

DAKOTA DISPATCH

Sharing the unchanging love of Jesus in a changing world.



Nothing to Fear

This is the eighteenth 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 6: In the Providence of God - Part 2

In the spring of the next year, S.B. Whitney, with John Richards, who spoke German, visited a group of thirty-five Sabbath-keepers. After a shaky start, due to the negative reaction of the Germans to the ever-present prophetic charts of the early Adventist itinerant ministry (perhaps because they thought of it as a form of idolatry, or were startled by the grotesque representations of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation), the meeting proved to be one of rich fellowship between believers of like faith.⁵

At the 1879 camp meeting at Sioux Falls, during which the Dakota Conference was organized, James White, there to officiate at the organization, received a bundle of the first issue of the new German missionary journal *Die Stimme Der Wahrheit* ("The Voice of Truth ") and encouraged its wide circulation among the "Russians " in Dakota.⁶ Also at this meeting, Pullen and Richards became licensed ministers of the new conference, and the "companies of Sabbath-keepers at ... Milltown, Emmanuel Creek ... Madison, and Wolf Creek " were taken under the conference's "watch care." Some or all of these were groups of German-Russian Sabbath-keepers.⁷

Shortly after this, Whitney issued a call for volunteers to canvass the German settlements with the new publication.⁸

For the next two years, Whitney occasionally visited the German groups, and a few of their number visited and even united with English-speaking churches near their homes,⁹ but the need for a Germanspeaking minister to work for them became increasingly obvious.

In November of 1881, German-born Louis Richard Conradi came to Dakota to work among the Germans. Beginning his work among Sunday keeping Mennonites at Brotherfield, eight miles north of Parker, Conradi initially had little success because of "the use of stimulants and the great prejudice against immersion" on the

part of the group with whom he had begun working. Shifting his emphasis to a group of "Baptist Mennonites" in the same community, Conradi received a better response, and after three months of patient, persistent effort, during which time he delivered fifty-four sermons, visited two hundred families, and distributed a large quantity of literature, the German evangelist conducted his first Sabbath meeting at Brotherfield, with "four precious souls obeying their Master's will."

Conradi reported that, "About twenty more are convinced, all hoping to keep it (the Sabbath) soon, but love for their church, and their peculiar custom of considering and weighing matters for a long time before doing, are as yet obstacles in their way."

At first, the Mennonite leaders, seeking to avoid division in the community "resolved not to molest those who are convinced of the true Sabbath, also to recognize those still as God's children who should commence to keep it", but later "decided to forbid the Lord's Supper, not only to those that would observe the Sabbath, but even to those who thought it was right." This action of the church leaders brought the issue to a head, and on July 22, eighteen of about 30 persons affected by the ruling attended Conradi's Sabbath service.¹⁰

In the meantime, Conradi had begun to work among the Sabbath keeping German groups at Milltown and Immanuel Creek, where he soon learned of the damage that had been done by the time lapse since the Germans had first heard the Adventist message. Conradi encountered severe prejudice, particularly among the leaders of the people who had, according to the evangelist, "been working against us for nearly two years" but was able to work with the members of one group who were dissatisfied with the high-handed action of the leaders in disfellowshipping dissident members "forever" and was successful in organizing the first German Seventh-day Adventist church in North America at Milltown April 9, 1882 with a charter membership of fourteen.

Among the obstacles Conradi listed that had to be overcome before the Milltown group was willing to unite with the Adventist church were an aversion to the ordinance of humility (foot washing), the fact that Adventists did not generally share their convictions against taking judicial oaths and observe their requirement that the heads of women be covered in public, the ownership of guns by Adventist believers, and the use by the Germans of fermented wine. The wearing of flowers on hats and ruffles on dresses by some Adventist women was also a stumbling block to the Brotherfield Mennonites.

