



Nothing to Fear

This is the seventh 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 1

"I have a message for you."

Ellen White spoke with the authority of one in direct communication with heaven. Her husband, James, and others listened intently.

"You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people. Let it be small at first; but as the people read, they will send you means with which to print, and it will be a success from the first."

The notion of initiating a periodical was mind-boggling for that impoverished little group of pioneers who listened. But that was not all, Ellen continued, "From this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear around the world."¹

His instructions had been to print now, pay later, as donations came in. But those were the days when people were as opposed to debt as they were to sin; so James White spent much of the next year unsuccessfully trying to raise interest (and principal) in the new periodical.

Discouraged, White decided to earn the funds by scything hay at 87.5 cents an acre. As he stepped out of the door, Ellen fainted. Moments later a vision came.

After it was over James asked, "What was it about?"

"About you."

"What did you see?"

"The Lord showed me that He blessed you last year when you went out to mow, but that if you tried the same thing now, He would let you get sick. Your work is to write, write, write, and walk out by faith."²

Ellen, telling the story later, commented, "My husband immediately commenced to write."³

Later that same month, July 1849, James White placed the copies of the first issue of *Present Truth* in a pile on the floor of their Rocky Hill, Connecticut home and the Whites, with believers from nearby farms, knelt around the papers, mingling prayers and tears, and asked God to bless this new, frightening venture.

Then they folded the papers, cut their edges, and addressed them to everyone they thought might read them. The papers were carried in James' carpet bag the eight miles to Middletown for mailing.⁴

Seldom in history has a movement been as closely identified with the printed page as that of Seventh-day Adventism. Ellen's astounding prediction of "streams of light... around the world" continues to be graphically fulfilled as fifty publishing houses scattered all over the globe print books and periodicals in 200 languages.⁵

As early as 1871, those streams of light found their way into the southern part of the Dakota Territory. (The portion that is now North Dakota was geographically isolated until the railroad came through a decade later.) Adventist settlers, finding themselves suddenly cut off from the close church ties of their former homes, welcomed the weekly visits of the *Review and Herald*, successor to *Present Truth*, with its inspirational articles and news of the progress of the church's work.

Large numbers of Scandinavians, the first ethnic group to migrate to Dakota, also treasured John Matteson's *Advent Tidende* which, like the *Review*, was used not only for personal enjoyment but for sharing the message of new truth. Those who resisted the urge to move west sent the *Tidende* to relatives and friends in "Dacotah."

Perhaps this is how Nels Peter Nelson, (possibly the first person in the Dakota Territory to accept Adventist teachings) who homesteaded two and a-half miles west of Swan Lake in what now is Turner County, South Dakota, began receiving the *Advent Tidende*, about 1873. According to one account, after comparing its articles, and other literature received even earlier, with his Bible, Nelson was convinced of the correctness of its message, and shared his conclusions with his neighbor, possibly O.F. (or O.A.) Frederickson. Frederickson later reported to the *Review and Herald* that several families had begun observing the seventh-day Sabbath as a result of reading the *Tidende*.

Frederickson, who appealed for ministerial help, noted that because of the lack of it the new group of believers had, at one point, dwindled to a single family.

Early in 1874 the first Seventh-day Adventist minister to enter the Dakota Territory, John F. Hanson, arrived at Swan Lake. Hanson, formerly a Baptist minister in

Minnesota, had learned the Adventist message from John G. Matteson.

As a result of Hanson's initial labors, four families began keeping the Sabbath. Among the first four candidates baptized at that time were Nelson and Frederickson, who led out in the work in the area between Hanson's periodic visits.⁶

Despite trying circumstances, including a plague of grasshoppers that almost totally destroyed their crop, "the friends" at Swan Lake began sharing their faith, and when Hanson returned in the fall of 1875, he organized the Dakota Territory's first Seventh-day Adventist church, consisting of seven members, at Swan Lake. The new church grew rapidly, and during Hanson's next visit in February of 1876, fourteen new members were added, bringing the total to between 40 and 50. They adopted the plan of systematic benevolence, (a forerunner of the tithing system, affectionately known as "Sister Betsy") promised \$100 for the coming year, and gave Hanson \$25 for his services.

