

Sabbath Recorder



*All we have, are,
or will ever become
is not ours to possess.*

May 2020

A Seventh Day Baptist Publication

CONFERENCE 2020 CANCELLED

2020 Annual Sessions Cancelled

The Seventh Day Baptist General Council, after considerable prayer and in consultation with the Conference President, Host Committee, Conference Directors, and Allied Societies, has made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 General Conference session. This decision was made in light of the significant disruption caused by the novel coronavirus. There is simply no reliable way to plan for a session that safeguards the physical and financial well-being of all those involved in our Conference sessions.

General Conference bylaws grant authority to the General Council to act with the authority of General Conference in all denominational matters between sessions of General Conference. We strive to use this grant of authority to always act in the best interest of His kingdom and this Conference. By God's grace, we do our best to act with the wisdom that only He can grant.

We know that this decision creates questions related to many aspects of the Conference's ongoing relationships, ministry, leadership, and decision-making processes. Please keep the people who make up the General Council, Conference Directors, Agencies, and Allied Societies in your prayers as we strive to find answers, cope with setbacks, report on our work, and respond to opportunities over the next few months.

Long ago, James reminded Christians that as we plan, we must be mindful that all our plans are subject to His provision of life and breath. The Lord willing, we will gather in 2021 for the next annual session of General Conference to celebrate all the Lord has done and to marvel at how He has used us to actively advance His kingdom.

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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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We want to provide you with a few announcements and opportunities surrounding this time to keep you informed and provide you with ways to serve others and for us to serve you.

Cancellations

The General Council has announced (in the letter on page 2) the cancellation of our annual **Conference Week** from July 26–August 1. We also cancelled the annual **Pastors Conference** at the end of April. With these cancellations, we believe it prudent to announce the cancellation, postponement, or alteration of our other in-person gatherings until August 1.

The **Church Planting Boot Camp** scheduled for Memorial Day weekend (May 21–24) has been postponed until Labor Day weekend (September 3–6).

The **Summer Institute on Sabbath Theology** scheduled for June 7–11 will be done virtually through Zoom and the Canvas LMS.

We also will not be attending the **AMPLIFY Conference** this year.

“Virtual” Conference Week 2020

More information will be coming out during the next weeks about ways in which we will be able to provide for a Conference Week “experience” for anyone interested. Any questions, concerns, or feedback that you may have about Conference Week should be directed toward Director John Pethtel (Conferences Coordinator).

Travel for Directors

Along with the above-mentioned cancellations or postponements, the Conference Directors will not be doing any travel until at least August 1. However, Conference Directors are available to meet with your churches for presentations or consultations virtually. Please feel free to ask any of us how we could share or serve your church at this time.

COVID-19 Recommendation

As states, provinces, and regions are dealing with public health concerns differently and with different timelines, we encourage our churches to continue to abide by state, provincial, and/or local public health advisories concerning public gatherings.

We are available, willing, and able to consult with you to help you actively advance God’s Kingdom physically and virtually in your community. You may find resources for leaders and churches at our COVID–19 Resource Page, seventhdaybaptist.org/covid-19.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel!
The SDB Director Team



What a difference a virus makes.

I have been to every General Conference since 1982. Summer means Conference, and each one has made an impact on my life.

On a number of my presidential visits this year, I played a sort of “parlor game” where I asked the people to shout out a year (from 1982 forward), and I would name the location of Conference and who served as president.

1992!! “Oh, yes... that was in Waukesha, Wisconsin, with Mynor Soper as president.”

2003!! “Um, George Cruzan served as president, and we were in Newberg, Oregon.”

1989!! “That was the year Luan Ellis ‘Shared the Joy’ out in Portland, Oregon.”

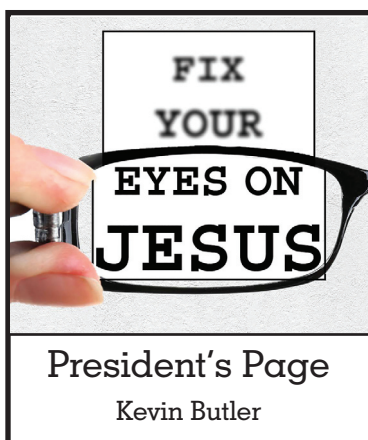
2015!! “Let’s see, back in Amish country... Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Bill Probasco was president.”

And now, 2020!!

Silence.

2020?!?

Ain’t gonna happen.



For the first time since World War II, we’ve had to cancel our General Conference annual session.

My page for this month’s SR was already written. I was to announce who would be leading our Conference Bible studies, along with each of the worship service speakers and how they fix their eyes on Jesus in their unique ministry situation.

I don’t say that to make you feel sorry for me. I want to thank those servants who immediately said “Yes” to my request. Their cheerful willingness to exercise their gifts was the highlight of my year.

All this is like the refrigerator magnet we had for years at the SDB Center: “We plan, God laughs.” I guess I prefer: “We plan, God rules.”

This time of waiting reminds me of a big life event for us. Our second child was due to arrive on Valentine’s Day—on that exact holiday, since it was a scheduled C-section. My in-laws drove from New York to be with us in Ohio and watch big sister Jenny. We were going to have a baby!

Janet was admitted to the hospital the night before, and the preparations for surgery began. A beautiful sunrise greeted me as I drove from the seminary campus into Columbus. We were going to have a baby!

My lovely bride was lying on the gurney outside the operating room. We were going to have a baby! Then the chief resident came out to talk to us.

“I just reviewed your latest test results. I’m not sure who gave the go-ahead for this, but the numbers show that your baby’s lungs might not be fully developed. We need to wait another week.”

Boom.

All of that anticipation. Our extended family waiting to hear. The whole campus excited for us. A busy and tired dairy farmer taking the time off to be with us.

You bet there were tears and feelings of disappointment! Why this glitch in communication? Why us? Why?

In our heads we knew that waiting was the best thing for our soon-to-arrive child; why have her begin life struggling on a ventilator?

Dad Davis drove back to the farm while Mom stayed with us. There were some stares of concern from fellow students who saw us walking around campus with no new bundle in our arms. We had “some ‘splaining to do.”

A week passed. The anger and questions subsided, the tears dried. Janet gave birth to a beautiful healthy girl!

As we endure today’s major interruption in “our” plans, this rare pause in our Conference cycle is an opportunity to truly fix our eyes on Jesus, and come back together even stronger. Yes, we’ll miss the hugs and laughter and fellowship and worship (and ice cream) in 2020, but this is out of our hands. Thankfully, we are in His. He will lead us through this pandemic.

Whatever these coming months hold for us as a Conference of churches, my prayer is that we truly focus on what—and Who—is important. Call on His wisdom and remember that He rules! [SR](#)

How Do You Define Generosity?

Generosity is one of the most significant movements and identifications of the evangelical community and part of our Vision Map as Seventh Day Baptists—but it is also a highly debated topic among Christian leaders. How we understand its role in the lives of believers and their surrounding Christian communities may say more about our understanding of the Gospel than any other single facet of our faith.

What is generosity? Let's try to put together a definition for us to work from:

Generosity is at its core, a lifestyle—a lifestyle in which we share all that we have, are, or will ever become, as a demonstration of God's love and a response to God's grace. A church cannot merely talk about generosity, nor can individual Christians simply commit to "being generous." For generosity to be a real and powerful witness to God's love, our actions are of much significance. Generosity flows from an understanding that all we have, are, or will ever become is not ours to possess. Generosity results in practically sharing with others what we've been given for the advancement of the kingdom and the glory of God.

Generosity embraces a Biblical understanding of stewardship. This means, first, that God is the owner of everything; second, what we have has been given to us by God and; third, that the resources we possess are assets to be invested in the kingdom. To be generous, we must understand what it means to be a steward, recognizing that what we have is not ours to own. It also means we confess that Jesus is Lord: over our money, possessions, positions of authority, and talents. You can't be generous without an appropriate discipline of Biblical stewardship, which in turn demands generosity.

