

DAKOTA DISPATCH

Sharing the unchanging love of Jesus in a changing world.



Nothing to Fear

This is the eighth installment of a multi-part series taken from Bob DuPuy's book, *Nothing to Fear: The Story of Seventh-day Adventism in the Dakotas*, published in 1983.

CHAPTER 3: Come to Dakota and Help Us - Part 2

These first four churches, Elk Point, Swan Lake, Sunnyside and Big Springs, were largely self-sustaining. The three Scandinavian churches saw Elder Hanson only on the rare occasions when his far-ranging travels would permit, and Elk Point apparently had no ministerial help for two years after its organization.

The need for leadership was partially met by strong laymen who, rising to the occasion, traveled among the churches tending to their needs. Later some of these men became ministerial workers, helping raise up new churches in other areas of the territory. Two such individuals were Chris Frederickson, of Swan Lake, and D.T. Biggs, of Howard (Turner County), who became charter officers in the Dakota Tract and Missionary Society (a prelude to organization as a conference) and were for years involved in evangelistic work.¹⁶

In 1879, the General Conference sent Elder Seymour B. Whitney to solidify and organize the fledgling work in Dakota.¹⁷

Arriving at Swan Lake in mid-January, Whitney led out in the organization of the Dakota Tract and Missionary Society. Formerly, the Dakota Territory had been a district of the Iowa society. Establishing its own identity in this manner was the first step toward the organization of the Dakota Conference later that year.

"T and M" societies proved to be a most effective means of advancing the church's work in a new field. By making literature available to all the scattered members in the area and encouraging them to sell, distribute, or mail tracts and periodicals to friends and relatives, these early societies made each member a "literature evangelist;" And the results of the "T and M" work often reverberated far beyond the boundaries of the society's territory, as we shall see.

Whitney was elected president of the society and M.M. (Martin) Olsen became its vice-president. Biggs and Frederickson, the laymen, were elected as secretary and director respectively.¹⁸

After visiting each of the churches and establishing local tract societies in each, Whitney opened a series of evangelistic meetings in Finlay (Turner County). Crowds of one hundred and more came to hear Whitney preach. In less than two weeks, when he scheduled the first Sabbath morning church service, twenty interested people attended.

All of these events startled and disturbed the local Baptist minister, who began to pre-empt the schoolhouse Whitney had been preaching in for a Sunday evening Bible class. Whitney graciously asked the pastor for use of the hall for just part of the evening, to which he responded by announcing that he would preach against Adventist teachings that Sunday night.

The next week Whitney asked the school authorities for permission to use the hall after 8 p.m. The Baptist pastor again announced a public service but delayed his arrival while another minister introduced the service. Arriving just before eight, he announced that since the Adventists had the use of the hall, he had arranged to hold his meeting in a different place. Picking up the story, Whitney said, " ... whereupon the church members retired, taking all the lamps that were in the house. Our friends all stayed by us, however; a light was soon procured, and we held our meeting without further molestation."¹⁹

The opposition was a bit less creative in Maple Grove (Lincoln County), where Martin Olsen was holding meetings. The Lutheran minister, after making the people promise not to attend Olsen's meetings because it was a sin to hear such doctrine, told them there was no Scripture for keeping Sunday, that it was a church institution. "Many of his people became disgusted," reported Olsen, "and concluded that he was too much like the Pope."²⁰

Sabbath Schools and T and M societies were organized in Finlay and Maple Grove in 1879.²¹

As Dakota moved closer to organization as a conference, Whitney presented to the members the needs for a fifty-foot tent for evangelism, support for Scandinavian publications, and for a reserve fund to enable the Trad Society to keep a supply of publications on hand for missionary work at all times. In addition, the territory was divided into two districts.²²

On July 24, 1879, at Dakota's first camp meeting, held in the new tent pitched at Sioux Falls (Minnehaha County), where Whitney was conducting evangelistic meetings, the Dakota Conference was organized.