During the same year, the Swan Lake church was received into the sisterhood of churches of the Iowa Conference. The new congregation continued to grow until, in the spring of 1878, fifty-two members were worshipping in a newly constructed 20 x 30 x 10-foot church, apparently the first Seventh-day Adventist church building in the Dakota Territory. The Hurley, South Dakota church is the modern spiritual descendent of that first church at Swan Lake.⁷

Hanson's visits to "Dacotah" between 1874 and 1879 were instrumental in establishing the Territory's first three Scandinavian Adventist churches: Swan Lake, a Danish church at Sunnysdale (Clay County), and a Swedish group at Big Springs (Union County).⁸

Before leaving to labor among the Scandinavians in other states, Hanson ordained M.M. Olsen as elder of the Sunnyside church and his successor in the Territory.⁹ As early as 1875, Hanson had reported to the *Review* that there was substantial interest among the "Americans" in Dakota, and that it would be a profitable field of labor in the English "tongue" as well.¹⁰ Reporting from Swan Lake in 1876, however, E.M. Frederickson stated that he was the only American in the church, and that he hoped the work could soon be conducted in English as well.¹¹

Meanwhile, in 1873, the Gipsons, an Adventist family who had moved to the Elk Point-Pleasant Grove (Union County) vicinity in the southeastern tip of South Dakota, had begun a work among the English-speaking settlers. Using tracts and periodicals, the Gipsons prepared the minds of their neighbors for the message of the church.¹²

One of those periodicals, the *Review and Herald*, fulfilled its role as a missionary journal in Elk Point, where by 1875 one man became deeply interested after reading the *Review*, which had been received regularly in Elk Point the previous year.

Because there was no Adventist church in Elk Point in 1875, G .W. Pond attended the Methodist church for Christian fellowship. One Sunday the preacher ridiculed Seventh-day Adventists, saying that Adventists were continually setting a time for the world to burn up, the latest being April 19, 1875.

The following Sunday, Pond took the pulpit and read an article from the *Review* that convinced some of the congregation that the preacher had misrepresented Adventists. "Several of his members are excited in favor of the truth," reported Pond, "come to Dakota and help us."¹³

Pond's appeal for ministerial help was answered when English-speaking ministers R.M. Kilgore and E.W. Farnsworth pitched what was probably the first gospel tent in the Dakota Territory at Elk Point, on June 30, 1876.

The novelty of the tent helped swell the attendance, and when the series closed on August 20, a group of 24 had begun Sabbath observance. Five of these were at Pleasant Grove where the Gipsons had labored and where, by November of 1876, a Sabbath School of 16 members was meeting regularly on Saturday and on Tuesday night. In January, Farnsworth returned to Elk Point for more evangelistic meetings. The Elk Point church was organized on February 2, 1877, with a membership of twenty-six.¹⁴

Among the early converts was a member of the Dakota Legislature. He reported to the *Review*: "In our legislature this winter, the day for holding school meetings was changed from Saturday to Tuesday, that those who observe the seventh day may have the privilege of attending."¹⁵

1. Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches*, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 125, 126.

2. Maxwell, *op. cit.*, 99, 100.

3. Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, (Battle Creek, Michigan: Published by James White, 1860), II, 115.

4. Maxwell, *op. cit.*, 102.

5. "A Quick Look at Seventh-day Adventists," 1982 edition, pamphlet issued by the Department of Communication, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Washington, D.C.

6. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 1, 1875, 6.

7. *Ibid.*, March 9, 1876, 79; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, *loc. cit.*; *History of Hurley, South Dakota Seventh-day Adventists church*, Appendix C, this book.

8. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 2, 1879, 6, 7.

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1875, 6.

11. *Ibid.*, March 9, 1876, 79.

12. *Ibid.*, November 9, 1876, 150.

13. *Ibid.*, June 10, 1875, 190, 191.

14. *Ibid.*, July 13, 1876, 22; September 7, 1876, 865; November 9, 1876, 150; February 15, 1877, 55.

15. *Ibid.*, March 22, 1877, 95.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear*:

Chapter 3, "Come to Dakota and Help Us" - Part 2 by Robert K. DuPuy

School Year Off to a "Rapid" Start

The first half of the year has been busy at Rapid City Seventh-day Adventist School. Eighteen students are enrolled in grades K-8 and all are enjoying the second year in a new building.

Despite COVID-19, fun things are still happening this year. The school has been able to take a few field trips. As part of a Social Studies unit on the U.S. Presidents, the class was able to visit Mt. Rushmore and the Presidential Wax Museum in Keystone. Students had fun taking pictures and eating ice cream cones at Mt. Rushmore. The lower grades visited Old McDonald's Farm just outside of Rapid City. It was a lot of fun to feed and pet all the animals, especially the free roaming goats.

In October, the student body planned to visit a pumpkin patch owned by a school family, but the weather did not cooperate. Since it was too cold to be outside, the pumpkin patch was brought to the school. The afternoon was spent doing activities with giant pumpkins. Students were paired up and worked to find different aspects about their pumpkin - including how tall and round it was, gutting it to see how many seeds were inside, and guessing how much they weighed. It was fun to see how students reacted when they touched the gooey insides. The expressions on their faces were priceless!

This year the school was able to participate in packing shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. A generous donation was given which enabled each student to shop for gifts to put inside their shoebox. Together the students and teachers packed 19 shoeboxes. They opened it up to church members who wanted to help and got some shoeboxes and monetary donations to help buy gifts.