The free gift of God's grace shapes our faith and leads to the conviction that all we have (in the way of time, talent, treasure, and testimony) are things that we have been given for a purpose. We cannot separate our acceptance of God's grace from the practice of generosity.

Generosity is an opportunity to witness to the nature of God who gives the free gift of salvation by grace to all who will receive it. [SR](#)

By John J. Pethtel



God Loves a Cheerful Giver

One of the things that is of great importance to instill in a child is the spirit of giving.

As a mother of three, the responsibility to create “good humans” weighs heavily on my heart at all times. As a parent striving to raise strong, Christian children, the responsibility is even greater. Let’s be honest. Parenting is an incredibly challenging and difficult blessing to have bestowed upon us and children are going to be the people God crafted them to be. They are going to be sweet, kind, and loving but they will also be fierce and strong-willed. Parents are tasked with being role models to these little ones and encouraging or building their soft characteristics and harnessing the more fierce ones for great causes.

One of the things that is of great importance to instill in a child is the spirit of giving. I truly believe that this can be found in any child. Children are inherently kind and compassionate and without prejudice. This is one of the soft skills that parents have to foster and set as an example. (Mind you, this sounds great in theory, but like any other parent, it can be a struggle as we navigate this world of on-demand everything and entitlement.) There are things that my husband and I strive to do in our daily lives to model this behavior. While I could provide a list at this time of all the things we do to encourage our kids to help others, the bottom line is: PRAY.

First and foremost, praying with your child for those who are sick and in need helps to open their eyes to the trials and tribulations that people (some, just like them) encounter. Encourage them to pray for the church and let them learn of the works of the church...from the mission projects to the construction needs to keep the building up and running and everything in-between. Teach them to pray for the pastor(s). The more they pray, the more their hearts open to the needs of others. Without this understanding, any mission project they participate in or any money they put in the offering plate would be just a motion.

The next step is putting prayer into action. This is the part where parents and members of the church family model the behavior and encourage the younger generations to acknowledge the needs and compassion that they have for others and do something about it. This means giving offering to the church every week. We show children this by putting our money in the plate and letting them see others do it as well.

Continued on next page...



Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV

By Courtney Mattus

Continued from previous page...

They'll remember from their prayer time that this money is for God and it is used for His works—the works of the church. We can also put our prayers into action by getting the children involved in activities that serve others and give back to our church or local community. In my household, we sponsor a little girl named Joyce from Uganda. The kids pray for her and write to her and it gives them a strong connection with someone who is less fortunate (in material things—I say this because she is clearly rich in love and Joyce's faith is strong!).

I am blessed to be a part of a church family that takes part in several activities that foster the spirit of giving in children. One of these is Operation Christmas Child. Through this Samaritan's Purse outreach, congregation members fill shoeboxes that are sent all over the world to children who need a smile and to feel God's love. It is endearing to be a part of this and watch many members of the church body assisting children as they fill boxes and see the delight the children find in helping others.

In our church, the spirit of giving is encouraged for the children as young as one year old. At one year old, these little ones participate in children's choir where a few gracious women provide coins to every child and let the children take turns collecting and giving offering. These little ones also partake in the church-wide "White Christmas" where the Sabbath School classes collect funds and donate them to a family, organization or cause. The littlest guys have been purchasing things such as chickens, bees, and seeds through the SDB Missionary Society and Heifer International for communities that can benefit from them and use them for food production. Our Sabbath School classes teach this and they talk to the children about what they are doing and why. They are teaching them about others and helping to instill compassion and understanding. The older youth of our church do various tasks to serve members of the congregation and community such as cleaning up yards, landscaping, etc., while expecting nothing in return.

I truly believe that teaching children to pray and understand the needs of others is where it all begins. Putting those prayers into action and helping the children learn to move when the Lord leads them is the next step. As parents, we have to pray for our children and their growing hearts of compassion. We also need to pray for guidance to help raise these little people and thank Him every day for letting us "borrow" them while they're on earth. Yes, the responsibility of a parent is huge. So what can we do? We can teach them to give. Generously. Teach them to serve. Teach them to love. Above all, teach them to pray. SR



So you have pre-teens, teenagers, and young adults in your church? Sabbath school groups can be amazing vessels who can apply the concept of stewardship.



Taking care of something or managing a resource well, that's stewardship. Temporarily stepping into the role of molding and making the next generation of leaders is a very important thing to consider!



Examples from the Bible which refer to stewardship include Genesis 2:15, Leviticus 25:1-5, and Psalm 24:1, to name a few. Examine the Scriptures and recognize that God is Lord of all and He has asked us to join with Him in taking care of His wonderful world, including the people in it.



We are to be wise in stewarding the gifts God has bestowed upon us, but this does not simply mean teaching our youth how to manage tithes and offerings according to godly principles. Wouldn't you agree our young people ARE the gifts we should be stewarding?



"All to Jesus" is the name of our young people's Sabbath School class, and they picked this name themselves. Already they have acknowledged that their God created all things and can do all things. Already they are grasping the concept that all they have and all they do is as unto Him. Are we stewarding them in this way?



Remember that term stewardship? Responsible management of something entrusted to one's care. Really, it comes down to each adult being faithful in the position in which God has placed them in relationship to these young people. Reconsidering our role as teachers, parents, or congregants, we must realize that the fruit of His ministry is each one of them.



Discipleship is a tool that we are learning about right now in the A2J Sabbath School class. Discipleship and stewardship seem quite interconnected. Discipling each other into deeper relationship with Jesus while stewarding each other into deeper relationships within the work of the church has been exciting! Desiring to further His kingdom together is the key, and even though the demographic in our class spans seven decades, we are one in the Spirit.



Sharing the resources of our time and talents has been part of the stewardship journey. Speaking truth and life into each other during lessons has translated into our youth and young adults taking active roles during worship and in the overall work of the church.




Honoring God through service to others has been an outward sign of the stewardship that has been poured into our students. Helping those who need a hand without a moment's hesitation has been a blessing to see.



Investing in our young people has been the most valuable form of stewardship we could do. Individually and corporately encouraging them to stay involved is key. It is not simply the job of the Sabbath School teacher or youth leader. If you haven't spoken directly into the life of at least one of your young people, I encourage you to do so!



Prayerfully consider this statement: Leaders perform stewardship when they prepare for an organization's future growth. Prioritize your stewardship on your young people. Pause and think where God is taking your church 50 years in the future and make stewardship decisions to join Him in His plans. Persistent, relentless protection and stewardship of our most valuable resource, our youth, will yield much fruit for the Kingdom. Pleading the precious blood of Jesus over us all! Amen. 

Submitted by: Valerie Probasco



A Generous Steward

A few years ago, I was asked by one of our newer congregations about tithing, and especially about the difference between tithes and offerings. I spoke privately with the pastor about the joys and blessings of someone who is a faithful tither and gave him my wife's and my personal testimony about being faithful givers.

The pastor claimed that many people were new to the whole concept of tithing, and they did not know the difference between tithing and giving. Many thought that if they dropped a dollar into the collection plate they were tithing. Many would describe this gesture of a dollar or two as being a giver—but not one who was really generous or even a good steward of their resources. And this makes me wonder: What is the difference between stewardship and generosity? What comes to mind when you hear these words?

We are stewards of the earth and the things that are entrusted to us, inherited by us, and earned by us. We are also stewards of our personal wealth and possessions and physical bodies. "Stewards" were those people many years ago who were given the title of "trustees." Trustees had fiduciary responsibilities and many cared for things owned by someone else.

Today you don't hear much about stewards and stewardship outside the church. Stewardship is a language derived from our Biblical roots and our church heritage; and by using, or saying, the word stewardship, you might be deemed as one using insider language. This is language that outside of the church is not easily accessible, or immediately understandable, by those new to the church. Also, there is something slightly legal sounding about the word stewardship. As a pastor's kid, I grew up hearing about stewardship, stewardship campaigns, and committees on stewardship, and the language focused our attention on supporting the church financially.

