it all means." Ultimately, we don't know yet, so strive to save information from different perspectives in your congregation, if you have them. This will help people later to understand the issues that you're addressing! We can leave it to others later to determine who was right and wrong! (To spoil the ending: usually it's not as simple as right and wrong—many sides of a debate can have some valid points!)

This can seem like a lot, but I promise you it's really just being mindful as you go about your normal work in life and church that it might be important later. Add that one extra step to save it so you can find it later!

Let's leave a good record of how God was moving among us in this season for future generations! [SR](#)



# Discerning the Truth

2020 has been a whirlwind so far. I believe this year has definitely upset daily routines and completely shaken up what normal looks like for most people. How interesting that our focus for this year's General Conference was an apt play on eyesight—"Fix Your Eyes on Jesus." We're certainly getting an opportunity to do just that in a big way right now.


There is so much division on a very visceral level right now—more so than we would probably see even in a normal election year. Politics is definitely not helping. Very basic questions about humanity are being turned over to politicians to provide answers—and let me tell you, they aren't qualified to address those questions— not really. There are conspiracies, politics, mistrust, and disinformation around every corner. Many have been posing questions about whom to trust—who do you listen to? I'm not going to share my views. I have them and some of you I know have differing ones. What I am going to do is beseech you to fix your eyes on Jesus.

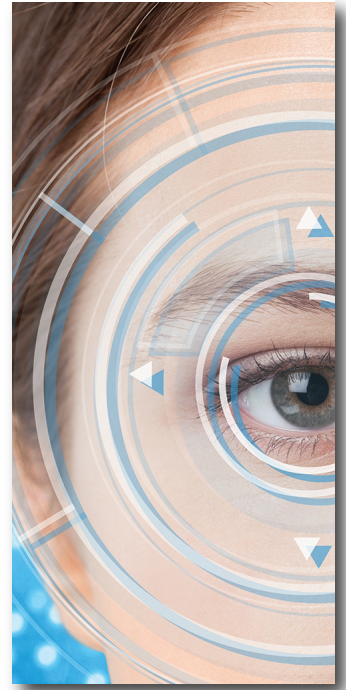
Unfortunately, Jesus doesn't straight-up address pandemics and quarantine measures in the beatitudes. But if we examine the life of Christ and His teachings and read the Bible, what does He tell us? One thing as a Christian, we believe Jesus is truth and He is good. But He didn't win a ton of popularity contests, especially among governing bodies.

At this point discerning truth regarding what is occurring nationally, from my point of view, is impossible. There are guidelines and rules that differ across state lines and even sometimes from city to city. Here are two guidelines I would say should govern your decisions about what you're doing, who you're listening to, and how you are responding to others (p.s. these aren't good only for pandemics).

1. Fix your eyes on Jesus and ask the clichéd phrase from the 90's and early 2000's, W.W.J.D (what would Jesus do). To be more specific, H.W.J.R. (how would Jesus respond). If you don't know, it might be a good idea to slow yourself down and read your Bible before doing anything.
2. The Bible encourages us to look at the consequences of our actions and examine the fruit. If how you or others are responding isn't bearing Fruit of the Spirit, it might be time to reevaluate your response. (Read Galatians 5 if you need a refresher).

Now in order for this to work I think we have to approach it with a humble and open heart. If you are searching for confirmation that your position is correct, that's probably what you are going to find. Let me tell you this article started out looking very different than it does now. But I had to allow God His sovereignty as judge and use these principles myself while writing this. My heart is so incredibly heavy with grief and sometimes burning with anger—I have to tread carefully, especially since people with opposing viewpoints may be feeling the exact same way.

Ephesians 4:6 is calling my name a lot these days and I'm doing my best to rely on Jesus' heart rather than my own. 



*Fix your eyes  
on Jesus*



**Women's  
Society**

By Katrina Goodrich



## Inflammation

Inflammation is the process your body uses to provide the healing chemicals and nutrients needed to help repair damage due to injury or disease. There are two types: acute—a temporary helpful response to an injury or illness; and chronic—a slow, creeping condition caused by a misfiring of the immune system that keeps your body in a constant, long-term state of high alert. Over time, chronic inflammation damages healthy cells.

Symptoms of acute inflammation include pain, redness, immobility, swelling, and heat. Symptoms of chronic inflammation present in a different way and include fatigue, mouth sores, chest pain, abdominal pain, fever, rash and joint pain. Chronic inflammation can start attacking the linings of your arteries or intestines, cells in your liver and brain, or the tissue of muscles and joints. This cellular damage can trigger diabetes, cancer, dementia, heart disease, arthritis and/or depression. Its slow and secret nature makes it hard to diagnose. Chronic inflammation's impact has been linked to dozens of health conditions. These include dementia, depression, Parkinson's, chronic fatigue, asthma, heart disease, inflammatory bowel diseases, obesity, metabolic syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, and allergies, to name a few.

Chronic inflammation happens when:

- Something triggers the immune system and puts your body in a state of stress and keeps it there.
- As a result, the immune system goes into attack mode with an inflammatory response and responds and responds and responds.

