

DAKOTA DISPATCH

Sharing the unchanging love of Jesus in a changing world.



Nothing to Fear

This is the nineteenth 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 3

Conradi arrived in Russia in July of 1886, the first Adventist minister in Russia (Philip Reiswig had been a layman). After visiting scattered Sabbath-keepers, Conradi and Perk organized the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Russia at Berdebulat, near the Black Sea, with nineteen members. Among the group was G. Tetz, who later became a pioneer worker in southern Russia and Siberia, among both Germans and Russians.¹⁴

Conradi found many in the area who spoke of "the good old man" (Philip Reiswig) who had brought the truth to them from America. "Only the day of judgement," reported Conradi, "will show how many souls have been brought to the knowledge of the truth through the publications circulated by that faithful old brother."

One of the homes visited by Philip Reiswig was that of his brother-in-law, John Werner, whose son Frederick had married Reiswig's daughter, Marie Elizabeth in 1877. Mrs. Elmer Reimche of Lodi, California, John Werner's great-granddaughter believes that the Werners were Seventh-day Adventists by the time they immigrated to America in October of 1884, stopping over briefly in South Dakota before settling in Wells County, North Dakota, where they formed part of the nucleus of the Bowdon church organized some years later. From South Dakota, Adventism had traveled halfway around the world and back again to help establish the youthful church in a new area just 300 miles from its point of departure!

The Milltown church also played a more direct role in the establishment and growth of the Adventist Church in North Dakota through "Milltown missionaries" who later settled in North Dakota, helping to create pockets of Adventism in such places as Harvey-Sheyenne, where Conrad Tebelius and his wife (Jacob Reiswig's daughter, Mary) homesteaded in the mid 1890's, and Lincoln-Valley, where other members of the Reiswig family settled by the turn of the century.

In addition, the Milltown church produced a bumper crop of Adventist ministers, including Valentine and Carl Leer, Conrad Reiswig and J.J. Reiswig who were active in establishing and sustaining numerous German

churches in both Dakotas over the years.¹⁵

The beginnings of the Adventist work among the Germans in Russia would also mean that large numbers of German-Russian immigrants to North Dakota in the closing years of the nineteenth century would have an even more thorough exposure to Seventh-day Adventist teachings than did their predecessors who settled in South Dakota years before; perhaps this was part of the reason for their receptiveness to Adventist evangelistic efforts on the Dakota frontier.

Perhaps Joseph Rott was such an individual. Rott, his wife, and four children immigrated to America in 1889 from Glueckstal, South Russia. After a short stay in Eureka, South Dakota, he homesteaded eight miles southwest of Streeter at Richville (Logan County). His family history states that Rott joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1890, apparently a charter member of the German church organized by Henry Schultz in the same year.¹⁶

Rott soon became a leader in that early church and a very effective lay evangelist. Rott, with his large, musically talented family, began to hold evening meetings in his home, inviting the neighbors to come and sing with them. Older residents of the Streeter area even today talk about the beautiful music that floated across the prairies of the Streeter flat as buggies were parked and horses tied by their owners who were coming to "Father Rott's" home at set of sun.

After the music, Rott would preach to the people, and as he touched on subjects unique to Seventh-day Adventist teachings, Rott invited the neighbors to come and worship with the little Richville group on the next Sabbath.¹⁷

Retiring to Napoleon (Logan County) in 1919, Rott once again opened his home to his neighbors, and before long, the Napoleon church was organized also.¹⁸

Rott took the job of church elder seriously, and if an ordained minister was not available when Rott had a candidate prepared for baptism, he administered the rite himself, often cutting the ice on a frozen pond rather than waiting till spring.¹⁹

Other early converts of Henry Schultz in the mid-1890's were the members of a group of former Baptists and others, who formed the nucleus of the Cathay church which appears to have been organized prior to 1900.²⁰

Preaching from Bible prophecies was the mainstay of these early ministers, with emphasis on current world events prophesied of as signs of the Second Coming of Christ. One of these men, Edward Loeppke, who homesteaded in the Bowdon area and worked among the German churches in several states, received stern rebukes from his startled ministerial brothers, however, when he boldly predicted that men would fly through the air and sail in ships beneath the surface of the sea before the Second Advent.²¹

In the early 1890's, a group of German homesteaders near the newly formed communities of Fessenden and Manfred, came to the conclusion from their study of the Bible, that there might be new truth for them in the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Writing to some Adventist headquarters office, the settlers asked for a worker to come and explain the teachings of the church to them. Elder H.F. Graf was sent, and immediately began Bible studies among the settlers. In a short time twenty adults were baptized, who through witnessing to others, were soon part of a group of church members too large to continue to meet in any of the homes of the

members.