Generosity, however, is an aspect of character. It is an attractive quality to aspire to and desire to see cultivated in my church family. The opposite of generosity is selfishness, self-centeredness, greed, and self-absorption. And generosity extends beyond just the use of money. There are people with generous spirits; people who are generous with their time, with their teaching, and with their love. Generosity finds many Biblical sources, and is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). It sounds more living, more reproductive, less legalistic, and less formal than the term stewardship.

Generosity is not a spiritual attribute someone acquires apart from the actual practice of giving. It becomes apparent through action.

Generosity focuses on the spiritual qualities of the giver, often derived from the generosity of God personally—rather than on the church’s need for money.

So, is it stewardship or generosity? One of these terms is not superior to the other. Perhaps there are differences in how they are perceived by young and old, to those new to the faith, or from those long-established in our churches. But, maybe using both wisely helps us reach people at different places on the journey of faith.

Whatever term you use, the bottom line is that churches must emphasize the Christian’s need to give more than the church’s need for money.

Congregations **should speak confidently and faithfully** about money, giving, generosity, and the difference giving makes for the purposes of Christ in the world and in the life of the giver. They need to **teach, preach, and practice relational giving** with the goal of tithing. They need to **speak of joy, devotion, how this honors God, and the steady growth of spirit** that leads to greater generosity and the delight in giving.

The church could, or should, **hold pledge campaigns** that are about **mission, spiritual growth, and relationship to God**. This will **build community, unite people** with purpose, and **clarify the congregation** as a whole, towards purpose and mission.

Here are some things that the church could do. Share **personal testimonies** about how stewardship has changed their lives. They could **publicly thank God** for the generosity of the people. They could **express personal appreciation** to those who give. The church needs to do this by talking about **specifics** and not deliver the message in general terms about stewardship.

DON’T emphasize the church’s need for money.

DON’T cause fear, guilt, shame, or pressure as a motivation for giving.

DON’T allow any stewardship campaign to focus solely on the church as an institution—focus on its people and their purpose as a congregation.

Here is a **BIG** one: **DON’T** hold pledge campaigns that are about money, dollars, and budgets.

And, **DON’T** ever apologize, moan, whine, act embarrassed, or feel awkward as you encourage giving.

Cheri and Rob Appel’s personal testimony about tithing and stewardship: We were married in August of 1977 and every month Cheri would say to Rob, “We should be tithing our income.” He would respond, “Yes, I know, but if we tithe, we won’t have any money left at the end of the month.” This went on for months until in March of 1978 Rob’s response was, “Yes, you are right.” We started that month and, at the end of that month, we had more money left over than we had in the previous six months. God had blessed us because we were willing to believe that He would take care of us. Since then, Cheri and I have never stopped tithing, giving, and sharing our wealth that God has blessed us with. We have a saying between us, “You can’t out give God.” God keeps blessing a cheerful giver—and He has certainly done that with us.

I encourage you, and your church, to take on a challenge of tithing, generosity, and stewardship. See where it goes. Take on a mission, a labor of love, as a congregation. Encourage those who are on the fence about expenses to have a cause to be blessed by. [SR](#)

By Rob Appel

What I Wish I Had Known About Stewardship

1. “Stewardship,” “generosity,” and “giving” are not synonyms.

I now realize, using these terms interchangeably confuses people. Stewardship is a role, giving is an act, and generosity is an attitude. Stewardship is recognizing that God is the owner and we are His managers, responsible for using God’s possessions to please Him. Generosity involves a willingness to sacrifice for the benefit of others. Giving is merely the act of releasing something of value.

2. Poor stewardship is dangerous for you; rich stewardship is for your benefit.

When I communicate to people about money, I guide them to understand that I want something for them, not something from them.

Poor stewardship is dangerous for you. Between 25 and 50 percent of church attenders give nothing or next to nothing. This is not a financial problem but a spiritual one. God is a giver. Our willingness to give reveals our relationship to God.

On the other hand, rich stewardship benefits everyone. In Acts 2:42–47, the early church lives out a culture of stewardship. Verse 45 says, “They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.” This first-century church is a beautiful picture of generosity in action, even in their scarcity.

3. Stewardship is about hearts, not causes.

We live in a world fraught with causes to support. Yet the point of stewardship isn’t about causes, important as they may be.

Jesus surprised His disciples with this principle. The story of Mary and the expensive perfume in Mark 14:3–9 is one example. Some of the disciples grumbled, imagining all it could have accomplished for the poor. But Jesus wanted to focus their attention on the heart of the giver. When we make God our highest priority, our desire is to honor Him. This releases a spirit of love, which releases resources to meet real needs.

In 2 Corinthians 8:8, Paul addresses this same concept when challenging the early Macedonian church: “I am not commanding you, but want to test the sincerity of your love.” Generosity, even amidst poverty, reveals our love for God (2 Corinthians 8:2).

4. We need more teaching about money, not less.

Money is an emotional topic, so people want to hide their financial struggles. They often feel they are not in a position to be generous. Avoiding the topic of money only deepens the problem. Preaching frequently about money creates a greater willingness in your people to address their financial health.

Here are three aspects of money to address to help your people grow as stewards:

The practical aspect: This involves teaching people how to organize their finances and manage their money.

The emotional aspect: When it comes to money, if the heart overrules the head, the result is frequently disastrous. Just follow teenagers around the mall to see what I mean.

The spiritual aspect: Your people will never be good stewards if they do not align their financial decision-making with the wisdom of God’s Word.

5. Your relationship with money impacts your relationship with God.

Stewardship is not a financial ministry; it is a discipleship ministry. If people don’t hear teaching and preaching about money, they are left exposed to one of Satan’s favorite tools. The stakes are high. We cannot leave our people lacking a clear understanding of the spiritual implications of their relationship with money.

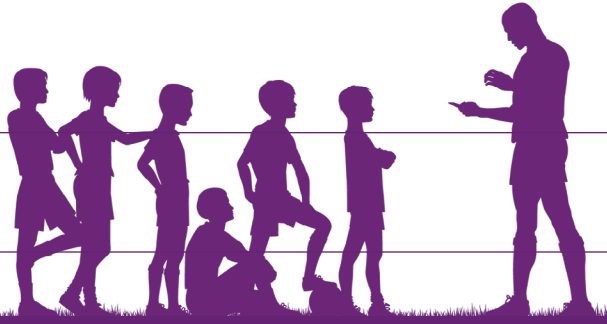
As I’ve learned over time, if you build a healthy stewardship culture, your church will never be the same. Your people will grow closer to God, your congregation will experience increased spiritual vitality, and greater resources will be unleashed for kingdom impact. SR

Dave Briggs is currently the Enrich Director at Central Christian Church of Arizona. Excerpts reprinted with permission from the August 2016 edition of Christianity Today.



Be a “Coach”

By JR Shick



The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it,

—Genesis 2:15 (NIV 1984)

When I was younger and in my father’s household I was given instructions to do chores of various kinds. Dishes, cleaning, cutting the grass, taking out the trash, and anything my father and mother told me to do was the norm of life. When I moved out and began living on my own, I found that I continued to do many of those chores. I had a new perspective on why chores needed to be done. Things were mine and I liked things to be taken care of. Now I have a family of my own and the responsibility of teaching my children the value and, at times, the importance of making sure things are looked after is now mine.

Many of us see stewardship in our churches as taking care of the affairs or facilities of God’s Church. I asked my son Keith what he thought stewardship meant. In his 10 year-old mind he said, “I don’t know.” So I gave him the definition: “the conducting, supervising, or managing of something.” (*According to Merriam Webster.*) He responded with, “Oh, like when I clean off the steps and doorway at the church!” He was referring to snow removal. I asked him if he thought that it was important to do this job and he said, “Yes—because it is an emergency exit and if I did not clean the steps off people would not be able get out without getting hurt!” Let me tell you, that wasn’t the response I was expecting. Keith’s response reflected a wise and mature perspective. This caused me to reflect on my own understanding and I came up with some questions: Are there just a few of us taking care of the building and grounds of the church in hopes of a legacy for the next generation? How old are the individuals doing the jobs that need to be done in and around the church? Are the duties of the church done by someone who is a paid person? Do we see value in teaching others about stewardship in our families—not just in our homes but in the family of the Lord?