There are four main causes of chronic inflammation:

- Infection that's hard to kill such as hepatitis C or Lyme disease
- Genetics: an inherited gene causes misfiring of the immune system or is turned on by inflammation
- Environment: toxins and pollutants which trigger and sustain inflammation
- Lifestyle: obesity, unregulated stress, tobacco use, drinking too much, lack of physical activity, poor sleep, poor diet. Belly fat, a highly inflammatory tissue, actively creates and releases inflammatory compounds.

Chronic stress causes an increase in hormones like cortisol and adrenaline which directly trigger a rise in inflammation.

Aging increases inflammation because the older we are, the more exposure we've had to all the above causes. Aging also make it more difficult for our bodies to properly manage our immune systems, to extract nutrients from food and to shed extra pounds. As we age all, of us have some degree of inflammation in our bodies. The key is to keep it at a flickering ember and not let it erupt into a forest fire.

Prevention is key to avoiding these chronic diseases. The ways to reduce your chance of chronic inflammation are to eat a healthy diet, reduce stress, get good sleep every night, exercise, stop smoking, and reduce alcohol use. Foods that spark inflammation include: white bread, deep fried foods, processed foods, bottled salad dressings. Foods that help reduce inflammation include: whole-grain bread, dark-colored fruits, vegetables and beans, yogurt, monosaturated fats (olive oil, avocado, nuts) polyunsaturated fats (fish, flax, oils) and big colorful salads. The vitamins and minerals found in fruits and vegetable are antioxidants and help fight inflammation.

Non-food reducers of chronic inflammation include yoga, improving your attitude, and attending church. Mindfulness, prayer, and meditation have been shown to help those who suffer from chronic inflammatory conditions.

These lifestyle changes are not easy, but isn't attacking one enemy—inflammation—a lot easier than worrying about dozens of them? If you have to pick one area to improve, focus on sleep, both quantity and quality. It not only lowers your inflammation levels, it also helps you do everything else better. When people give their body time to rest and lower stress, they have an easier time making smart food choices and getting exercise the next day. Anything you can do to reduce inflammation is a step to better health.

—Adapted from AARP Bulletin 11/2019





## The Sabbath – Sacramental

WHILE the Sabbath is not a sacrament, we feel that it partakes of the nature of a sacrament. In the midst of time the Sabbath anchors eternity, signifying and symbolizing the sacredness of all time. To observe the Sabbath therefore is to worship God and acknowledge His love and care. Even as we read in New Testament times of the preparation day preceding the Sabbath, so our sunset-to-sunset observance offers us an evening of spiritual preparation; and the Sabbath eve serves as a vesper call to God’s Holy Day of praise and worship.

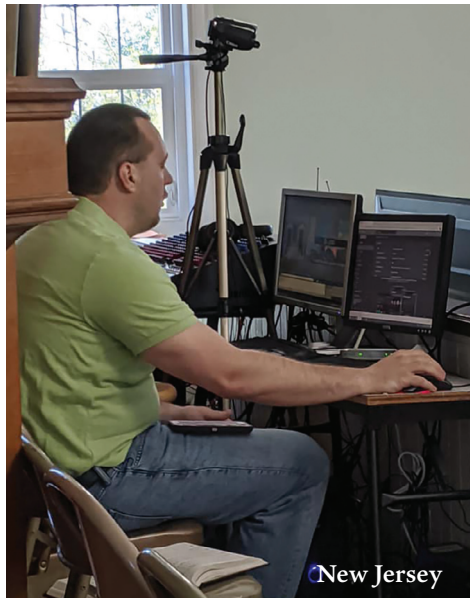
—Dean Ahva J. C. Bond

Reprinted from *The Sabbath Recorder* dated September 6, 1948  
Vol. 145, No. 6

Rev. Ahva J.C. Bond (1875-1958) was active in the pastorate from 1903 to 1935 and culminated his career as dean of Alfred University School of Theology from 1935-1956. He was a graduate of Salem College, the AU School of Theology and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. His pastorates included Main Settlement, NY; Nile, NY; Milton Junction, WI; Salem, WV; and Plainfield, NJ. An author of several books of sermons and poems, he wrote two books on the Sabbath – *Sabbath History I* (1922), and *The Sabbath* (1925).



Colorado



New Jersey



Wisconsin



Florida



Rhode Island

SDB Worship  
Quarantine-style!



Nebraska

## OBITUARIES

**BOYD**—Joe A. Boyd, 83, of Texas Corner Road, New Enterprise, PA, passed away on April 3, 2020, after a battle with cancer.

Joe was born on January 28, 1937, in New Enterprise, PA, the son of the late Jerome and Eva (Stiffler) Boyd. On August 4, 1958, in Lost Creek, WV, he was united in marriage to Beth (Randolph) Boyd who survives. Joe was a Class of 1956 graduate of Replogle School and a member of the Bell Seventh Day Baptist Church in Salemville, PA. He was janitor at the Replogle School for six years and retired from E.F. Smith Trucking. Joe enjoyed John Deere tractors, die-cast toy collecting, attending auctions, and making apple butter with his family. He was involved with the NBC Food Bank and the Southern Cove Power Reunion, and was a volunteer worker at the Southern Cove Fire Company Turkey Dinners.

