

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference 2001

Conference Crier

Friday, August 10, 2001 ** Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas

Summer Christian Service Corp Presentation

It all began with rousing choruses, as an energized group of young adults bopped onto the stage in rhythm. Musicians accompanied singers with piano, guitars and percussion instruments. Once again the auditorium was filled with an expectant audience waiting to see what the Summer Christian Service Corps Program would reveal this year.

Our denomination was blessed to have 26 individuals in 13 teams this summer. With bright smiles, each team briefly introduced themselves, where they were from, how many years they have been in SCSC, where they served, and recited their team Bible verse.

Through a skit illustrating a letter written home from a SCSC project, many common experiences were highlighted. Of course the letter was closed with the familiar cry "Send Money!" Love, Team Encouragement 2001 (which would include) Jenny Butler, Amy Goodrich, Miriam Lawton, Anna Vasquez, Paula Reynolds, Kris Bonser, Bethany Tompson-

Gordon, Steve Pimple, Brett Greene, Holly Davis, Karlene Neher, Stephanie Ritchie, Karl Rudd, Chris Van Horn, Jeff Sinclair, Keith Ashley, Jamaal Fyffe, Marris Van Horn, Jody McLean, Aaron Smith, Nathaniel Lawton, Joanna Harris, Megan Clark, Julianne Grove, Julie Sias, and Patrick Leonard.

Next the SCSC staff came to the stage to give recognition for years of service. Linda Camenga spoke of the training the workers go through throughout the year to develop and mature in their relationship with God. Certificates were given to workers and staffers who had served from one to three years. Marris Van Horn was honored for serving four years and also working with the staff during training.

Althea Rood was given acknowledgement and a standing ovation for her many years with SCSC. For those of you who may not know, Althea was one of the original SCSC workers, has been a Project Director and has served our

denomination in a SCSC leadership position for nine years.

The Women's Board and their SCSC Committee were recognized with audience applause. We were informed that the project workers had been at work all week within our Conference including Children's Associated Conference classes, Campfire, Recreation, Interest Committees, and Workshops.

The most exciting announcement was, "We are having a Baby!" meaning, through the coordinated efforts of Karl Rudd, pastors, lay people, our Women's Board SCSC Committee, Staff, and others, the Australasian Conference will be setting up their own SCSC Program.

With beautiful voices and hands raised upwards, the workers and staff showed their dedication and commitment to God by singing two worshipful choruses and closed with prayer. "It was one of the best SCSC programs I've seen," remarked a veteran conference attendee.

Ministry Opportunity

The SDB Church of Shiloh has been searching for a Youth/Assistant Pastor. If you feel you may be called to this ministry, please talk to someone from the church. To obtain a job description or other information, please contact the Shiloh Seventh Day Baptist Church at PO Box 145, Shiloh, NJ 08353 or call (856) 455-0488.

Women's Banquet is a Harmonic Feast

On Wednesday evening 160 ladies gathered in the dining hall for our annual banquet. As we ate, we were serenaded with Barbershop Quartet style music. The quartet of Steve Saunders, Dale Thorngate, Paul Green and Phil Rood, sang several songs as the ladies waited patiently for their turn to go through the buffet line.

While eating our delicious meals, SCSCers Jenny Butler and Bethany Thompsegordon shared their testimonies of their experience from their summer projects.

Jeff Hazen told of his many experiences while in Zambia as a short-term missionary. Jeff shared with us how the women's

boards here and in Zambia are different and yet alike.

In Zambia the women earn a uniform, which is a sign of respect within the church. This is common among many denominations there. The blue of the Seventh Day Baptist uniform means love.

The ladies of Zambia show their love for the Lord in the many requirements they have to meet to earn their uniform. They show their love for others by sharing the clothes sent by many in our own Conference.

During our banquet we were able to show our love in two ways. First, we secretly sent around a card for all our ladies to sign. At the end of our banquet this card was presented to the

Women's Board President, Marjorie Jacob, to honor her and Jim, as they will soon celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

The second way we were able to show our love was through giving financially to the Love Gift. The total for last night's gift was \$4550. The Love Gift will be divided many ways, so that we can share the love of our Lord here within our own Conference as well as with our sister Conferences around the world. A list of where the Love Gift will go will be included in the Women's Interest Committee report. If you would like to add to this year's Love Gift, you may send your gift to the SDB Women's Board until September 30th.