As Keith was still with me, I asked him what is a generous person and he said, “Well, if you see someone in need, you just give it to them.” Essentially, Keith was giving the equation: if you have something + someone in need = you give. At that time the 10-year-old mind was right—however, it was just a few days prior he was yelling at his sister for using his iPod charger. In his simplistic

way, Keith was able to identify the key aspect of both words. What we have is not ours, it all belongs to God. Many look at giving out of abundance, however that is not being generous the way God intended for HIS people to be.

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had,”

—Acts 4:32 (NIV 1984)

A family in White Cloud bought a used vehicle. However, they needed to sell their current vehicle in order to pay for the new one. A second family in White Cloud had their only car break down beyond repair. Even though the first family needed the money from the sale of their car, they gave the car to the second family. Someone asked the first family why they gave the car to the second family knowing they needed to sell it for the money. Their response was, “I can still go to work. They do not have a car at all and cannot go to work without a car. Their need is greater than mine.” If you have something + someone in need = you give. Therefore, my generosity comes from my stewardship. The greatest act of stewardship is to be generous with others.

Remember those questions from before? In the Gospel of John chapter 21, Jesus asks Peter if he loved HIM. As Peter responded that he did, Jesus gave him three orders: “Feed my lambs; Take care of my sheep; and Feed my sheep.” We can apply this command to ourselves to tend, care for, and provide spiritual food to others. We can teach and instruct how to be generous stewards with those God has put in our lives. A coach does not explain the rules of the game one time and then tell his team to win games while he stays at home watching the game on TV. Coaches stand on the sidelines instructing, encouraging, and inspiring their teams each and every practice and game. He molds the players into the best athlete they can be through hard work and dedication. Become a “coach” by encouraging younger men to share in the responsibilities of taking care of the facilities and church grounds. Be a “coach” and give children the opportunity to pray, read Scripture, and sing praises. Be a “coach” and help prepare someone to give their testimony on Sabbath morning. Be a “coach” in ways that help others to be generous stewards of God’s Church. If we don’t “coach” or prepare our family, who will? SR

Give to the Lord First

I grew up in a giving family. My parents (George and Lannette Calhoun) taught me the value of giving to the Lord first with my time, attitude, attention and money. 10% of your earnings goes to the Lord first—to your local church or to a missionary overseas (for example). To choose to give to the Lord first is the best business plan. He will multiply your efforts. They also taught me the value of hard work while utilizing my strengths and committing to a project until it's finished (which goes hand in hand with tithing in my humble opinion). These are simple truths that I've carried with me my whole life. Great rewards require sacrifice and risk. According to our world, it sometimes seems contradictory to give away our hard-earned money, especially if you don't know where your next paycheck is coming from. But that is the principle that we as believers hold to. Our economy is not only dollars and cents but of a holy obedience to the Lord and believing His promises of supernatural provision. Growing up in a minister's family, I remember my parents celebrating the fact that their bills were paid for that month to the exact penny by anonymous givers who simply put cash in our mailbox. The Bible says in Proverbs 11:25, "A generous man will prosper. He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." I saw this played out in my parents' lives, as both givers first and as receivers. I can attest to it being absolutely true. The Bible suggests that our Jehovah Jireh (our provider) is jealous of that role as a Father, Protector, and Sustainer of his family. The Bible states...

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." —Malachi 3:10

As a business owner and a musician in full-time ministry, this principle of tithing and giving sacrificially has opened doors that are impossible to open otherwise. I started a nonprofit ministry called GENEROSITY ROCKS to serve two purposes. The first is to give 10% of all of our merchandise sales at every CITIZEN WAY show to a local ministry. When I show up in the morning to the venue, I introduce myself to the pastor of the local church and the promoter, asking them what the need in the community is. We figure out who to give to and the emcee advertises the process for us when they introduce CITIZEN WAY on stage. During the right moment in our set, I talk about it as well. I explain how GENEROSITY ROCKS seeks to empower musicians to go proclaim the Gospel and inspire generosity in Jesus' name. Musicians like CITIZEN WAY. I then restate the fact that 10% of our merch sales goes to the chosen local ministry of the day. It opens people's hearts and inspires them to be generous. Where they might not have bought merchandise



before, they do now. Where they might have paid the asking price for a T-shirt, they now tip a little bit more on top of that. That 10% typically goes to food banks, homeless shelters, pregnancy centers, and even a family in need. There's always a need wherever we go locally and it is genuinely exciting to help meet those needs. It's easy and it works. It never ceases to amaze me how exciting and fun it is to give

whatever amount of money to someone in need right then and there. I actually write them a check and take a picture with the ministry rep. It totally revives me and reminds me of why I leave my family and comforts of home for a sometimes brutal road experience—haha (see our bus burning down last year).

The second aspect is giving people the opportunity to continue giving toward CITIZEN WAY through GENEROSITY ROCKS online. Just like a missionary raises money for their livelihood, so do we as musicians in ministry. We call ourselves "Musicianaries." People all over the country now support me and my family and CITIZEN WAY through regular monthly giving or one-time gifts. We even raised enough money to pay for our latest record of which donors joined us in the studio as we recorded it. It was uniquely special. Our bus was also provided for us. It burned down accidentally at a show and new sponsors rose up to help us get a new one. A bus is crucial for a touring band. Donors even helped my wife and me by buying us used vehicles when we moved to Nashville and had car troubles. It's humbling and inspiring at the same time.

Give to the Lord first. That's what I've learned. Just do it. Find a ministry your heart burns for and give sacrificially. Find a need and help meet it. It's simple. Time. Attention. Prayer. Money. It's all valuable to the Lord. He will always always always make good in His promise to multiply it. Remember that story of Jesus feeding all those people with 5 loaves and 2 fishes...? Yea...that, haha!

I've been totally blessed by being obedient to serving the Lord this way. If you'd like to bless my family, CITIZEN WAY, or any of the other artists we serve, you can visit www.generosityrocks.com and donate today. Your gifts are tax-deductible and any amount is appreciated.

To those of you who are a part of our donor family...WOW! Thank you! You have no idea...

I am a proud SDB. We sing and we serve. Great combo. Thank you all for inspiring me to keep fighting the good fight.

In Jesus' name,
Ben Calhoun

Corona relief activities in Andhra Pradesh, India



Deployed Because of Covid-19

These are unprecedented times. In a very short space of time, a novel coronavirus, named COVID-19, infiltrated our world. It has come with a vengeance. The numbers are staggering. At the time of writing, over 2.5 million infections are confirmed in at least 185 countries and territories, including more than 186,000 deaths. It is possible that no one in the world can say that they have not been affected in some way. It has been popularly theorized that one of the main reasons that the virus has been able to spread so rapidly and so extensively is because of the proliferation of travel in our modern era. The existence of supersonic jetliners means that I can leave my home on any given day and be on the other side of the world in a matter of hours. Our lives are increasingly intertwined with those in other countries as we share technology, fashions, entertainment, sports, music, and even food. We are more connected than we realize.

The good news is that God is a global God. He cares about the entire world. And the times in which we live, as scary and as insecure as they seem, are simultaneously exciting and thrilling. What will our amazing God do in the midst of all this corona craziness? What miracle does He have up His sleeves? In what ways will He continue to display His glory and might?

I am suggesting that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has the power to penetrate and saturate the world faster and more extensively than COVID-19. The question is, will God's people be contagious in these dark and difficult days? Will we be contagious with His grace, with His power, with His love? Will we infect the world with large doses of spiritual vaccine so that mankind may be inoculated against the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and eventually the very presence of sin?