To finish out the first half of the year students went ice skating downtown at Main Street Square. It was a fun afternoon of laughing, skating, and drinking hot cocoa. Most of the students had at least one parent or family member that was able to come along. It was nice to see the families spending time together and see the students having so much fun. One first grader kept falling because she was laughing so hard that she could not keep her balance!

Overall, it has been a fun and blessed first half of the school year. Teachers are thankful to have had a great start and are hoping to finish out the year the same way.



Article & some photos by Jamie Howell, lower grades teacher.

People of the Light

We have been through a pretty traumatic year, wouldn't you say?

From a pandemic that has killed hundreds of thousands, to division and hatred, the world has turned into a raging fireball.

For many of us, it has changed the way we see the world.

Many have become bitter, hateful, angry, hopeless, pessimistic, and divisive.

We've begun to see the world through the eyes of the news media, social media, church media. Whatever viewpoint, agenda, or ideal we've identified with, we have sought after these sources to better "equip" ourselves against the opposition, widening the divide between "us" and "them". To a significant extent we have allowed our hope to be in a party, a person, a nation, a people, even the world itself.

Why are we surprised when we have become what we have beheld?

The saying goes that "we are what we eat". What have you been eating? What have you been digesting? What have you been ruminating on? What or who have you been following?

Followers of The Way don't see the world for what it is, but for what it could be.

In our following of Christ we quickly see that God sees the world very differently than

we do. He sees people very differently than we do. He doesn't see it all as wretched, washed up, or lost. He sees it through the lenses of His finished work on the cross. He sees it through the lenses of salvation. He sees it through the eyes of a loving father pursuing the heart of His children. His entire goal was to redeem and reconcile the world unto Himself. He did it. It's done. It's here already.

Are we trying to dismantle what God has already accomplished by persecuting one another, hating one another, breaking one another?

The call has always been reconciliation, NEVER resentment.

Ellen G. White states, "The very act of looking for evil in others develops evil in those who look."

Here in the Dakotas our goal is to be more and more like Jesus, awakening to the holiness, the good, and the love that is already within us because of the Spirit of God who lives inside of us.

We will refuse to be a people who focus on the night, because we are not people of the night; we are people of the light.

Are you missing love? Joy? Peace? Patience? Kindness? Goodness?

Then your missing "peace" is Jesus. Place your hope in our Living Hope, and find life abundant.

Psalm 46:6-9

"The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
He utters His voice, the earth melts.
The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*

Come, behold the works of the Lord,
how He has brought desolations on the earth.

He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
He burns the chariots with fire."

Worship Thoughts by Pr. Ricky Melendez



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 CRYSTAL RITTENBACH

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

dakotaadventist.org > ministries > men's ministries

DAA Inducts New Members to National Honor Society

Dakota Adventist Academy National Honor Society (NHS) had the privilege of inducting two new members on January 17. Colter Roffler, senior, and Tasian Subigca, sophomore, both have cumulative GPAs well over 3.5 and have demonstrated leadership and initiative public service efforts.

Working with the school's COVID restrictions, this year's NHS president, Welsey Kayser, arranged for an in-person induction program that allowed both students' parents to attend and witness their children's accomplishments be recognized. Wesley and Jessica Winistorfer, seniors, welcomed the new members with membership cards and pins.

The 2020-2021 DAA National Honor society members are: Wesley Kayser, Jessica Winistorfer, Colter Roffler, Anna McCarthy, PawLay Pway, and Tasian Subigca. This year's team is looking forward to growing in academics and service.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION

Article by Jovannah Poor Bear-Adams, English teacher.

From Prairie to Peru

Sabbath, January 23, the Mandan church said good-bye to members/friends, Bradley and Jessica Church. Brad and Jess moved to North Dakota from Michigan 4 and a half years ago when Brad got a job at Bismarck Aero Center. The couple are graduates of Andrews University; Brad with a business/aircraft mechanics degree and Jess a degree in education.

After obtaining his aircraft mechanics license, Brad went as a student missionary to the jungles of Guyana, South America. While in Guyana, he helped maintain an aircraft used primarily to help people in remote villages get medical help. Brad's desire to serve as a missionary grew even deeper and it became a more pressing topic of conversation between him and Jess.

They had been in Bismarck for two months when they received a random, and surprising, phone call from Brad's friend, Eben, a missionary with Peru Projects. Eben attended Aircraft Mechanics school with Brad and was calling to ask if they would be willing to come to Pucallpa, Peru as missionaries. Both Brad and Jess couldn't believe that this had happened. This was a dream come true, but why this timing? They had just moved. Brad had told his work that he would give them about five years and then he planned on pursuing mission work. There were many days of prayer, discussion, facing fears, talking with friends and family, and asking questions, finally a decision was made. They believed God was saying "not now".