John Hanson was there for the encouragement of the Scandinavians who numbered at least half of the two hundred in attendance. Present to officiate at the organization was General Conference President James White, who, with his wife, Ellen, had traveled the last twenty-five miles by stagecoach.

Whitney was elected president. A.L. Dawson was chosen for secretary, and Peter Nelson was named treasurer. The entire ministerial force consisted of Whitney, Olsen, E.H. Pullen and John Richards.

The new conference in session passed resolutions encouraging the reading of the works of Ellen White, adopting the tithing system, and pledging to more thoroughly apply health reform principles. (On Sunday afternoon Mrs. White spoke on the subject of Christian temperance, and one hundred-ten of those present signed the "strongest temperance pledge.")

The charter churches were Swan Lake, Sunnyside, Elk Point, and Big Springs, and the conference voted to take "under its watch care" the companies of Sabbath-keepers at Finlay and Maple Grove, as well as groups at

Milltown (Hutchinson County), Immanuel Creek (Bon Homme County), Madison (Lake County), and Wolf Creek (Hutchinson County). Of the last four, at least the first two - perhaps all of them - were independent groups of Sabbath-keepers, not connected with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We will revisit them in a later chapter.²³

Apparently, another independent group of Sabbath-keepers which, according to records of the former Ash Grove, South Dakota church, had begun meeting as early as August of 1873 near Lake Badus (Lake County), in a shack decked with prairie sod, escaped the attention of the new conference altogether until later work brought the "wanderers back into the Shepherd's fold" through exposure to "new truths", probably leading to the organization of the Badus church some years later.²⁴

Theoretically, at least, North Dakota was part of the Dakota Conference in 1879, but for all practical purposes, an almost total lack of transportation and communication links between the two sections made it a completely separate field. As we have seen, even the work in the south was restricted to the southeastern corner where rail and stagecoach lines made transportation feasible. The Adventist message would eventually get from South Dakota to North Dakota, but it would travel halfway around the world and back to get there, as future chapters will reveal.

During the first five years of its existence, under the leadership of Whitney, O.A. Olsen (conference president from 1882 to 1884) and his brother A.D. Olsen (conference president from 1884 to 1887), the membership of the Dakota Conference more than doubled, and churches were organized at Sioux Falls, Tyndall (Bon Homme County), Springfield (Bon Homme County), Madison, Parker (Turner County), Bridgewater (McCook County), Iriquois (Kingsbury County), Milltown, Brotherfield (Turner County), Immanuel Creek, Badus, Belford (Aurora County), and Vilas (Miner County). Work was also begun in Allentown (Turner County), Flandreau (Moody County), Valley Springs (Minnehaha County), Milbank (Grant County), Brookings (Brookings County), and Cameron (McCook County). In each of these places some form of organization was effected, such as Sabbath School, or a "T and M" society. Some may have been fully organized as churches; the records are unclear.²⁵

Two famous Adventist institutions originated in what is now South Dakota. We note them briefly, before considering the beginnings of organized work in the boundaries of present North Dakota in 1884.

In 1894, Luther Warren came to South Dakota as an evangelist. Taking a special interest in children and youth, Warren organized them into groups that he called Sunshine Bands, for the purpose of doing "something for somebody every day." These early Sunshine Bands developed into the church's world-wide youth organization, the Missionary Volunteer Society.²⁶

The other Adventist milestone is shared by South Dakota and Iowa. Jasper Wayne, a resident of Sac City, Iowa, owned a tree nursery in Elk Point. In 1902, Wayne received 50 more copies of a special issue of the *Signs of the Times* than he had ordered. Carrying them with him as he traveled in South Dakota selling his fruit trees, he sold the magazines also, telling the purchasers about the mission work of his church. From this humble beginning developed the annual fund-raising program of the Adventist Church, Ingathering.²⁷

16. *Ibid.*, January 23, 1879, 31.

17. *Ibid.*, January 2, 1879, 5, 6.

18. *Ibid.*, January 23, 1879, 31.