That is what I believe the church is being called to in this season. When Jesus told His twelve disciples to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, that motley crew must have thought He was nuts (crazy). How were they supposed to do that? On camels and horses?

But today, transportation, technology, and the Internet have been created or exponentially improved, so that indeed it is now a small world after all. The whole world

is at our fingertips. We can now engage in "e-vangelistic" interactions with people on the other side of the world without leaving our homes. The current opportunities for "E-vangelism" are limitless.

For the past few weeks, most church communities around the world have not been able to facilitate their conventional gatherings and assemblies. The corona pandemic has disrupted our normal routine. So, buildings have been empty. In the face of all that, where is the church?

Let me suggest that the church has been deployed to be the church wherever we are. In our homes, in our limited physical interactions, and most of all, with our technology and media platforms, we now have innumerable opportunities to be light and salt to the world. A word of encouragement, a text, a voice note, a video, a post, a blog, a tweet, a page, can all serve to minister hope to a world that is full of fear and restlessness, nervously biting its fingers, because the future seems so grim.

But that's not us. Whereas we take the physical realities of the virus seriously, we also maintain a confidence in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we trust Him to see us through this season. Your Missionary Society is busily engaged in helping our brethren around the world navigate the choppy waters of this season. So far, financial assistance has been given to our brethren in Uganda, Liberia, India, and Rwanda. Let spiritual media supersede social media. Let the people of God look for opportunities to show kindness, help someone prepare for eternity, give generously, and edify someone by the word of God. Let us not forget to bathe all our efforts in prayer. After all, the enemy is defenseless against our prayers.

COVID-19 came to destroy, but God has deployed His Church to be a beacon in the world, and we are assured that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. SR



FOCUS on Missions

Andy Samuels

Chief Executive Director
SDB Missionary Society

Extreme Measures: Previous Conference Session Cancellations



As you read this issue of the *Sabbath Recorder*, word has reached you that our General Conference sessions this summer are cancelled. As the situation progressed surrounding the consideration of cancelling, I researched recent Conference cancellations on a recollection from John Pethtel that we had cancelled previously. When I went to the archives, the recollection was confirmed: Conference was cancelled twice during WWII, in 1943 and 1945. Given the circumstances, it's worth a look back at those decisions.

At General Conference in 1942, like much of America, the Conference was reacting to the events following the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into the war. The Commission (the council which held oversight over the work of the Conference as a whole) included in their report language which was adopted by the Conference in session to the effect that the Commission would be empowered to carry out the business of the Conference if it was impossible or "extremely impractical" to meet. As 1942 moved into 1943 and the war continued, the Commission evaluated the situation, including a request from President Franklin D. Roosevelt for civilians to limit travel, and decided not to meet. Similar circumstances in 1945, after the Conference met in 1944, led to another cancellation—though the announcement came later, no doubt because of hope the war would be over (following V-E Day) and that Conference could continue.

The Yearbooks for the work of the Conference in those years begin with letters from the President of the respective Conference sessions. In 1943, Conference President Hurley Warren's letter suggests that significant consultations were undertaken with both the host church (Alfred), and the site (Alfred University), and that there was a specific request from President Roosevelt to limit travel. In 1945, Conference President Perley Hurley referenced the rapidly changing conditions, and pointed specifically to transportation problems and wartime demands keep-

ing people away even if the sessions could be successfully held. The backdrop of the war played prominently in both letters, as things like rationing and the hopes that war might end are obvious in the text of the letters.

As the war drew to a close, it was also clear that Perley Hurley was thinking about the state of the Conference coming out of the war. He acknowledged the difficulty on the people of Conference in not meeting, saying, "...the activities of an organization can be carried on more effectively when there is periodic opportunity for discussion and settling of problems. The people of an organization need the inspiration and help that come from associating with other members." But beyond the need for meeting, Hurley also clearly understood that the work of the Conference was not limited to one meeting, saying: "...we need to realize that without Conference [meetings], our zeal for denominational interests must be greatly increased wherever we live and work." Perley closed his letter suggesting that the necessity of raising the entire Conference budget had never been greater and that in lieu of traveling, people should contribute their travel money to the work of the Conference instead. (I wonder how that suggestion would be met today!)

The letters and decision processes obviously give us insight to the past, but should also give us encouragement today. There are clear analogs between the situation faced by SDBs then and now, though obviously there are also differences. In both cases, there were real drains on resources because of a national crisis. Likewise, government leaders requested or imposed significant restrictions on travel. The importance of meeting despite those challenges was clearly understood in both 1943 and 1945, but the circumstances clearly warranted the cancellations. And in both cases, there were groups of duly elected SDBs who stood to make the decisions that were necessary. All of these pieces apply today as well. We face challenges in this present moment around both the physical and economic tolls of the COVID-19 pandemic. But we have the knowledge that God has brought us through these sorts of events before as a people, and we can emerge from this crisis stronger than we have ever been. SR



Council on History

Rev. Nicholas J. Kersten
Director of Education
and History



EDUCATION in the Time of COVID-19

In the days since the national response to the COVID-19 situation began, I've spoken with many Seventh Day Baptists, and one of the things I keep hearing is that people are trying to find silver linings—good outcomes that might result from this terrible situation. Everyone I've talked to has been honest that a global pandemic and economic crisis isn't a good thing, but they remain optimistic that from the crisis, God will turn the results to some good purpose. I've heard suggestions about possible spiritual revival, reinvigoration of the environment, reestablishment of families, breaking our bondages to busyness, and a variety of other good outcomes suggested.

Let me offer one other possible good in all of this: God may be equipping you, or moving to equip you, for the ministry work He has called you to in this time. Obviously, not everyone is sitting home binging on Netflix, but the changing rhythms have given many of us new and different opportunities with what we do with our time. There are fewer opportunities to leave home. Fewer opportunities to fill our calendars with things to keep us busy. There are more opportunities to engage in that sharpening we have long meant to do!


For this reason, the Christian Education Council has been considering things we can do to aid you in the equipping God may want to accomplish in you in this season. While we don't have a specific new program for you, some of our existing programs might be right up your alley!

Are you a member in your local church who is looking for some additional skills as you lead and serve in your local church? Then the **Lay Leadership Certificate** program (or at least a module or two of it) might be just right for you! There are six modules available, covering topics from basic Bible Interpretation to SDB distinctives, to discipling others, to being on God's mission wherever you've been planted! If you're interested in getting started, you should talk with your pastor, as you will need to find a mentor to walk with you through the program. You can pay \$30 and gain

access to all six modules though there are some additional fees for some course materials which would be your responsibility to gain access to (but all of which can be ordered online!). We can send the modules to you digitally!

Are you a leader in your local church who is serving in a leadership role and you are needing additional training? If your church affirms your calling, the **Ministry Leadership Certificate** program might be for you! There are eight classes in the program, taught using online educational systems by SDB pastors from around our Conference. If you are interested in this program (or the previous one), you can find out more information online at: <https://seventhdaybaptist.org/sdbu>, where you can select the option to see program details for this program!

Are you looking to bolster your **evangelism skills** or those of your church? We have a variety of resources which are being tested and used to great effect in local SDB churches which we would love to talk to you about! There are called and talented people engaging in new evangelism work all over our Conference who can tell you about the exciting things God is doing in and through them in this time.

If there are **additional things** you feel the Lord moving you to learn and be equipped for in this season, please contact me and let me know what you're looking for—it's possible that God may be moving in you and others to create a new program or explore a new resource which could benefit many people. In addition, we have access to **learning management software** which may be useful to you or your church in this time, which we could make available to you, depending on your program needs! We desire to help you **make the most of every opportunity in this season**, so that you and your church are ready for the next thing the Lord wants to do! 



Christian
Education
Council

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



When Fish is on the Menu

By Carl Greene
Executive Director

My grandfather simply would not eat fish. Whenever it was served, he would make his dislike for fish very clear at the table. In fact, his disdain for fish made for a great family joke every time it was served. A family tradition organically developed where we made the same prodding comments to Grandpa when fish was served, and every single time we found his response funny.