He was preceded in death by sisters Shirley (Boyd) Richards and Mary (Boyd) Ellis. Surviving are his wife Beth; son Rodney Boyd and wife Sheila of Everett; daughter Christina Thorngate and husband David of Little Genesee, NY; son Joe Allen Boyd of Everett; daughter Joan Patterson and husband Jerry of New Enterprise; daughter Betsy Francke and husband Daniel of Port Matilda; as well as 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Due to recent COVID-19 regulations and restrictions, immediate services will be held privately and a Celebration of Life Service will take place at a later date. Interment was in Salemville Cemetery. If so desired, memorial contributions in Joe's name can be made to the NBC Food Pantry.

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**FAUST**—John A. Faust, 59, of New Enterprise, PA, passed away on April 30, 2020, at Maybrook Hills Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center in Altoona.

John was born on May 31, 1960, in Altoona; son of the late Harold Fred and Shirley Louise (Ross-Lear) Faust. He was raised by foster parents D. Russell and Violet E. Clapper, both deceased.

John attended Northern Bedford High School and was a member of the Woodbury Brethren in Christ Church and the Bell Seventh Day Baptist Church in Salemville, PA. He enjoyed fishing, gardening, church camps, and NASCAR.

John was preceded in death by his foster brother Bill Clapper and his wife Dolly. Surviving are siblings: Susan True, Carol Faust, Harold Faust Jr., Thomas Faust, Donald Faust, Debra Faust, Sallye Clapper (Bridgewater), Perry Clapper, Rudy Clapper, Julie Parrish (Dale), as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Also surviving are John's loving and caring co-parents, Norman and Anna Reiff, as well as helpful individuals, Jacob and Eva Sensenig and family. Due to recent COVID-19 regulations and restrictions, a memorial service will be held at a later date. If so desired, memorial contributions in John's name can be made to the church of your choosing.

**RUDERT**—Donald G. Rudert, age 90, passed away on May 2, 2020, at Green Acres Assisted Living Center in Fremont, MI.

Don was born on July 13, 1929, to Elry and Helen (Gould) Rudert in Pittsburgh, PA. He attended Staunton Military Academy, VA, and later Salem College, WV. It was here he met his future wife, Norma Johnson. They were married on July 30, 1949, in White Cloud, MI.

After working for his father for five years, Don decided to move to Norma's hometown. He founded the Rudert Agency in 1954 and enthusiastically took part in the life of a small town. He served on the White Cloud City Council and later served as Mayor, City Planning Commission, School Board, was a member of the Rotary Club, Summerfest Committee, White Cloud Fire Department, Newaygo County United Way, Saladin Shrine Temple of Grand Rapids, Shrine Motor Patrol, Two-Cylinder Club, and Antique Farm Equipment Club. Don was instrumental in arranging for NARCO to locate to White Cloud when the company was looking at locations to build their manufacturing facility. As a school bus driver, Don enjoyed driving the team bus to away games and working at the scorer's table for home basketball games. Don was an avid fan of Michigan State University sports and The Pittsburgh Steelers. He was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, FL, and served on the denomination's General Council.

He is survived by his wife Norma, their 5 children, Thomas (Cindy) Rudert of Mt. Pleasant; Eric (Michelle) Rudert of White Cloud and Traverse City; Sandra (Dan) Monahan of Birmingham, MI; Lauren (Willy) Marinez of Haslett; Gigi (David) Hines of Fremont, 15 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, and his sister Carol (Burton) Douglass of Redmond, OR.

Don's family gathered at Crandell Funeral Home on May 4 to hold private farewells. Interment will be in the White Cloud Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be given to the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Daytona Beach in memory of Don.



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go to your App Store and  
download the **free**  
SDB LINK app.



For I hold you  
by your right hand—  
I, the Lord your God.  
And I say to you,  
“Don’t be afraid.  
I am here to help you.”

—Isaiah 41:13

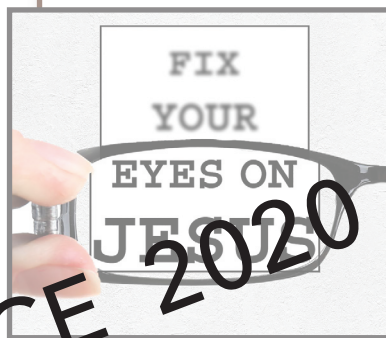


# VIRTUAL CONFERENCE WEEK

WATCH FOR DETAILS IN THE  
JULY/AUGUST SABBATH RECORDER!



Coming soon!



SDB Conference  
20/20

July 26 - August 1

Calvin University

Grand Rapids, MI

**CONFERENCE 2020 CANCELLED**