



Jodi Dossenko Photo

DAKOTA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Dakota Messenger

Hijacked

Neil Biloff, President

Have you ever considered that your faith may represent something it wasn't originally designed to? Has it become a tool to serve other agendas? Is your Christianity being used to impress someone, increase your social status, promote a political party, attain money, buttress a moral belief, or fill intellectual, emotional and relational voids? If any of the above is true, perhaps your faith has been hijacked.



In early New Testament history many young Jewish men were swept into the religious-political warfare of their time. Faith had become a battle cry to weaponize and unite a people against the evil Roman empire. Young zealots died believing they were fighting for their faith, but to what end? Others used their faith to make connections and grow their bank accounts. In his book *Messiah in His Sanctuary*, F.C. Gilbert writes that during the time of Jesus a priest could be financially set for life if he was high priest during the Passover ceremony. Gilbert states that an occasional high priest mysteriously died just before Passover. History reveals some have justified the killings stating it was for the good of the church.

True, none of us reading these words would ever think of doing such horrible things, but just maybe our faith in Jesus and His word has been hijacked in other ways. In today's society could being mean and hateful to others be self-justified as good of one's church or faith? Could sharing internet information filled with accusations based on hearsay, gossip and conspiracies be considered a blessing to the Kingdom of God? Could we as Adventists be caught up in our own form of holy war against anyone who disagrees with us? We are living in amazing times and it appears that the Christian faith can quickly morph into something it was never intended to become. Is it time to cleanse our spirituality from the things that have hijacked it?

The prophet Micah said it well when he described true faith and religion, "He hath shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." It seems true religion is quite basic and simple. Why in these last days has it become so difficult to walk in the plain words of the prophet?

Journeys

Mark Weir, VP of Administration, Education

Since November, I have had the chance to crisscross our conference. The only population areas I have not yet been to are Willison and Pierre. I have been in all of our schools except one while school was in session and I have had the chance to speak in several of our churches. One seven-day stretch took me to Watertown for Sabbath, Fargo for a church meeting on Tuesday night, and then to Rapid City early Thursday morning so I could spend time at the school. I share this because as I am beginning to understand my role and our constituency, I am finding several realities that both amaze and impress me. But the best way to sum all of this up is simple – it is the people.

Over and over, I have been welcomed warmly and greeted generously. I realize that I am the “new guy.” I realize that there is still much to learn, but I have sensed a spirit of acceptance. That is not always the case. I am not native to this area, and sometimes that can be a barrier in the minds of some people. I have sensed none of that. But even better, I am one of the administrators of the Dakota Conference. That is a very special privilege granted to me by this faith community, yet sometimes individuals

with certain *titles* can cause mixed reactions. Sometimes people think they can curry favor, other times there is suspicion. But guess what? I have sensed neither.



I share this with you for a simple reason – I am becoming more and more appreciative of the people in our conference every day. From notes of encouragement to positive attitudes to wise council (especially from those who serve on the K-12 Board and Executive Committee). I have met many dedicated, conscientious, hard-working, down-to-earth, God-fearing people. And for that I am thankful.

I am a pragmatist at heart. I want things that work and for work to go smoothly. I sense that same sort of attitude across our conference. New ideas are great, they just need to be ones that make sense and make things easier. And that is my desire as I serve the church family in the Dakotas. I want to strive to help things make sense, and to make things easier. This is a journey I am looking forward to.

DAKOTA ADVENTIST
CAMPS 2020

FLAG MOUNTAIN CAMP
CUB CAMP. JUNE 17-21
JUNIOR CAMP. JUNE 21-28
TEEN CAMP. JUNE 28-JULY 5

NORTHERN LIGHTS CAMP
CUB CAMP. JULY 8-12
JUNIOR CAMP. JULY 12-19
TEEN CAMP. JULY 19-26
FAMILY CAMP. JULY 30-AUGUST 1

ROAM FREE.

DAA Hosts Robotics Meet

Mark Seibold, VP of Finance

After participating in robotics events in recent years, Dakota Adventist Academy hosted their first robotics meet on January 17, under the sponsorship of Ryan and Tracy Peterson. Held in the recently renovated DAA gymnasium, nine teams participated in the regional meet: DAA, Tioga, Alexander, Wilton, Bismarck's Career Academy and Technology Center, Shiloh Christian, St. Mary's Central, Williston and another school from the Minot area. Described by organizers as a "scrimmage," the gathering was a pre-season opportunity for students to test their electro-mechanical creations against peers – and the clock – in an official competition-level arena.



Student-built from a variety of electronic, mechanical and structural elements, robots feature limited computer-programming and are designed to perform specific functions. This year's challenge required the ability to lift and move sizable plastic blocks around obstacles between two points within the 12' X 12' arena. As each machine is controlled remotely by two students, a pilot and a lift-function operator, operation demands practiced cooperation and split-second decision-making. Within each two-minute match points are awarded for number of blocks moved a minimum distance, blocks placed or stacked on a special tray, and for other time and performance achievements. Together, these elements produce not only great team excitement, but a lot of fun for spectators as well.