Workshops Offer a Variety of Experiences

By Linda Harris

TRY Defending Your Faith

This workshop, led by Marissa Van Horn, explored the subject of apologetics, which comes from a Greek word meaning to defend or justify.

Since there are so many questions asked by unbelievers, we covered just two of them. The first question dealt with Jesus' resurrection. Two common questions are "Did Jesus really die?" and "Was the tomb really empty?" Using scripture (John 19:31-37) along with medical and historical evidence, these questions can be answered affirmatively.

The other topic we discussed was "If God does exist, why is there evil in the world?" Scriptural evidence comes from

the book of Job, where Job asked why, and God asked Job over 60 questions, none of which Job could answer. God allowed the possibility of evil because He allowed humans to possess free will. If we have could not choose evil, then we could not choose the good; we would be forced into it.

The session ended with a discussion of the many resources available, including *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis, *The Case for Faith* and *The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell, and websites such as www.answersingenesis.org and www.rzim.org.

TRY Caring for Parents

Caring for aging parents is a task most midlife adults will

have to face. Linda Lawton shared her recent experiences in facing the decisions of caring for her own parents. Workshop participants also shared some of their own experiences.

Much helpful information came from the website for the National Council on the Aging (www.ncoa.org). A Benefits Check Up is available, which asks for incomes and health information and then identifies programs for which the parent might qualify. Also on the website is an article on How to Be More AWARE of Long-Term Care.

Other topics discussed included hospice care for terminally ill parents, where to find information in local

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Workshops Offered Variety

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communities, and deciding what you want for yourself when you reach the point of being unable to care for yourself.

A free book, *How to Care for Aging Parents*, can be obtained from Marriott Senior Living Services by calling 1-800-873-0323 or from their website, www.marriottseniorservices.com.

TRY Expanding Your Prayer Influence

One of our newest pastors, Dr. Tim Bancroft of the Alfred SDB Church, led us in an informative and inspirational

workshop on prayer. The session included information on techniques for reading the Bible to lead us into prayer.

The first part of the workshop discussed time, space and distractions, prayer vs. meditation, discovering our prayer type and other topics.

The second part of the workshop began with a view of history, in which we saw that many of the concepts developed over time collapsed at the time of World War II.

The Psalms can help us to pray by giving our passion to God, just as David and the other

writers of the Psalms did. We also looked at the Lord's Prayer as a pattern for our own praying. Traditions from Benedictine and other monastic Christians helped us to see that there are other ways to pray than what we have learned as Protestant Christians.

Dr. Bancroft emphasized that the many ideas presented in this workshop were like a smorgasbord (very appropriate for Lindsborg) from which we can choose those ideas that will help us have a more meaningful time with the Lord in prayer and meditation.

Treasures From Psalm 25: Thursday AM Bible Study

How wonderful that God is there to lift our souls to, says Pastor Chris Mattison of North Loup, Nebraska. Although we believers have been given new spirits, our glorified bodies are on lay away; thus, when these

bodies sin, the shame and guilt we feel can serve as a fence to show us that we have left the green pasture to which our Shepherd has led us and tried to stick our heads through to the other side of the fence.

How great is God's mercy (Psalm 25:6)! Mercy is God's first resort, wrath His last. Like a child on our grandparent's lap, we can go to God's mercy seat, not his wrath seat.

Who Versus Whom: Friday Bible Study

Pastor Leon Lawton shared the message from Psalm 51:10-13 in regard to "purifying your heart" so that you will always be ready to Try God! He gave the example of his first weeks in office at the Missionary Society

(over three decades ago) when Rev. Everett Harris' presence was missed on the elevator ride to the fourth floor. This fellow passenger had never known the executive's name but had felt comforted by his spirit. Pastor

Leon prayed for just that kind of witness.

In Proverbs 3:5-6, we reviewed putting your trust in God and Proverbs 4:20-22 emphasized the need to remember God's words.

Conference Passes Stem Cell Resolution

During business sessions on Friday, the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference adopted the following statement on human embryonic stem cell research.

"We affirm that human life begins at conception. Therefore, we are morally opposed to

human embryonic stem cell research."

The conference also voted that this statement would be sent to national governmental leaders in the United States (no mention was made of Canadian governmental officials), and that the statement should be

published in the Conference Crier to, "encourages our membership to contact their local representatives as soon as possible.