19. *Ibid.*, March 20, 1879, 95.

20. *Ibid.*, March 27, 1879, 102.

21. Ibid., April 3, 1879, 118; May 29, 1879, 174; July 3, 1879, 14.

22. Ibid., February 20, 1879, 64; May 1, 1879, 142.

23. Ibid., July 24, 1879, 26; July 31, 1879, 47; see chapter 6 this book.

24. An entry in an early record book of the former Ash Grove, South Dakota church refers to a meeting conducted on August 16, 1873, a Sabbath. The meeting place for the group, according to a church history prepared by Barbara Schlisner and Floyd Bresee, (see Interlakes, South Dakota church history, appendix C this book) was on the land of Dr. Hal Kellogg. An 1883 report by O.A. Olsen mentions conducting a meeting in "The Kellogg school-house" while visiting the nearby Madison church, and meeting "a large company very much interested to know the truth." (Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, September 4, 1883, 572.) The Badus church was organized by July of 1884. (Ibid., July 29, 1884) The references to "wanderers" and "new truths" are from a 1955 poem by Walter J. Crandall presenting in verse the history of the Ash Grove (Badus) church.

25. Based on reports to the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald from 1879-1884. See Chapter 7 of this book for a detailed account of this period in South Dakota.

26. "Sunshine Band," Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, op. cit., 1275.

27. "South Dakota Conference"; "Ingathering," Ibid., 583.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear*:

Chapter 4, "A New and Important Field" - Part 1 by Robert K. DuPuy

Hope is Here

Hope can be a tricky emotion. It can open us up to the greatest anticipation but can also lead to the greatest disappointment. This might be why parents or elders advise their children, "Don't get your hopes up" in an attempt to save them from the crushing hurt of disappointment. After too many disappointments, it becomes easy to give up on hope entirely. But hope by nature does not give up that easily.

A distinction needs to be made between hope and optimism. Optimism is the mindset of seeing things positively in an otherwise negative landscape and believing that things could take a turn for the better. Hope is more than just optimism. When we hope, we believe that in the end things will turn out for good despite all evidence to the contrary. This is possible because hope is not focused on circumstances but rather in whom our hope is placed, "And now, O Lord, for what do I wait? My hope is in you." (Psalm 39:7).

Adventists are no strangers to disappointment. The entire Advent movement began out of Great Disappointment. But those early Adventist pioneers shifted their perspective from an event or date to a person in whom they could hope. While waiting for our long-expected savior, we can confidently sing, "We have this hope..." (Hymn 214).

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Romans 15:13).

Worship Thoughts by Pr. David Werner, pastor of the Bison/Bowman/Dickinson church district.



DAKOTA CONFERENCE
26TH ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT
dakotaadventist.org

A SON OF THE FATHER

MARCH 12-14, 2021

SPEAKERS:

Jony Hajaj
Larry Priest
Mark Weir

ROUGH RIDER HOTEL
301 3RD AVENUE
MEDORA, NORTH DAKOTA

PHOTO BY CHRYSTAL RITTENBACH

To view the online brochure and register for the event, visit:

dakotaadventist.org > ministries > men's ministries

Early bird prices end on February 28, 2021.

DAA to Host Academy Preview Days

Have you ever seen a magnificent piece of pottery and wondered to yourself, "How did they do that?" Well, that is what we should think every time we open our eyes. God is our creator, our potter. Isaiah 64:8 says, "But now, Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are our potter. All of us are the work of your hand."

Last year Dakota Adventist Academy held Academy Preview Days before the COVID outbreak. This year, in spite of COVID, we will be hosting Academy Days. Mark your calendars for April 22 - 25, 2021! We will open our school to any 8th - 11th grade student who is interested in previewing DAA for themselves. The event begins Thursday evening with registration at 7:00pm and the first activity at 8:00pm. The weekend will be an experience in learning, making friends, learning more about yourselves and your relationship with God, and a whole lot of fun!