After a few years and time spent in prayer and discussion, Brad and Jess decided to reach out to Eben at Peru Projects and see if the call received earlier was still an option. With the phone call it was clear the option to go and serve in Peru was very much still there. The need was greater now than before. Eben was flying for the project, helping with the Bible college, maintaining the aircraft, and performing administrative duties. This meant little time with family and time away from other necessary projects. He said it would be a dream come true if the couple could come. Brad could take over maintenance of the aircraft and help with other things as needed, and Jess could help in the community, maybe even teach English. So began the process of asking questions, praying, and weighing the options. This was not a choice they wanted to make lightly. It took a few weeks, but the decision was made. They would serve as missionaries with the Peru Project in Pucallpa, Peru.

Brad and Jess's flights were booked in December for departure in February through a third-party company. Two weeks ago, Jess looked at their flights and they had been canceled. She contacted the airline and was told all flights by this major airline were cancelled for this date in February. The airline had neglected to notify the third-party company about the cancellation. When the couple tried to rebook, the flights had quadrupled in price. Jess was able to find cheaper flights directly with another major airline which offered better connections to Peru, upgraded seats for the overnight flight, and more luggage allowance. With the 'new' airline, Brad is allowed to take his guitar on the plane as a personal item, another answer to prayer!

The Mandan Church wishes Brad and Jess safe travels and God's blessings as they embark on this missionary adventure. They will be greatly missed.

To get up-to-date news on their work in Peru, go to: www.fromprairietoperu.com



Article compiled by Julie Brude, Conference membership clerk & trust assistant, with input from Jessica Church's blog. Photos by Paulette Bullinger, Conference women's ministries director.

W O N D E R

2021

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

Dakota Pastors Meet Together

The past year has brought cancellations and isolation. Conference administration knew that pastors needed to get together to converse and lift each other up. In past years, January Pastors' Meetings have been held at the Dakota Conference Office but due to social distancing recommendations a new venue was needed. The Bismarck Seventh-day Adventist Church graciously opened their doors to the group which allowed for the meetings to take place in person.

Union College professor, Dr. Tom Toews presented to the pastors on Tuesday

afternoon and Wednesday morning. One of the topics was "how to study what we already know". Pastors appreciated his presentations and the question and answer time. "I really enjoyed Dr. Toews' portion of the meetings. He has been in the Dakotas and presented to us on several different occasions. Every time I come away from it understanding the Bible more." said one pastor.

Elder Mic Thurber, Mid-America Union ministerial director, joined via Zoom and spoke on Robert's Rules of Order and other board chair functions. Office and academy departments presented topics and announcements throughout the week to help pastors take communication back to their congregations. Each day, meetings were closed with a prayer time led by Conference Prayer Ministries Director Pastor Barry St. Clair.

This was the first Pastors' Meetings with Mark Weir as Conference president. "It has been wonderful being able to be together. We are blessed to be in the Dakotas." commented Elder Weir.

The next time pastors and office staff will be together is at Campmeeting in June.



Article and photo by Jodi Dossenko, Conference communication director.

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.

January -

- 30: Local Church Budget
- 31: Children's Ministry Training - via Zoom

February -

- 4: Dakotans Pray - via Zoom (7pm CT)
- 6: Local Church Budget
- 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

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

Blessed & Kept

May you have perseverance.

May you find yourself with an abundance of energy and desire to do your work well.
May you push through the moments when your mind and body tell you to stop.

May you remember that no one is counting on you
Everyone is counting on the God who gives you strength.
May you find comfort in the fact that nothing depends on you. And everything depends on the spirit within you.

May you not ask for a lighter burden, but for broader shoulders with which to carry that burden.

May you press on because God will strengthen you for the journey.
May you push forward because you know you can.
May you persevere because your source of life is never ending.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

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

January 28 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken in Stutsman County, North Dakota by Chrystal Rittenbach.

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](#)

- [!\[\]\(f15d3c54be60b4fd0ce1da9fb3f67256_img.jpg\) Dakota Conference Website](#)
- [!\[\]\(7bf135d42c40a6430c927b2fd03d7659_img.jpg\) Dakota Conference Facebook](#)
- [!\[\]\(2bcc37677ea6b96900e4d746ad300082_img.jpg\) Dakota Conference Education](#)
- [!\[\]\(b62812e390f75b509ead0f847e76b4ce_img.jpg\) Dakota Adventist Academy](#)
- [!\[\]\(702f396a3c354a80d179cf62e75a5343_img.jpg\) Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps](#)
- [!\[\]\(c4a9e26ffee79396bf5db4da66793f2a_img.jpg\) Dirt Kicker Charity Run](#)
- [!\[\]\(05829f1dfede3fb516a7a7a32441dc04_img.jpg\) Dirt Kicker Run Facebook](#)

Copyright © 2021 Dakota Conference, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