I always assumed that Grandpa simply did not like the taste of fish—one of those foods that disagreed with his taste buds. In my younger years, I also imagined that he simply found fish to have ugly faces and couldn't bring himself to eat a filet. Or, another leading possibility was that he was grossed out by seeing too many pictures of birds swallowing fish whole.

My assumptions changed when Grandpa was approaching 95 years old. He shared with my family that he did not always dislike fish. During the Great Depression his family largely lived on fish. They ate what they caught. Day after day. He said that he saw fish so routinely across that time that he could no longer bring himself to even consider another bite of fish.

Grandpa knew about living in want. Like many others of his generation who lived that experience, he saved all sorts of “just in case” items. Bent nails, electric mixers that gave a “slight shock,” vacuum cleaners that no longer worked, canned goods from the previous decade...you know the picture I am painting here. At the same time that Grandpa insisted on living incredibly frugally, he was also generous with his family.

Every time I visited my grandfather, he had time for me. At that point in my life, I figured it was because he was old and what else could be more important to him than visiting with me? (This indicates an issue of narcissism on my part, but let's assume I outgrew that). As I grow older, I recognize that Grandpa chose to invest time in me—he had plenty of other things that he wanted to get done. Yet,

he would put everything on hold for the specific purpose of investing in someone. He was a steward of his time—being sure to invest outside of himself.

Even when it came to finances, Grandpa was surprisingly generous to others, especially when you consider how frugally he chose to live. This generosity flowed even when the payback was poor at best—such as the hours of pipe organ lessons that he and Grandma paid for. I am afraid I never emerged as the next Bach, but they were longsuffering and encouraged me to keep going, recognizing the importance for my own development and growth rather than their personal return on investment. Indeed, stewardship has a focus on the return on investment within God's Kingdom economy, not simply a financial return.

As I reflect on my grandfather's stewardship of time and money, I recognize that he was human like the rest of us. He made missteps and mistakes when it came to generosity and stewardship. At the same time, there was a genuineness to his giving nature that I want to emulate. When it comes to stewardship, I long to be more than generous with my time and finances with family and church family. I have a lot more to learn in being consistently generous—funny how circumstances and challenges of life can derail the best of our intentions.

Every time I see fish served at a meal, or even see a bird snarfing down a fish whole, I smirk as I remember Grandpa and how we would turn his face inside out at the sight of fish. That's a fun memory, but I need to go beyond that. I want to remember his example of stewarding time and finances even after some harrowing life experiences. I want to have open eyes during our current season of life uncertainties and challenges to see how I can be a better steward of what God has blessed me with, living with greater generosity toward family and church family. When fish is on the menu, literally or figuratively in the weeks ahead, I hope to remember this lesson well. [SR](#)



In the last couple of months, I have found faith to be a very visible thing in my life. Since high school I have been diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. With the world in uncertainty these past couple of months, I expected to be anxious and worried because it has been such a thing in my nature. I was surprised to find that I haven't had one ounce of worry or anxiousness in these past couple of months. I just woke up one day and BAM! it was gone. Every morning I wake up and I have no sense of doubt. Every single ounce of me knows that it's in God's hands. This new sense of faith has been incredible because I haven't had an anxiety-free month in years.

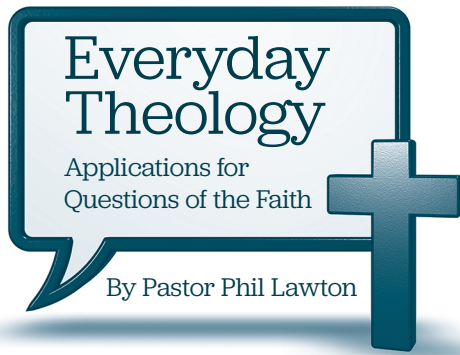
As someone who suffers from an anxiety disorder, I know that it is tough when we are told to release our anxiety. I was often told I shouldn't be having these feelings of anxiousness—and often it made it worse. I felt that there was something wrong with me. As I've grown older, I've come to the conclusion that my anxiety is a gift from God. I believe that God gave me anxiety to build me stronger, to be able to help others, and be someone to whom others could come. Life is like a bouncy ball: the harder it hits the floor, the higher it will bounce up.

I know we have been going through a time where anxiety and worry are very high. A period of uncertainty. I don't want to tell you that you are wrong to have them—because that won't help. What I want to tell you is that this sense of worry and anxiety will go away one day, even though it seems impossible. One day you will wake up with this sense of relief. You'll feel lightness on your shoulders. And that will be because you are strong and you worked together with God. I encourage you to talk with Him. Do not feel you are being punished—but rewarded because you are about to travel to this amazing feeling.

I was recently reminded of the story of Peter walking on water. It is such an important story in our faith journey that it can never be over-heard or over-read. I encourage you to read this story as you walk further into your faith (Matthew 14:22-33). In Matthew 14:29, "He said, 'Come'. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus." We must take that step in faith, in order to see a better day. [SR](#)

YOUNG ADULT

By Sarina Gumness



What Comes After



I have spent a lot of time thinking about our current situation. In between making phone calls, attending online meetings, and acting as remote tech support, I have come to a conclusion. This is new territory for all of us. We didn't really have a concept of words like pandemic, social distancing, or Zoom. Yet now they are household words. If your church is anything like mine, then you were forced to adopt myriad of technology in the hopes that it would allow you to stay in communication while you all sheltered in place.

There have been other trends as well. People are learning new skills. Some are taking up leisure activities that they never tried before. And most of us are keeping up with the news like never before. This last trend has caused two very familiar things to happen. People are spreading conspiracy theories and arguing over what the government should do. Maybe things aren't changing quite as much as I thought?

None of this is really the conclusion I came to. Yes, this is definitely new territory for all of us. Yes, people are doing new things. Yes, the world does not look like it did two months ago. But all that has led me to one very important realization: God is doing something new.

New Vision

I'm sure you heard them, too. All the jokes and speeches about how the year 2020 was going to be the year of new vision. How we were all going to see something new. Well, we have. But it looks nothing like what we thought. If I'm honest, I think that is a good thing. It means that we are awake. It means that we are all looking with hope at what will come next. It means that God has our attention.

I don't want you to take that last statement as an endorsement of the idea that God caused this to test us—or to punish us. I can't know that. What I do know is that some of the worst times in my life have been used by God to bring some of the best breakthroughs.

In John 9 we find the story of the man born blind. I encourage you to go read the whole chapter. There is so much in there. What I find most striking about the whole story is that the only person who really sees Jesus is the man born blind. Everyone else in the account uses the man as a prop for their particular theology. The disciples don't see a blind man; they see a way to settle an argument about sin's consequences on a family. (John 9:2) The Jewish leaders obsess over work on the Sabbath (John 9:13-16), and accuse the man of being a liar and Jesus of being a sinner (John 9:24). Even the man's parents don't want anything to do with the situation (John 9:18-23). The most sobering part of the account is what Jesus says at the very end: "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." (John 9:39)

In a year when we are supposed to be receiving new vision, I think it is important that we take Jesus' words to heart. Everyone was too distracted by their own issues to actually see what Jesus was doing. In fact, the only person who saw properly was the blind man. He not only received physical sight, but also spiritual sight. God transformed him. I think God is doing the same thing right now. There are distractions too numerous to count. If we want to know what God is doing, it means that we must be transformed by God. That reminds me of another story.

Resurrection Not Resuscitation

In a hospital when you stop breathing or your heart stops beating, the doctors and nurses resuscitate you. Their whole goal is to get you back to health. They want to return you to a previous state. Their job is a success if your life returns to normal. That is not resurrection.