There is another option available for Academy Preview, which is a personal academy tour. Staff will set up a time that works for the attendee's schedule and tour the classrooms, dorms, meet teachers and students, and set up a class schedule for next year. This will offer potential students the information needed to make an educated decision about school options for next school year.

I started out this note to you with references to our master potter and pottery, so you may be wondering what that has to do with Academy Day information. Well, I guess you will just have to register for Academy Days to find out!

Don't forget! **April 22 - 25, 2021**. See you then!



COME PLAY IN THE "MUD" WITH US!

Article and photos by Tracy Peterson, recruiter. Pictured: Kylie Krein (left) and Ronite Owusu-Ansah (right).

Women's Day of Prayer

The Women's Day of Prayer provides an opportunity for women to learn about each other and pray for one another. It is a time to reunite with God and one another to strengthen spiritual bonds. Prayers for women everywhere create a spiritual network of empathy and understanding. Although the essential purpose of the day is for prayer, the day can also provide women with an opportunity to strengthen their ties with other Christian women as they pray together.



For more information, visit: nadwm.org/day-of-prayer and follow the Dakota Conference Women's Facebook site at [Dakota Conference Adventist Women](#).

Would you like to start a women's ministry in your church? Reach out to Paulette Bullinger, Dakota Conference women's ministries director with questions at: 701.319.0103 or paulette8950@gmail.com

Grand Forks Church Illuminates a Message of Hope

2020 was a year full of challenges for many of us on personal, national, and global levels. The Grand Forks Seventh-day Adventist Church decided to bring a message of the hope of Jesus amid darkness and difficulty to their community by participating in the local Christmas in the Park.

Church members constructed a 10-foot-tall wooden cross and manger and covered them with approximately 1,900 lights. Two signs completed the display, one with the church's name and a reminder that "God's Love Shines Through the Darkest Night," and the other with John 12:46: "I [Jesus] have come into the world, so that everyone who believes in me will not remain in darkness."

Christmas in the Park is an annual collection of lighted Christmas displays in Lincoln Drive Park in Grand Forks sponsored by the four local Lion's Clubs. Displays are made or rented by local businesses and other organizations. For a small fee vehicles may drive through the park from 5:30-10:00pm each evening, starting the Friday after Thanksgiving until December 31. One hundred percent of the proceeds are donated to local charities. 2020 was the 19th year for Christmas in the Park in Grand Forks.



W O N D E R

2 0 2 1

FLAG MOUNTAIN

cub camp, ages 8-10 | June 16-20 | \$200
junior camp, ages 11-13 | June 20-27 | \$275
teen retreat, ages 14-17 | June 27-July 4 | \$275

NORTHERN LIGHTS

cub camp, ages 8-10 | July 14-18 | \$200
junior camp, ages 11-13 | July 18-25 | \$275
teen retreat, ages 14-17 | July 25-Aug 1 | \$275
family camp | Aug 5-8 | price varies per family

register online at: dakotayouthandyoungadults.org/camps

MAUC Plans for Virtual Church Ministries Convention

The Mid-America Union (MAUC) is hosting a virtual Church Ministries Convention. The event will be held March 25-28, 2021, and is designed to equip church ministry team members with knowledge and ideas. Please register for this virtual event before March 18; a registration fee of \$30 is required.

For more information and to register, visit: adventsource.org and click on the events tab at the top of the page.

Next level training in:

- Prayer Ministries
- Adventist Community Services
- Disaster Response
- Health Ministries
- Family Ministries
- Communication Ministries
- Women's Ministries
- Men's Ministries
- School Board Ministries
- Evangelism

Featured speakers and presenters include:

- Jose Cortes, Jr. - NAD Ministerial Associate Director
- Elizabeth Talbot, Ph.D - Speaker and Director at Jesus 101
- Freddie Russell - Lead Strategist at the True North Group
- Hubert Morel, Jr. - MAUC Vice President for Administration
- Ed Barnett - Rocky Mountain Conference President
- Gary Thurber - MAUC President
- Roger R. Wade - MAUC Church Ministries and Youth Director