Jacob Reiswig was chosen elder of the newly organized Milltown church. Later a sod church was built near the James River on Philip Reiswig's land. Shortly after Milltown, churches were established at Brotherfield (September) and Immanuel Creek (April, 1883); the German work in Dakota Territory was firmly established with nearly seventy members.¹¹

From the group at Milltown, even before they were officially Seventh-day Adventists, literature of the church had begun to be sent into the German settlements in southern Russia.¹²

Several of these tracts found their way into the hands of a neighbor of Gerhard Perk in a Mennonite colony in southern Russia about 1879. Three years later he told Perk about them, describing them as so dangerous that "even an earnest member of the Brethren Church might be led astray by them." His curiosity aroused, Perk begged to see the tracts, and after promising not to show them to anyone, he received a copy of *The Third Angel's Message* which he took to the haymow to read in secret... Later in the year he accepted completely the Seventh-day Adventist message.

A correspondence developed between Perk and Conradi, Conradi convincing Perk that he should sell Adventist literature in Russia and Perk convincing Conradi that he should come to Russia and work among the Germans.¹³

5. *Ibid.*, May 15, 1879, 158, 159.

6. *Ibid.*, July 24, 1879, 36.

7. *Ibid.*, July 31, 1879, 47.

8. *Ibid.*, August 14, 1879, 61.

9. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1880, 77; August 19, 1880, 141.

10. *Ibid.*, December 13, 1881, 378; February 21, 1882, 123; June 6, 1882, 364; August 1, 1882, 492.

11. *Ibid.*, March 21, 1882, 187, 188; April 18, 1882, 251; August 1, 1882, 492; October 10, 1882, 636; April 17, 1883, 250; Adeline Reimche, *op. cit.*, 5. Conradi's observation about the hesitation of the Milltown group regarding the foot washing rite is interesting, as is his comment (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 1, 1882, 492) that the Milltown believers were previously Lutheran, when compared with Eldon Pullen's account of meeting with Baptists who practiced foot washing! To say that these were simply two different religious groups (which Pullen admitted existed contemporaneously in Milltown - *Ibid.*; January 2, 1877, 4) seems reasonable except for the remarkable similarities between Pullen's 1879 account and the c. 1962 recollections of Jacob Judson Reiswig (*op. cit.*) that would seem to identify his father, Jacob Reiswig Jr. (whom J.J. Reiswig identifies as a Lutheran!), as the man Pullen met after the Baptist meeting in Milltown in 1879. Also interesting is Pullen's report that the man he initially visited soon convinced his wife, his mother and his stepfather of the Sabbath, a family relationship that while not alone conclusive, does fit Jacob Reiswig's situation and lends additional overall credence to the notion. On the other hand, it should be noted that there are real problems in J.J. Reiswig's recollections. For example, he places himself, at nine months old, in that first encounter with Pullen, but gives his birth date as January 30, 1883.

Perhaps the solution to the apparent discrepancies lies in the obvious religious diversity of the South Dakota German settlers, and in the fact that they, more than once modified their beliefs and practices after studying and learning new ideas. Indeed, J.J. Reiswig indicates that about 19 families of Lutherans, including Jacob Reiswig, at Milltown had decided to study the Bible together", perhaps to study such new, diverse ideas as the foot washing service, when Pullen first visited Milltown in 1879.

12. *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 21, 1882, 187, 188.

13. "Gerhard Perk," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, *op. cit.*, 975, 976.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear*:

Chapter 6, "In the Providence of God" - Part 3 by Robert K. DuPuy

God Hears Me

Recently I've been learning a lot about the Holy Spirit. Through different experiences and interactions I've started to become more aware that the Spirit is always moving, always waiting. One such area of my life I've noticed the Spirit's presence is in prayer. Prayer had always been an area of difficulty for me. Like many people, I struggle with unanswered prayer: Why does God answer some prayers and not others? The Psalmist David wrestled with the same thing. In the psalms of lament, David asks of God, "Why are you far off?" "Why have you forsaken me?" "How long oh LORD?" It's comforting to know that a man of such faith also struggled with this issue. I don't have a solid answer to the question of how God chooses to answer prayer, but what I hear the Spirit saying to me in the Psalms is that God does hear.

