

DAKOTA DISPATCH

Sharing the unchanging love of Jesus in a changing world.



Nothing to Fear

This is the twenty-ninth 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 8: To Effect An Organization - Part 4

The first officers of the North Dakota Conference were: President, John G. Walker; Vice-President, Lars Nielson; Treasurer, Mrs. Alice H. Robinson; Secretary, A.E. Christian; Business Agent, Charles Leer; Educational Field Secretary, F. G. Specht; Missionary Field Secretary, C.H. Staples.²³

A partial report of the Committee on Credentials and Licenses only lists three ordained ministers: Valentine Leer, Lars Nielson, and A.E. Christian. Ministerial licenses were granted to Conference President John Walker and to Educational Field Secretary F.G. Specht. There may have been others in either or both categories, as a later report of this committee authorizes the Conference Committee to consider "all other applications."²⁴

Not much is known of these first North Dakota Conference officials prior to their election in 1902. The scanty records do indicate that most of them had worked for several years in either North or South Dakota.²⁵

North Dakota's first president, John G. Walker, was a Canadian, born in Lincoln, Ontario, in 1862. He had served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Dakota Conference and Tract Society, as Missionary Field Secretary, and as Dakota Conference Vice President before being elected North Dakota's first president. Though a relatively young man (40) and without many years of ministerial experience (indicated by the fact that he was elected president prior to his ordination), his leadership qualities and sound business sense must have been evident to inspire the confidence of the workers and constituents of two conferences.²⁶

Laymen were encouraged to supplement the small ministerial force, particularly by gaining experience first as literature evangelists. According to S.H. Lane's account, the colporteur work was so successful that most of the current colporteurs were specializing in the larger, more expensive volumes because of an abundance of money.²⁷

Lane also warned the multi-ethnic believers not to allow “class feelings” to come in, but to recognize “that all--both German and English--should realize that we are all one in Christ Jesus.”²⁸

Sometime after this organizational session, the *North Dakota Gleaner*, a conference news sheet, issued in both English and German (under the name *Sammler*) began to be published and continued until the *Northern Union Reaper* was first issued in 1906.²⁹ Perhaps this is why reports from North Dakota virtually disappear from the columns of the *Review and Herald*, as the workers began to report primarily to their local publication. I have been unable to locate any surviving copies of the *North Dakota Gleaner* or *Sammler*, so reports of these early years of the North Dakota Conference are unusually sketchy. Reports of the German work are even more scarce, possibly due to the existence of the *Hausfreund* (later called the *Arbeiter?*), a German language periodical apparently roughly equivalent to the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*.³⁰

Just two months after camp meeting at Carrington, Vice-President Lars Nielson organized a “society” with two families at Stanley (Montrail County), the Nathaniel Wards and George Fowlers. A 1906 report in the *Northern Union Reaper* talks of electing an elder and a deacon “thus completing the organization of the Stanley Church.” But entries in an early clerk's record book speak of taking the Ward and Fowler families into the church by letter (November 1, 1902); of a talk on church organization by Elder Nielson (June 3, 1903); and the election of officers, including elder and deacon--an almost certain indication of organization, according to the prevailing practice (May 21, 1904).³¹

In any event, the Stanley church was a family affair for its first few years, Nathaniel and Lois Ward's son, Charles marrying Mary S. Fowler after her husband's death and the other two sons, George and Frank, marrying Mary S.'s two daughters, H. Mabel and Mary M. Mary S.'s son, George Fowler, then married Ward's granddaughter Hattie. If you can get all that straight, the discrepancy in organization dates should prove no problem.

Although specific documentary evidence has not been found, it seems likely that work conducted around Stanley, and at Minot, where a Scandinavian camp meeting was conducted in 1902, combined with the influence of the nearby church at Kenmare, resulted in the organization of a church at Mohall before the first anniversary session of the North Dakota Conference in 1903.³²

23. *Ibid.*, 16, 17, 20.

24. *Ibid.*, 19, 22.

25. Based on reports from the Dakota Conference published in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* in the years prior to 1902.

26. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 25, 1955, 27; Dakota Conference letterhead (containing a letter dated January 9, 1902), listing “Jno. Walker” as Vice President and Missionary Department Field Secretary.

27. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 22, 1902, 18, 19.

28. *North Dakota Conference Session Record Book*, *op. cit.*, 1, 20.

29. *Ibid.*, 31, 32, 53, 54, 80, 81.

30. *Ibid.*, 6, 159, 201.

31. *Northern Union Reaper*, June 12, 1906, Early Stanley clerk's records, compiled by P.E. Iverson, whose history of the church gives a date of August 17, 1902, for the organization of a “society” (T and M?). Compare *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 29, 1884, 493 with February 24, 1885, 124, for another case of organization being “completed” sometime after a church was formally admitted to the conference.

32. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 3, 1902, 23; History of the Kenmare church prepared from clerk's records and member recollections in 1976, mentions close ties in later years between the Kenmare and Mohall members.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear*:

Chapter 8, "To Effect an Organization" - Part 5 by Robert K. DuPuy

If you are a new subscriber or have missed the earlier installments, you can find all issues of the Dakota Dispatch on our website: <https://www.dakotaadventist.org/communiques/dakota-dispatch>

The first installment of *Nothing to Fear* starts in the October 22, 2020 issue.

Mandan Church Begins New Year with Local Ordinations

On New Year's Day the Mandan Seventh-day Adventist Church held an ordination service for elders, deacons, and deaconesses. Paulette Bullinger and Josh Metz were ordained as elders. Bryce Chin, Mike Miller, Brian Werner, and Biya Buta were ordained as deacons. Bonnie Sundby and Trude Thoman were ordained as deaconesses. Dwight Duke and Greg Soules were present as ordained elders to be part of the laying-on of hands during the ordination prayer. The church plans to have another ordination service in the near future for the people who were absent that day.



Article by Pr. Harold Chin, pastor of the Goodrich / Mandan / McClusky / Turtle Lake church district in North Dakota. Photos by Linda Oswald, Mandan Church member.

Purchased at a High Price

Have you ever owned something that you wished you didn't? I think this happens a lot with cars. You buy one and sign on the dotted line to pay for it well, forever. After awhile, the newness wears off and you feel trapped - enslaved by payments. You grow accustomed to the car's dented face, squeaky brakes, and the broken windshield wiper. Every payment you make for the once-new car gets a little harder to make and you wonder how much will be lost if you just trade it in on a new one.

Nowadays, many people are deciding to lease. Lease-to-own gives the individual the right, but not the obligation, to purchase the leased item at a predefined price and time. Leasing gives you a way out! When you look at all the things that are wrong with the car, just remember you are not obligated to buy it. One day you can give it, and all its problems, back.

As I thought of leasing-to-own as opposed to purchasing, I began to think of our owner, our purchaser. The Bible tells us that God purchased us at a high price. He gave His only Son that we, with all our problems, could be His forever. Aren't you glad God didn't just lease and have the option to give us back if He decided He wanted something newer and better? God's Word tells us that we are the apple of His eye, and He thinks we are His beautiful creations. So, remember, Jesus loves you. 1 Cor. 7:2 says, "God purchased you at a high price. Don't be enslaved by the world."

Worship Thoughts by Pr. Vernon Herholdt, pastor of the Bismarck church district in North Dakota.

Pierre Church Hosts Christmas Party

Members and friends of the Pierre Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Dakota had a Christmas get-together on December 11. The group started with vespers, then shared a potluck which included homemade hot chocolate and cider. They then played minute-to-win-it games, foosball, ping pong, and drew numbers for a gift exchange. Festivities were followed by a movie and snacks. The event was enjoyed by all in attendance.



Article and photos by Tammy Johnson, member of the Pierre Church in SD.

Traditions at the Rapid City Seventh-day Adventist School

According to verywellfamily.com, “Traditions create a connection for children that comes from feeling like they are part of something unique and extraordinary. Family traditions can even contribute to a child's self-esteem and enhance their well-being. After all, children find comfort and security when things are predictable and consistent. Just as routines and schedules are important to a school program, traditions are an important part of school, too.”

An event that is becoming a tradition at our school is the Harvest Festival. Face painting, beanbag tossing, golfing, selecting the perfect lollipop for a prize, three-legged racing, winning a special baked goodie at the cake walk, and sending your friend to “jail” were all activities at our fall festival. Our new Home and School leader, Erika Lopez, organized this highly successful fundraiser which brought our church and school community together for a fun evening that benefited our school.