After the initial rounds of single head-to-head competition, clubs were paired for the elimination rounds based on accumulated points. The demand for teamwork kicked into high gear, as clubs could maximize their standing points by optimizing cooperative efforts with their new teammates. In the limited space of the arena this proved to be a challenge but the pairings did well, improving as the matches went on.

The DAA "Tinheads" team made the final rounds, and their paired team placed second overall. DAA students participating included Orrin Waldner, Colton Playle, Elena Goldsberry, Austin Hay, DaYeong Ko, Jaelyn Pickett, PawLay Pway, Rosalyn Ray and Casey Waldner. Two DAA team members unable to attend were Tasia Subigca and Sierra Schlenker.

"This was an excellent way to be involved in a larger way in our community and region while showcasing our school," said



principal Anthony Oucharek. "We hope our visitors enjoyed their stay and will share positively with others about what they experienced."

A Call to Prayer

Pastor Barry St. Clair, Prayer Ministries

BISMARCK, ND — Dakota Conference pastors, studying spirituality and church growth in mid-January, urged for a conference-wide week of prayer and fasting March 1 - 7, 2020.

“Research of Adventist churches indicates spirituality or the spiritual culture of the church is the main indicator of whether Adventist churches in the North American Division are growing or in decline,” said S. Joseph Kidder, professor from Andrews University Seminary while sharing with Dakota Conference staff and pastors gathered at the Conference office.

“What are you as spiritual leaders going to do?” Kidder queried while presenting Biblical fasting and prayer as a personal connection with the God.

Dakota Conference has faced challenges of declining participation over the past five years with 2019 presenting particular financial challenges relating to weather impacts on donors’ commodities production and harvest in both North and South Dakota.

“Why don’t we, as a conference, commit to at least one day of fasting and prayer together, petitioning God; laying the challenges we are facing before His throne?” one pastor suggested.

The pastors and conference staff prayed together, and then discussed plans for each pastor to return to their districts and conduct some preaching on Biblical prayer and fasting.

Throughout Scripture, God invites His people to come to Him in humility, seeking and petitioning Him to act on behalf of His kingdom and for His glory. This isn’t a magic wand, demanding, earning or legalism. It is our privilege to cooperate with the Holy Spirit’s calling and participate in the intercessory ministry of our High Priest, King Jesus, laying before the throne of grace what God already knows. God offers us the invitation to be active in His Kingdom community through the avenue of prayer.

Fasting is simply an act of denying self in some area, whether media, food, or other areas of life, in order to redirect time and attention away from self, to connect with the God of the universe.

“My wife and I are determined to pray for more of our fellow pastors beginning *now*,” said Pastor Roy Morris, Yankton - Hurley, SD district. “We also will incorporate prayers for our evangelism series as we pray for the health and well-being of our conference as a whole, during the week of prayer and fasting.”

There are several ways you may participate. First, pray and ask God what He wants you to do. Perhaps a day or two, within your schedule during the week, to fast at a safe level within your context and in consult with your primary care provider. Reinvest the time of food preparation and cleanup, or screen time to prayer and reflection on Scripture.

Dakota Conference Prayer Coordinator, Pastor Barry St. Clair, regularly participates with the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists’ monthly *All-night Prayer Call* and plans to represent Dakota Conference to the NAD prayer team Thursday, March 5.

March 6 is *World Day of Prayer* and some communities may have programs scheduled, or your church could consider hosting a community prayer service in cooperation with your local ministerial association.

<http://www.wdp-usa.org>

Sabbath, March 7, *Women’s International Day of Prayer*, is scheduled on the NAD calendar. Your church may opt to use the available materials for the worship service or adapt some of the items into your regular program. <https://women.adventist.org/international-women-s-day-of-prayer-archives>

Above all, celebrate God’s abundant goodness and mercy, even through trials. This is His church. We are His people. To God be the glory!

DAKOTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Tracy Peterson, DAA Recruiter

Dakota Adventist Academy's special choir, under the direction of David Ballesteros, traveled to Union College for the 67th Annual Music Festival. The festival is designed to "help students improve their musical ability, bond with and learn from students at other schools and get to know Union College." DAA's students joined with over 150 musicians from other Mid-America academies. Starting Wednesday evening the academy students poured over their music, perfected tones and harmony. Friday evening vespers was a concert of musical selections from each of the academies. It was a wonderful showcase of the musical talents with which God has blessed our youth. The Music Festival concluded with a magnificent mass choir concert! Dr. Ricky Little conducted the academy's melded choir accompanied by the Union College Orchestra to produce auditory bliss. The concert is archived on Union's Utv. Enjoy the performance at <https://livestream.com/utv/events/8961538/videos/201414531>. DAA's special choir, felt blessed to have had the opportunity to participate in the festival, as well as meet new friends and catch up with old ones. The focus shifts every other year between vocal and instrumental performance.



L to R: David Ballesteros, Jaelyn Pickett, Heather Longtin, Sierra Schlenker, Jessica Winistorfer, Twainé Smit, Wylee Gareau, Savannah Ulery.