"Blessed be the LORD! For He has heard the voice of my pleas for mercy" (Ps 28:6).

He is good, "Oh give thanks to the LORD for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Ps 107:1).

All He asks me to do is to trust in those things and wait for Him, "But for you O LORD, do I wait; it is you, O Lord my God, who will answer" (Ps 38:15).

There is a lot I do not understand about the Holy Spirit or about prayer. But what I've learned is that for now, it is enough just to know that He is good, that He has moved mightily in the past, and He asks me to wait and see how He will do it again.

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

The Power of Prayer

A prayer anointing service was held at the Dakota Conference 2021 Campmeeting earlier this month. About 20 people presented various prayer requests, were prayed for and anointed by Pastors Sam Thomas, Terry Pflugrad, Mark Piotrowski, and Barry St. Clair.

The service had three main parts. First, a prayer of humility and confession was offered by Dr. Mark Piotrowski, Conference VP of administration and education superintendent, inviting each person to yield their hearts to Christ in confession. Then, those gathered prayed with and for one another, and for the collected prayer requests posted throughout Campmeeting week on the board in the prayer room. Finally, the pastors prayed for each participant and personally anointed them with oil, asking in faith for God to move upon each life as He saw fit.

"The anointing service was powerful. The pastors took their time and prayed for each person requesting anointing," said Janice Koslowski-Dickhaut. "There were all ages participating which was touching, me not knowing the others' needs. Afterwards, one participant was relieved; burdens lifted. The whole service was very powerful."

"Four people, four different situations, and four solutions. God gave me the opportunity to anoint and pray for all four people. We lifted up their request believing God would answer in the way that He knew best. Each one was experiencing physical pain and emotional baggage which they left in the hands of the Almighty. God heard and answered their prayers that day, that moment, there is no doubt in my mind," shared Pastor Sam Thomas.

For many, the number of hours spent in prayer during the past year has likely increased. The challenge we now face is guarding this special and sacred invitation by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to participate with Him in the ministry of intercession and reconciliation as our schedules start to fill up again.

Future plans include forming a Dakota Conference Prayer Committee and hosting a Prayer Conference annually.

God desires to do great and wondrous things for Dakota families and communities. He invites us to ask His "will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

You are needed by your local church prayer ministry. Information and training is available to support and bolster your efforts planting, watering, and harvesting in the Lord's Vineyard. You can contact your pastor, or Pr. Barry

St. Clair, Dakota Conference Prayer Ministry Coordinator at redriversda@gmail.com or at 701-537-3931.



Anointing Service at Dakota Campmeeting June 12, 2021



DAA's Restrooms Renovation – Why it Matters

If you were at Campmeeting this year you would have seen the new restrooms that have been created in the old space down by the chapel. At the very least, even if you did not see them for yourself, you would have heard of them. Many Dakota Adventist Academy staff and students put countless hours into completing these spaces to be ready for Campmeeting, and I was pleased with the reaction of those in attendance.

We are so blessed in the Dakotas to have had so much gifting come our way. Most of these donations have been used to help make Adventist Education affordable to those who could otherwise not attend – and this is an important task. After all, we are charged with taking care of those who are less fortunate than we are, and never has that been more important than in these past two years. “So why,” the critics ask, “are we spending money on bathrooms when the ones we have work?” To many of us, restrooms may be just that – restrooms. So what’s the big deal?

In a nutshell, allow me to sum up the importance of this project. So often we live by the adage, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” To these people, changing/updating is comparable to saying that the original design was flawed, or at the least, that care was not put into the original design. The reality is so much different than that. The reality is that every time we spruce up a yard or renew a space, it actually means that we want to look our best – that we take pride in what we have. This releases feelings of greater self-worth, a dignity in our ownership. When God commanded the temple to be built, He wanted it to be grand and maintained to be grand. You see, the way that we maintain our house is an indication of the gratitude that we have for what we have. Holes in carpets are more than mere trip hazards. Hanging screens, clouded glass, worn furniture, doors that don’t hang correctly – all are indicators that what we have is not important enough to care for. And here at DAA, although Eric and Ryan are geniuses at keeping things in repair, there are always those big projects that we seem to lack both the time and the money to get to – so they go to the bottom of a list.