A site was chosen about five miles south of Manfred for the location of a church building. Known as the Fessenden church until 1910, when it was renamed Manfred, this first Seventh-day Adventist church building in Wells County was one of the first in North Dakota as well.²²

14. "Union of Soviet Socialist Republic," *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, *op. cit.*, 1348.

15. Reimche, *op. cit.*, 6,7.

16. *Streeter, North Dakota Golden Jubilee*, *loc. cit.*

17. Based on 1975 and 1976 conversations with residents of the Streeter - Napoleon area and members of the Streeter and Lehr churches.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. Telephone interview with Mrs. Ervin Funk, Concord, California and Mrs. Emma Banik, Newbury Park, California, daughters of D.D. Kurtz and Andrew Dietz, two early Cathay church members, October, 1976.

21. Conversation between Isaac Loeppke (Son of Edward Loeppke), of Carrington, North Dakota, and Edward Scheresky of Jamestown, North Dakota, 1976.

22. See discussion in chapter 5 of this book.

Next time from *Nothing to Fear*:

Chapter 6, "In the Providence of God" - Part 4 by Robert K. DuPuy

A God Shaped Hole

Do you ever feel like something is just off? Like there's really nothing wrong, and yet nothing seems quite right... I have felt that way many times and I find myself asking the question, "What is going on?" There's nothing actually wrong, there's nothing out of the ordinary, in fact everything seems to be exactly the same as when everything is going well. So what in the world is going on?

If you are like me, there are times when devotional life is amazing. It is filling and fulfilling, it is passionate and life changing. Then there are days when it is merely going through the motions, because time with God is so important, even when you don't feel like it. But there are also days when the world gets in the way, and somehow or another you don't do your devotions for a day or two. It's easy to not even notice, and soon it may even feel like the habit is gone or even unnecessary. But the longer that time is not taken, the more it becomes missed. I know that for me I don't always miss it at first, it just seems like a normal day. But for whatever reason the day just wasn't what it should be. Nothing goes wrong, but nothing goes right either. Pretty soon it becomes clear that something is amiss.

Genesis 2:18 says, "It is not good for the man to be alone...". There are a few reasons for this, but one of them is simple: Humanity was made to live in community. Not only were we made to live in communion with one another, we were made to live in communion with God. "For God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). God did not want to prove that we are unworthy to be with Him, He wanted to make sure that we are able to be with Him. John 10:10 says, "I have come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly." There is only one way to have that abundant life, and that is through a relationship with Jesus.

Those times that I have found my day to be just off, almost always if I look back at my day I realize that I missed

my time with Jesus that morning. It is amazing how consistently this is true. The longer I go without it, the more I try to fill that need with other things, distractions from what is really wrong. But ultimately it is like trying to fill a wicker basket with water. It holds up for a minute, but the moment I stop pouring stuff in, it is almost instantly empty. Only God can fill that God shaped hole, and taking the time to fill it properly is where we learn to live the abundant life that God wants for us.

Worship thoughts by Pr. Justin Walker, associate pastor of the Cleveland / Edgeley / Jamestown / New Home church district in North Dakota.

Miracle in India

In 2000, when a major push for evangelistic efforts in the nation of India were going on, I went there myself with an evangelist friend of mine, along with my sister-in-law, who was a nurse. We were there for a 3-week series.

During the meetings it became apparent to us that most of the 3,000 people we were ministering to were sick. And because they were sick, they were tired and very weary. Each night after the meeting the three of us would stand in front of lines of people desiring prayer. One by one they would come to us, most often taking our hand to put on their foreheads for prayer. It was because of our ability to touch their foreheads that we all knew that most of these people were suffering with fever.