MID-AMERICA UNION CHURCH MINISTRIES

TRUST JESUS

2021 MINISTRIES CONVENTION
LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES TRAINING

PS. 37:3-5

NEXT LEVEL TRAINING IN :

- PRAYER MINISTRIES
- ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES
- DISASTER RESPONSE
- HEALTH MINISTRIES
- FAMILY MINISTRIES
- COMMUNICATION MINISTRIES
- WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
- MEN'S MINISTRIES
- SCHOOL BOARD MINISTRIES
- EVANGELISM

FAITH IN JESUS
FILLED WITH JESUS
FOLLOWING JESUS

INSPIRING MESSAGES
UPLIFTING MUSIC
DYNAMIC COACHING

OUTLOOK
AdventSource

MARCH 25-28, 2021

REGISTER AT WWW.ADVENTSOURCE.ORG

ABC Located at Dakota Conference in Bismarck

Tuesday - Thursday: 3:00 - 5:30 pm (If you happen to be in town during other hours, please stop by. We will try to accommodate.)

Friday: ABC & office closed

Dakota Conference Calendar

Offering schedule is in purple.

February -

- 13: NAD Evangelism
- 15: Office Closed - Presidents' Day
- 17-21: DAA Home Leave
- 20: Local Church Budget
- 27: Dakota Challenge

- 27: Mid-America Union Pathfinder Bible Experience

March -

- 4: Dakotans Pray
- 6: Women's Day of Prayer
- **6: Local Church Budget**
- 7: K-12 Board of Education at the Conference Office
- 12-14: Men's Retreat in Medora, ND
- **13: Adventist World Radio**
- 19-20: Global Youth Get-together Weekend in Fargo, ND
- 21: Executive Committee at the Conference Office
- 17: Deadline to register for MAUC Church Ministries Convention
- **20: Local Church Budget**
- 25-28: MAUC Church Ministries Convention - Virtual
- 27: Northwest Regional in Dickinson, ND
- **27: Dakota Challenge**

For more scheduled events, please see the calendar on the Dakota Conference website: www.dakotaadventist.org/events

Blessed & Kept

May the peace of Christ flow through you.

May you find despair impossible, even when despair seems the most logical emotion

May the much more illogical disposition of hope be a mainstay of your day

May you not look away from the world's myriad problems

Instead may you face them with the certainty of the restored world that is being re-made before your eyes.

May you take the hand of God, partnering with the creator in the restoration of the beauty and shalom of creation.

May that beauty and shalom continue with you even when your restoration efforts fail.

In those moments, may beauty and shalom be amplified in your soul

May your response be calm and inquisitive.

May the peace you carry become a contagion passing from person to person until your space is filled with the non-anxious, comforting presence of the divine.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

To follow Casey's Podcast *Blessed & Kept* click [here](#).

February 11 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken by Bobbi Brotton in Burleigh County, North Dakota, along the Missouri River.

If anyone has local church news or stories to share, please send event information, news suggestions and/or articles and pictures to: j.dossenko@gmail.com

Dispatch Mission: To build a climate of encouragement and blessing through the sharing of witnessing and evangelism activities. If you have news to share or would like to be added to the **Dakota Dispatch** mailing list, please email Jodi Dossenko at j.dossenko@gmail.com. Bison [Copyright](#)

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[!\[\]\(e474458956c9a37fbf9586ddb60a7fa1_img.jpg\) Dakota Conference Education](#)

[!\[\]\(3e2231b1ad3ca8da8658228c00dd08e0_img.jpg\) Dakota Adventist Academy](#)

[!\[\]\(125d701e9425b54c764340b5671b38cd_img.jpg\) Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps](#)

[!\[\]\(21199eb166cc97331a0c54c649195dcc_img.jpg\) Dirt Kicker Charity Run](#)

[!\[\]\(2bdfe261b986065ee0ac76460d6528c9_img.jpg\) Dirt Kicker Run Facebook](#)

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