Here is where some recent donors have been a huge blessing. Rather than giving untagged donations that so often go into operations or worthy student funding – both important to making the school viable and keeping it open – they label their giving for facility upgrade. Sometimes, they have ideas for the funds but other times, they trust us with making sound renovation decisions. One giver asked me, “What would you like to see done?” I thought we were just dreaming so I talked about the bathrooms and was surprised when a check came in to be used to complete that project.

Lately, I have been questioned about the viability of continuing to operate DAA. Last year, only 18 of a possible 85 Dakota students were in attendance. Coupled with the pandemic-caused slowdown in international students which dropped our student numbers to a low of 33. But oh, the difference that has been made in the lives of those 33. I am seeing a missing demographic, the numbers of young people in our churches is dramatically diminishing, particularly as they live through and exit these high school years. And while I know that coming to DAA or some other Adventist school is not some panacea that will see our people remain in our faith, I also know that it is an advantage that I want for my children.

“What has this to do with new restrooms?” Simply – three things:

1. In Luke 19:14, the king who is leaving for a while tells his servants to do business and occupy until he comes. I believe we are charged with occupying, which includes beautifying our space, along with everything else. And to that end, along with trying to build enrollment and fund the school with all that is needed to operate, including supporting our students who have financial needs that exceed their means, we will continue to beautify and upgrade one space at a time.
2. If you have been a donor in the past, I want to thank you and I want to assure you that we will take care of your investment by keeping what we have up to date and looking awesome – an attractive place where people want to send their children to school. I also want to encourage you, if you have not been a donor before but have the wherewithal to give, consider a project at DAA.
3. Finally, if you are high school-aged or if you are a parent or grandparent of such a teenager, please prayerfully consider enrolling at DAA. I have only been here 4 years but have been privileged to see relationships built and lives changed. They graduate and leave, and I fully expect to see many if not all of them again – either here at Alumni Weekend or other gatherings, or in the earth made new.

Matthew 6:19-20



Article and photos by Anthony Oucharek, Dakota Adventist Academy principal.

CALLING ALL DAA, SRA, & PVA ALUMNI!

HONOR CLASSES (2020):

1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966,
1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991,
1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016

HONOR CLASSES (2021):

1947, 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967,
1972, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992,
1997, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017



ALUMNI WEEKEND 2021
WHEN: OCTOBER 1-2
WHERE: DAKOTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY

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.

July -

- 1: Dakotans Pray via Zoom (7pm)
- **3: Local Church Budget**
- 5: Conference Office Closed for Independence Day
- **10: NAD Women's Ministries**
- 14-18: Cub Camp (ages 8-10) at Northern Lights
- **17: Local Church Budget**
- 18-25: Junior Camp (ages 11-13) at Northern Lights
- **24: Dakota Challenge**
- 25-Aug 1: Teen Retreat (ages 14-17) at Northern Lights
- **31: Dakota Evangelism**
- 31: Outdoor Church at Beaver Lake, ND

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

Blessed & Kept

May God rejuvenate your soul

In the midst of your work, may you find rest.

May your posture towards work be one of privilege not of obligation.

May this posture come with sincerity because you know that you are a human being not a human doing

May your production and efficiency increase because of this better, healthier posture.

May the brief moments of reflection that pop up throughout the day be filled with motivating gratitude.

Gratitude for what you have.

Gratitude for the time you still have to do more.

Gratitude that even if you don't do it, you are still valuable and loved.

May today be a springboard for the person you are becoming and indeed already are.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

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

July 1 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken by Charles Metz of the Liberty Memorial Bridge 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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- [!\[\]\(d8f7165d5a8d1eba426ea452457190e5_img.jpg\) Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps](#)
- [!\[\]\(f608c4821f4fa8f3141b1baf96fa88f9_img.jpg\) Dirt Kicker Charity Run](#)

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