Dakota Conference & DAA Invite You to the Regionals

Northwest Regional

March 28, 2020
Dickinson, ND

Northeast Regional

April 18, 2020
Jamestown, ND

2020 CAMPMEETING RESERVATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATTRESSES NEEDED:

SEND FULL AMOUNT WITH RESERVATION

DORM ROOM: Full time \$100.00 _____
Daily \$35.00/day _____

REFRIGERATOR: If available \$25.00 _____

CAMPGROUND: Full time \$50.00 _____
Daily \$18.00/day _____
(RV/Campers/Tents with hook-ups)

NO HOOK-UP: Full time \$10.00 _____
(Tent space or self-contained RV)

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Dakota Conference
Send to: Campmeeting Reservations
Dakota Conference
7200 N Washington Street
Bismarck, ND 58503

Reservations may be made online, www.dakotaadventist.org
Full reservations take precedence over daily stays.



June 10 - 13, 2020 Heralds - Thursday Night Only, 7pm

Men's Retreat Registration - Also Available Online at dakotaadventist.org

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Preferred roommate _____

Before March 1, 2020

- Weekend price - **single**: \$295.00
 (2 nights/5 meals)
- Weekend price - **double**: \$195.00
 (2 nights/5 meals)
- **Retreat only**: \$100.00
 (No overnights/5 meals)
- **Sabbath only**: \$ 80.00
 (No overnights/3 meals)

After March 1, 2019

- Weekend price - **single**: \$320.00
- Weekend price - **double**: \$220.00
 (2 nights/5 meals)
- **Retreat only**: \$125.00
 (No overnights/5 meals)
- **Sabbath only**: \$105.00
 (No overnights/3 meals)

Deadline is March 5, 2020

Register online @ dakotaadventist.org, or via mail. Send check to Dakota Conference, 7200 N Washington Street, Bismarck, ND 58503 701.751.6177.

Friday, March 13

- Registration 5:30 pm
- Light Supper 6:00
- Song Service 7:15
- Presenter - Vine 7:30
Marx, Social Justice & the Gospel

Sabbath, March 14

- Devotion 7:00 am
- Breakfast 7:30
- Song Service 9:00
- Presenter - Biloff 9:30
From Battle to Victory
- Presenter - Vine 11:00
Truth, Tragedy & Transgenderism
- Lunch 12:30

Sabbath Afternoon/Eve

- Free Time 1:30 pm
- Song Service 4:30
- Presenter - Weir 5:00
On the Road with Jesus
- Supper 6:00
- Song Service 7:00
- Presenter - Vine 7:30
The Biblical Right to Self-defense
- Evening Activity 9:00

Sunday, March 15

- Devotion 7:00 am
- Breakfast 7:30
- Song Service 8:30
- Presenter - Vine 9:00
Men, Porn & the Gospel
- Check Out 10:45



Dakota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

7200 N Washington Street
Bismarck, ND 58503
www.dakotaadventist.org



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BISMARCK, ND

<p>February</p> <p>08 Fargo Youth Get-together - Fargo Church</p> <p>12 - 16 DAA Home Leave</p> <p>15 MAUC Pathfinder Bible Experience</p> <p>17 Presidents' Day/Office Closed</p> <p>20 - 23 DAA Academy Days</p> <p>22 Bismarck Youth Get-together - DAA</p> <p>March</p> <p>01 K-12 Board - CO 10 am</p> <p>08 Executive Committee - CO 10 am</p> <p>13 - 15 Men's Retreat - Medora, ND</p>	<p>C A L E N D A R</p>	<p>13 - 22 DAA Spring Break</p> <p>21 Rapid City Youth Get-together</p> <p>28 Northwest Regional - Dickinson, ND</p> <p>April</p> <p>02 - 04 DAA Music & Arts Festival</p> <p>11 Education Sabbath</p> <p>18 Northeast Regional - Jamestown, ND</p> <p>19 K-12 Board - CO 10 am</p> <p>19 - 21 New in Ministry Training - DAA</p> <p>25 Sioux Falls Youth Get-together</p>
<p>President, Evangelism, ASI Neil Biloff</p> <p>VP of Admin, Education Supt Mark Weir</p> <p>VP of Finance Mark Seibold</p> <p>Ministerial Director Merlin Knowles</p> <p>Associate Treasurer, Trust Director Cindy Miller</p> <p>Youth, Young Adults, Pathfdrs, SS Ricky & Brooke Melendez</p>	<p>Receptionist, Adm Assistant, Clerk Jodi Dossenko</p> <p>ABC Manager, Adm Assistant Lynette Miller</p> <p>Communication, Treasury Clerk Jacquie Biloff</p> <p>Development Lynette Miller, Sharon Heinrich</p> <p>Assoc Trust Services Director Charles O'Hare</p> <p>Trust Services Adm Assistant Julie Brude</p>	<p>Maintenance Marlin Miller</p> <p>Adventist Community Services Bob Forbes II</p> <p>Disaster Relief Director Phyllis Alexander</p> <p>Women's Ministries Director TBD</p> <p>Men's Ministries Director Randy Rubbert</p> <p>Prayer Ministries Director Barry St. Clair</p>