One morning, early on, we met and agreed that we needed to plead with God for the gift of healing. It was hard to minister the Word of God to people who were so sick. And so, we prayed, and prayed.

Then one day while visiting in a village, with the question in mind of whether or not our prayer for the gift of healing would be answered, I overheard, through a translator, a mother say that her son's fever was gone after an evening prayer session. It wasn't long after that when we realized more and more heads were cool to the touch. And by the end of the series EVERY head was cool and the people who were once tired and weary were instead happy and hopeful!

Other miracles took place as well. One night, while I was standing on the periphery of the crowd while my friend spoke, a man approached me with an armload of fruit. As he set the fruit at my feet, I asked him what the gift was for. He explained, in broken, but intelligible English, that one night he came after the meeting for prayer. That he did so because he was very "sick inside and had a fever." However, because of the crowd, he couldn't get close enough for me to pray with him. I have to explain that the "lines" were not always orderly and it was not unusual for a crush of people to be around you. He went on to explain that the best he could do was touch my elbow, and that when he did "I was healed inside and my fever was gone." I was shaken by his words. He reached out in faith and God honored that faith... through me! It was a humbling moment.

At another time the line in front of my evangelist friend parted as a mother ran forward with her infant crying, "Pray, pray, pray!" My friend looked down at a completely limp baby who was grey in color and not breathing. Putting his hand on the child he later said how the child was extremely hot with fever. Being a former paramedic, as he prayed, he wondered to himself what he might do for the child after he finished praying. When he finished praying, he saw the child looking up at him, in perfect color and health. Praise the Lord!

Before we went, I cannot say that any of us would have said that we had the gift of healing. God, however, in response to our need to reach the people with His Word, honored, in abundance, our pleas for the gift. Jesus said, "Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be

complete” (Jn. 16:24). Our “joy” was in seeing the happy faces of the people night after night as God moved among us.

Today, in the Dakotas, there are those who are afflicted on many fronts. Certainly, the same Lord who worked among us in India is with us today. As we see the needs in our communities, let us in confidence, and a sense of our desperate need, ask God for His help so that our joy, here and now, may be complete.

Article by Pr. Dave Moench, pastor of the Huron / Mitchell church district in South Dakota.

Prayer Ministries in the Dakotas

Prayer ministries is a privileged and vital part of church life. The opportunities to invest time in communion with God, and fellowship with one another across the Dakotas continue to grow amidst one of the more challenging years in recent memory.

Prayer fuels the engine which pulls all other ministries in its train.

Here’s some of what’s happening:

- Dakotans Pray monthly prayer Zoom call to lift up specific areas of emphasis in Dakotas;
- Ten Days of Prayer, which began as Global Rain in the mid-90s - tendaysofprayer.org;
- Prayer Room for reflection and prayer between scheduled meetings at Dakota Campmeeting with a prayer board to leave requests;
- An anointing service for specific prayer needs.

Other opportunities include a prayer call for the Mid-America Union Conference, the Southwestern Union, and the Lake Union of Seventh-day Adventists and their leadership each Wednesday morning from 7:30-8:30am CT. This prayer line has been praying together for more than 16 years. The phone number is 605.468.8036 and at the prompt enter the code 270973#.

There is a monthly North American Division all-night prayer call the first Thursday of each month beginning at 9:00pm CT. You may join this call at 404.891.6338 and enter the access code 772937#. This prayer call can be joined at any time throughout the night till about 5:00am.

The Dakota Conference Prayer Ministries department has partnered for more than a year with KPOG.org FM aired in West Des Moines, Iowa. This partnership also includes the Prayer Ministries of the Iowa-Missouri Conference and their weekly live prayer program Bold2Pray. Several Dakotans have been frequent guests for half-hour segments on the show. It can be heard locally from the KPOG website, or on Facebook Live. B2P airs each Thursday from 11:00 am-3:00pm.