I've talked about this before (February 2016 SR: *So Much More Than Zombie Jesus*), but let me just sum up the differences. Jesus was resurrected. His resurrected body was similar to his body before death—it still held the tangible scars of His crucifixion (John 20:19-29) and He ate fish (Luke 24:36-43). But it was also changed. He got into a locked room (John 20:19) and He could disappear in the blink of an eye (Luke 24:31). Jesus's resurrected body was something new.

There are numerous implications of this. Paul talks about how Jesus' resurrection gives us hope for our own (1 Corinthians 15:20-23). This is awesome, but not what I want to talk about. I want to focus on the time before. At the time of this writing, we are only a few days removed from Easter. That means that we have just come off Holy Week. It also means that I have spent some time thinking about Good Friday.

Without Easter, Good Friday is actually "horrible nasty death Friday." Jesus knew the pain that lay ahead of Him. That's why He went to the garden to pray (Luke 22:42). Yet He still went through with it. We are told by the author of Hebrews that Jesus endured the cross because of the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2). I believe that joy was not so much the resurrection, but the reality that the resurrection meant humanity gets to spend eternity with God. Jesus endured the cross for us. But not for us as we are now. He endured it because it means that we will all be transformed (see Romans 8:18-30).

A Time of Transformation

We are currently in a time of transformation. We know that God works good in all things (Romans 8:28), and I believe that part of the way God does that is to transform us during suffering. Jesus had a miraculous resurrected body, but He had to be crucified first. Job received a double portion of what he lost (Job 42:10), but he still lost his whole family. What comes after is going to be amazing, but we still have to endure suffering today.

I know that God wants to work wonders in your life. I know that God has amazing plans for your future. But I also know that none of that will happen if your life goes back to what it was. A caterpillar and a butterfly are genetically separate organisms. For the butterfly to emerge, the caterpillar has to die. A butterfly who clings to the life of a caterpillar will never make it to the sky.

Life after the pandemic is not going to be the same. There will be many changes. You will think twice before shaking hands. You will order more food on the internet. You will never take toilet paper for granted again. You will mourn for the people that you have lost. You will mourn for the life that you have lost.

It's also going to be a time of great revival. Christians are going to see people come to Christ by the hundreds. You are going to hear and see things that you thought only happened in the book of Acts. But that is only going to happen if we allow God to transform us now. God is going to move in a big way. God is going to make life after this pandemic more beautiful than you can imagine. But that will be nothing compared to what comes after. SR



Waiting

It's midnight and my day is far from over. It began around 7:00 AM when I rolled out of bed and started finishing what I hadn't gotten done the day before. I've been waiting six hours for approval on a packet that I really wanted to start sending out 4 or 5 hours ago—so that by this point I'd be done and heading to bed. I'm just waiting.

I realized that I haven't written my article for the month (and it's past the deadline—again—sorry, Pat). I've been thinking about it, sure, but really there was nothing I wanted to say that people probably haven't heard so many times over the past month, and will hear so many times more in coming days, weeks and months. I'm waiting on some inspiration that, to tell you the truth, I still haven't found.

City lights that brighten the view off my deck have dimmed and, in some cases, gone out—it's dark and quiet. I'm waiting to get tired but am still wide awake, although I should be exhausted. I know that I am not going to want to get out of bed in the morning.

Fell asleep on the floor of my living room around 3:30 last night (it's 7:30 now). I've edited the paragraphs above and they remind me of a captain's log—but there is a reason I haven't just deleted them and started over. I've noticed a theme in my wee hour rambling.

Right now, to some degree, it seems like the world has stopped turning, and we're waiting for things to start back up and life to resume its normal pace. For some of us that “stop” feels like things have slowed down and for others (like me at this moment) we're running harder.

Joshua 10:1-15 tells the story of the day God made the sun stand still. In the story, time literally stopped but the people did not. Neither the Amorites nor the Israelites stopped what they were doing. Most often in cinema, when time stops, so do most characters and the scene they're in (think spilled drink suspended in air), except for one or two “special” people who can move through time or something. Yet, on the day the sun stayed in the sky for 24 hours, everyone kept moving and accomplishing their goals and tasks.

Life doesn't stop because we're living in a historic moment when the world is turned on its ear and our regularly scheduled things aren't happening. For those of you with children in the house—I suspect that is abundantly clear. Don't wait for life to regain its regular rhythm to live—in fact, don't wait to live period. This isn't a judgement on how you're doing life, by the way. I firmly suspect that I will not be in the portion of society that emerges from quarantine with a new skill.

Truthfully, I always must be careful of waiting and becoming stagnant even when it looks like I'm moving. Some of you are thinking the Bible says: wait on the Lord. I don't think that waiting always means standing still. We aren't the sun, we're the children of God. Because we don't know what the next right move is, we go through the motions of living and miss life, so focused on what we don't have or can't do yet. Sound familiar?

Crazily enough, maybe a quarantine is the time to learn how to embrace life. So, we can't do or have everything we want to a higher degree than normal. Maybe it's time to learn how to actively wait, focusing on what we can do (no judgment if you wait from a position on your bed or couch).^[SR]



Women's
Society

By Katrina Goodrich

THE SABBATH RECORDER PAST

What People Say About the Sabbath and _____

ITS SATISFACTIONS

I would like to testify to the real satisfaction and joy and rest which is ours. After a day filled with worship and leading a class in Bible study, and possibly visiting a sick friend, we can enjoy the rest which he alone can give. Isaiah 56:7, 8; 58:13, 14 give promise of just such delights and pleasure, which alone is enough compensation for all the effort put forth.

The preparation for the Sabbath and the Sabbath eve prayer meeting sets up a glad anticipation for the receptions and duties of the Sabbath, and we feel that we are riding upon the high places of the earth. We are claiming the promises and receiving the rewards even though what we do is commonplace and often times crude.

—R. C. Brewer, Riverside, CA

FARMING

The Sabbath should be dear to the farmer because he is working in partnership with God. He sows the seeds and works the soil, but only God can give the increase. The farmer can plan his work to worship God on his holy Sabbath, and it should be very sacred to him because of his dealings with nature in his everyday tasks. God instituted the Sabbath to bring man into communion with the Creator of the world and the author of life. The Sabbath is a symbol of God's presence in time and a pledge of eternal Sabbath rest. The world needs God's holy Sabbath.

—Jerome Boyd, Woodbury, PA

THE HOME

Because homes and circumstances are never alike, we can only strive to reach a common goal of "love and reverence for God's holy day." No two people can observe the Sabbath in the same manner, but children and parents together can make it a day of joy, peace, and worship—a day different from any other day in the week, a day to be desired and loved, a day set apart.

—Maleta Curtis, Riverside, CA

VOCATIONS

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." —John 14: 21

It gives me joy to testify to the thrill that keeping Sabbath has given me through the years. One of the prime contributing factors to the share of success that has been mine in the business world is to be accredited to Sabbath keeping.

One phase of my experience is illustrated in the story of two friends of mine, Jacob Wright and Lee Abbey. These friends decided to keep Sabbath at about the same time and were both working for the Canadian Pacific Railway as mechanics. Jacob went to his superior and requested that if it were possible, he would like to refrain from work on Saturdays. His lack of confidence and lack of determination to live what he claimed to believe caused him soon to be without a job. Lee also went to his superior and told him about his religious experience and beliefs and ended by stating that in the future he would not be at work on Saturdays. His forthright sincerity impressed the foreman and he was soon promoted. Today he is chief master mechanic in that district.

—Albyn Mackintosh, Los Angeles, CA

THE MINISTRY

The Sabbath was instituted for man's good. Its occurrence every week is a reminder to man of God. Jesus honored it and used it for worship, and to proclaim the good tidings of the kingdom. Paul preached both to Jews and Gentiles on the Sabbath. It still affords opportunity for worship and the spread of the gospel of Christ.

—Verney A. Wilson, Nortonville, KS

Excerpts reprinted from *The Sabbath Recorder* dated April 29, 1946; Vol. 140, No. 17

<https://www.sdbhistory.org/resources/sabbath-recorder-archives/>

OBITUARIES

BURKS—Richard William “Bill” Burks, 66, passed away March 2, 2020.