Another fun fall activity that is becoming our school’s tradition is a visit to the pumpkin patch. One of the school families owns a wedding venue, which is also a kid friendly zone. Students were able to paint pumpkins, play on

the tire structure, and ride the barrel train.

A third tradition at our school is packing boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Students go shopping at the Dollar Tree store with a budget of \$10.00 each. Then they pack their box. Before boxes are taken to the drop off location, students and teachers surround the boxes and pray over them. We pray for the children that will receive them, that they will not only receive the box of gifts, but that they will have an opportunity to meet Jesus.

One tradition that we are currently working on is our annual Christmas Pageant. This year's pageant was called Flower of the Holy Night. Students learned songs and lines and created props and a backdrop. The performance was on Thursday, December 16.

Traditions make a school unique and create fond memories with students, teachers, and families that endure in their minds forever.



Article by Jennifer DeFluiter, head teacher at the Rapid City Adventist Elementary School in South Dakota. Photos submitted by Jennifer DeFluiter.



Dakota Conference Prayer Retreat
Live by the Spirit

March 18-20, 2022
Bismarck, North Dakota

Speaker: Elder Paulet Howard Jr.

Come to the Prayer Retreat to experience new prayer styles, learn practical applications, and revitalize the role of prayer in your life.

Make plans to attend the Dakota Conference Prayer Retreat. Registration will open soon - stay tuned for more information.

Kid's Corner

Visit the Dakota Conference Children's Ministries YouTube channel "Dakota SDA Kids" and explore the many videos available for children:

In January, devotionals are exploring the names of God:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v1SLTCPA14>

Enjoy the snowflake craft corner video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aspt8hWjgus>

COMING SOON! Fundamental February:

There are 28 days in February and 28 Fundamental Beliefs, a match made in heaven! Every day in February, a new kids devotional video will be posted on the Dakota SDA Kids YouTube channel. Dakota pastors and ministerial team are hard at work preparing these materials and are excited to share them with our conference children. Visit www.youtube.com and search "Dakota SDA Kids."



Kelli Wasmiller is the Dakota Conference education superintendent and children's ministries coordinator.

ABC Located at Dakota Conference in Bismarck

Tuesday - Thursday: 3:00 - 5:30 pm

If you happen to be in town during office hours, please stop by. We will try to accommodate.

Friday - Sunday: ABC & office closed

Dakota Conference Calendar

Offering schedule is in purple.

Office preaching schedule is in blue.

January -

- 22: Dakota Challenge
- 22: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Bismarck Church, ND
- 23: K-12 Board Meeting at Conference Office (10am)
- 24-27: Pastors' Meetings
- 29: Local Church Budget
- 29: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Bottineau Church, ND
- 29: Elder Charles O'Hare preaching at Goodrich/McClusky Church, ND - Trust seminar in afternoon

February -

- 2-5: Union College Music Festival

- [5: Local Church Budget](#)
- [5: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Ellendale Church, ND](#)
- 12: Mike Tucker preaching at Fargo Church, ND
- [12: NAD Adventist Evangelism](#)
- [12: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching at Dickinson Church, ND](#)

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

Blessed & Kept

May you remember that the kingdom of God is the only eternal kingdom.

May you remember that all kingdoms of the earth will fall.

May the unprecedented events yesterday remind you that your citizenship is with a higher kingdom.

May you pledge allegiance to the only king worthy of it.

Though the depth of our divisions was further revealed, may you stand united with all those bearing the image of God.

For God desperately wants to restore all of them.

May you make no person your enemy.

May you love even more recklessly.

May yesterday's unsettling episode solidify the conclusion that our hope is not in earthly kingdoms but in God's slow, magnificent work of restoring peace and beauty to the world.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

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

January 20 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken by MiKayla Torres just outside of Dakota Adventist Academy in Burleigh County, North Dakota.

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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- [!\[\]\(73944fd4f6fb83e4c64013731d1820cc_img.jpg\) Dakota Adventist Academy.](#)
- [!\[\]\(d8f7165d5a8d1eba426ea452457190e5_img.jpg\) Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps](#)