DAKOTANS PRAY

First Thursdays 7-8:30 pm CDT 6-7:30 pm MDT

Zoom Meeting ID: 895 8855 6393

Phone in- 312 626 6799

Passcode: 885424

redriversda@gmail.com

Photo by Jack Sharp on Unsplash

Article by Pr. Barry St. Clair, Conference prayer ministries coordinator and associate pastor of the Fargo / Red River / Wahpeton church district in North Dakota.

Prayer Partnership Desired

As you have doubtless been aware, our international students have made up between 15 and 25 percent of Dakota Adventist Academy's population over quite a number of years. This last year really hit us hard as we had only four international students: three from Korea and one from Canada.

When we think of international students, two of the first things that come to mind are that these students are always full-pay, and that they are bringing outside dollars into our organization. But there is so much more to the picture than just revenue. Our Dakotan - and all of our American - students gain so much in the way of cultural understanding and diversity. Some of our American students embrace new languages; occasionally picking up a foreign language credit in the process. A few of our Americans students have even gone to the homes of our international students over vacations, availing themselves of the opportunity to be immersed in a different culture - to become more global citizens.

Revenue aside, looking strictly at the value of DAA to international students, the big thing that ought to be in our minds is the opportunity that we have to witness and answer our calling to "...spread the gospel to every kindred, tongue, and people" (Matthew 24:14 and 28:19-20). Many of our international students have gone on to higher education at Adventist colleges and several have even been baptized into Seventh-day Adventist church membership. While our primary goal is not to create Adventists, this is a natural outcome as they learn to become "...thinkers and not mere reflectors of other men's thoughts" (White, *Education*, para.). Generally, our international children (Canada aside) arrive with little to no knowledge of Jesus Christ - but while they have come in empty, we are sending them out full; as they return to their homes, they take a knowledge of a divine Savior

with them, and they are forever changed in the process.

For this coming school year, students from several African countries have inquired about the school, but when they actually applied to come here, their visas were denied at the embassy level. Interest from India and several South American countries have also been expressed, but their borders remain closed to travel in and out of their countries, so our international student numbers continue to drop.

We are asking you, the readers of this Dispatch, to join us in praying for three requests as we seek God's answer to our school's and our students' needs:

1. We ask that if God wants these international students here that the metaphoric seas will part and that they will be able to come. We truly want God's will to be done, and if it is best that they not be here, whether for them or for us, that he continues to maintain this blockade and He assist us in accepting it.
2. We also ask you to pray for our own Dakotan students who need to be here, where they can be "...taught of the Lord" (Isaiah 54:13). Convict them of his will for their lives, if this is part of his will, and fill us to overflowing.
3. Finally, we ask that you join us in prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on DAA as we enter this post-pandemic time period, that God's will will be done, and that He will, ultimately, "...save our children" (Isaiah 49:25).



Article by Anthony Oucharek, Dakota Adventist Academy principal. Photo courtesy of Getty Images.

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 -

- 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

August -

- 2-5: Pastors' Retreat at Northern Lights
- 5: Dakotans Pray via Zoom (7pm)
- 7: Local Church Budget
- 10-11: Teacher In-services at Conference Office
- 14: NAD Christian Record
- 14: Outdoor Church in Washburn at Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, ND
- 15: DAA Registration
- 20-21: Spiritual Feast at Flag Mountain
- 21: Local Church Budget

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

Blessed & Kept

May you encounter the glory of God.

When Moses asks that God would show him God's glory.
God responds "I will make all my goodness pass before you."

May every person passing by you today give you a tangible feeling of God's goodness passing by you. For they are made in the image of God.

Moses was not permitted to see God's face. Just as only one priest was permitted in the Most Holy place once per year.

But when Jesus died the curtain was torn in the temple.

May you encounter the uncovered face of God.
May the mystery and majesty of the glory of God fill you with awe.

May you reflect this glory like a mirror.

May you absorb the glory of God let it shine onto others so that all the earth is touched by the glory emanating from you.

May you relish in your participation in the renewal and reconciliation of the world.
For it is the glory of God that heals, unites, and makes new.

Written by Casey Bartlett.

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

July 15 Dispatch Photo



Photo taken by Sara Erickson in Stutsman 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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