He was born in Council, ID, on August 1, 1953. Bill was preceded in death by his father, R.C. Burks; mother, Evelyn Smouse; and stepfather, Robert Smouse; sister, Barbara Burks; and son, William Ross Burks.

Bill left behind his wife of 40 years, Cynthia (Frieg) Burks; two sons: Eric (Deva) Burks and Carl (Leah) Burks; four grandchildren: Nova, Ronin, Ryker, and Reagan; sister, Gina Burks; and a host of family and friends.

Bill’s memorial service was held on March 14 at the Missionary Baptist Seminary in Little Rock, AR.

KNOTT—Laura Anna Davis Knott passed away on August 28, 2019, at her home in Silver Spring, MD.

Laura Anna (Laddie) Davis was born to Orla and Arlene Davis on December 10, 1925, in Doddridge County, West Virginia. Laura Anna married Harry Knott in 1952 at the Salem, WV, Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Laura Anna attended Salem Public Schools and graduated from Salem College with a Bachelor of Science. She obtained a Master of Science in Library Sciences from the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore. Laura Anna retired as the Head Librarian at the White Oak Naval Research Library in Silver Spring, MD. She was a member of the Washington, D. C., Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Laura Anna is survived by one brother, Harold (Ellen) of Phoenix, AZ. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband and two daughters; sister, Lois (Floyd) Goodson, and brother, Allen Davis.

MARRIAGE

WATT-ARNOLD—Emily Michael Watt and Thomas Craig Arnold were married on December 3, 2018, at the Salem, WV, Seventh Day Baptist Church with the Rev. Dr. Lawrence Watt officiating. They celebrated a formal recitation of vows with reception at Wrightsville, PA, on March 30, 2019.

BIRTHS

BOND—A daughter, Brynn Rose, was born April 13, 2020, to Richard and Katherine (Williams) Bond of Bridgeton, NJ.

FOWLER—A daughter, Elizabeth Julia, was born to Charlie and Emma (Sanford) Fowler on March 13, 2020.

ARNOLD—A daughter, Charlee Elisabeth, was born on November 21, 2019, to Thomas and Emily (Watt) Arnold at York, PA.

CHURCH PLANTING BOOT CAMP

Due to the cancellations of our annual meeting and the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, our first Church Planting Boot Camp will be postponed until Labor Day weekend. If you have any questions, please contact the Director of Church Development.

Women’s Board

It’s Time for Nominations!

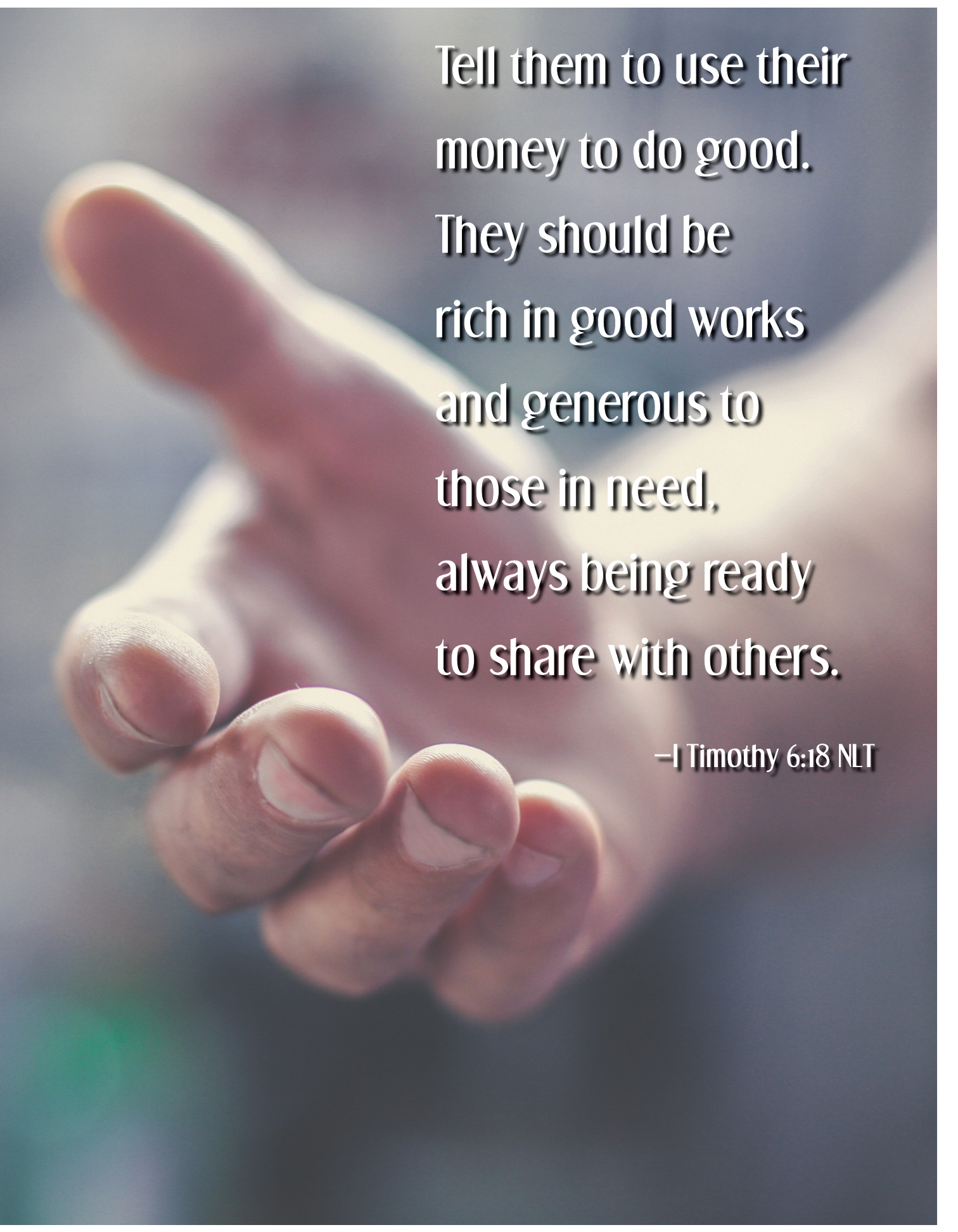
The Recognition Committee of the Women’s Board would like to encourage you to submit your nominations for the **Robe of Achievement** (for a woman who has served the denomination, her home church, family and community) or **WISE Award** (for a woman who has given evidence of service above and beyond the call of duty in her home church). We don’t want you to be inhibited by the forms and all the information that is needed. Fill in what you know and don’t worry about the exact dates of activities if you don’t know them. This information can be secured later if your nominee is chosen for the honor of receiving the **Robe of Achievement** or **WISE Award**.

The deadline for nominations has been extended to
May 30, 2020.

The forms are available on the Women’s Board webpage:
<http://www.sdbwomen.org/>
under the Recognitions tab or by requesting a copy from Karen Payne by email at Karen.payne1127@gmail.com or by mail at **13528 595th Street, Claremont, MN 55924.**



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.

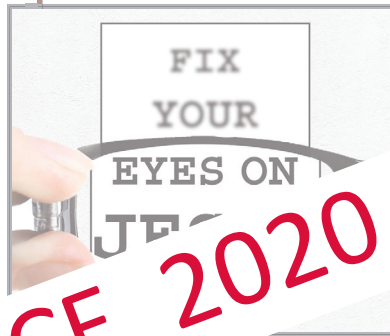


Tell them to use their
money to do good.
They should be
rich in good works
and generous to
those in need,
always being ready
to share with others.

—1 Timothy 6:18 NLT

Periodicals postage paid
at Janesville, WI
and additional offices

Coming soon!



CONFERENCE 2020 CANCELLED

Conference
20/20
July 26 - August 1
Calvin University
Grand Rapids, MI

DETAILS ON PAGES 2 AND 5