

Nothing to Fear

This is the 73rd 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 13: Legacy of Uncertainty - Part 7

Handbills proclaiming, "Thus saith the Lord, Probation will close February 6, 1924, Jesus will return to the earth February 6, 1925" were distributed among the Germans in the Wells-Foster-Kidder-Stutsman County area in 1924, and persistent accounts tell of at least one group of people at Cathay, who allegedly assembled in the church the night of February 5, awaiting the Lord's coming at the midnight.⁴⁰

Along with these Rowenite features, the influence of the German Reform Movement can be documented as well, both in this period and later in the 1930s after the Rowen movement had dissolved. Indeed some members of the Cathay church, singled out by the North Dakota Conference session at Fessenden in June of 1923 and disbanded for alleged involvement with the "reform movement", seemed to have lost confidence in Mrs. Rowen's teachings by at least the end of the year when she began to advocate the 1925 date of Christ's return. Other evidence indicates that the break with Mrs. Rowen for some may have come even sooner, over her teachings regarding the divinity of Christ.⁴¹

The wording of the resolution disbanding the Cathay church, moreover, lends some credence to the affirmation of some who were part of the Cathay church in those difficult days, that the members disfellowshipped in June 1923 had not fully joined with the "reform

movement" even though they had listened to both Mrs. Rowen and the Germans. The recommendation stated that "the majority members of the Seventh-day Adventist church located at Cathay, North Dakota are *in sympathy with and in spirit have identified themselves with another movement*, and as a result have been advocating principles which are subversive to the faith of the Seventh-day Adventist body" (emphasis supplied).⁴²

The Cathay church is an interesting case in point, illustrating perhaps most clearly what we have been theorizing. The events relating to its disbanding in 1923 were highly charged with emotion. Since the majority of the members (including most of the trustees of the church building which was owned by the members) were disfellowshipped, they retained use of the church building to the consternation of the conference administration. The reorganized Cathay church apparently met in members' homes.

Those who remember the disbanding of the church unanimously agree that the action was taken for alleged involvement with the Rowenite movement even though some of them deny the truth of the accusation. The documentary evidence on the subject; however, is quite interesting.

In the August 4, 1931 *Northern Union Reaper*, F.F. Schwindt and R.R. Sietz, reporting on an evangelistic meeting in Cathay state:

"We find that it takes considerable work to break down the prejudice and clear away the misunderstanding in regard to our message which has arisen out of the Rowenitish paroxysm which so prominently manifested itself here on February 6, some years ago."

But in the August 18 *Reaper*, Schwindt and Sietz report: "We also feel it a duty to say a few words in regard to the opposition here, from the Seventh-day Adventist Reformers, so-called. Readers of the *Reaper* are, no doubt, acquainted with these people that had to leave our church some years ago. Their main burden, they say, is to reform the fallen church, Seventh-day Adventists."

In this latter report, Schwindt and Bietz indicate that the "movement" in the Cathay church for which it was disbanded by the North Dakota Conference in 1923, was the same one still active in 1931. Yet it is described in quite different terms and is apparently distinct from the Rowenite problem mentioned in the earlier report.⁴³

Contemporary records even call into question the popular notion that groups of Rowen's followers in North Dakota gathered in such places as Cathay, waiting for Jesus to come at midnight, February 6, 1925.

- **40**. A copy of the flyer is included in the photo section of this book; *Northern Union Reaper*, August 4, 1931, 6; a series of telephone conversations with R.R. Bietz of La Crescenta, California and Harold Kurtz of Reedsport, Oregon during 1977.
- 41. Telephone conversations with Harold Kurtz of Reedsport, Oregon and Lillian Pepple of Yakima, Washington during 1978, for example, at least indicate that not all of the former Cathay church members assembled at the church the night of February 5. Also, a 1977 conversation with B.R. Huff of Carrington, North Dakota indicates that a key Cathay leader, Daniel Kurtz rejected Mrs. Rowen because of her teachings concerning the divinity of Christ. The citing of this issue, (which is not recorded in readily available manuscripts) lends credence to Huff's assertion.
- 42. North Dakota Conference Session Record Book, op. cit., II, (unpaged), draft of resolution disbanding Cathay church.
- **43.** *Northern Union Reaper*, August 4, 1931, 6; August 18, 1931, 8. Telephone conversations in November of 1977, with R.R. Bietz, and with Harold Kurtz and Emma Dietz Banick, children of members of the Cathay church in 1923, although they differ widely in their analysis of the degree of actual involvement of the church; show agreement that Rowenite influence was used as a rationale for the disbanding of the Cathay church. Harold Kurtz and others acknowledge, on the other hand, (again differing in degree of involvement only) that the movement active in Cathay in 1931 was the German Reform Movement (as is also implied by Schwindt and Bietz's description).

Next time from Nothing to Fear:

Chapter 13: Legacy of Uncertainty - Part 8 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:

dakotaadventist.org/communiques/dakota-dispatch

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



Dear Dakota Dispatch Readers,

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your continued support and readership. I hope this communiqué has been a valuable source of information and entertainment throughout 2023.

Please note that this marks the last *Dakota Dispatch* issue of the year, and due to a busy schedule, there will be no issues in January. However, the regular publication schedule will resume on February 1, 2024. I am committed to delivering engaging content, insightful stories, and relevant news to enhance your reading experience. Your input matters; please feel free to share suggestions for the upcoming 2024 issues by contacting me at the email address provided toward the end of this edition.

I would like to take a moment to extend heartfelt gratitude to the contributors who make this communiqué possible. Thank you to Pastor Ted and Lynnette Struntz for providing a column and photos for every issue—Lynnette also faithfully edits the *Dispatch*, and I am so thankful for her donated time! Kudos to Kelli Wasemiller for taking time from her busy schedule as the elementary education superintendent to create quality and relevant YouTube content for our children. Special appreciation to Brenda Rexin Klein for being vulnerable and open in sharing her devotional thoughts, especially in this issue—Please keep Brenda's family in your prayers as they navigate this difficult time. Many thanks to Casey Bartlett for writing and allowing me to share "Blessed & Kept." I am also grateful to the pastors, teachers, and members of this Conference for their contributions to the biweekly content. Special acknowledgment to Paulette Bullinger, Myndi Clements, and the other fantastic photographers who generously and regularly share their talents with our readers. Each contributor plays a vital role in making this communiqué possible!

Thank YOU for being a part of the *Dakota Dispatch* community. Wishing you a joyful Christmas season and a fantastic start to the new year!

All the best,

Jodi Dossenko

Communication Director

Photo by Tosha Rochelle.

All That We Cannot See

I live out in the country, and once I get beyond the reach of my yard light and my brother's bin site lights, my world gets pretty dark.

Tonight, as I glanced toward the north, I saw an unusual glow.

On some nights, a faint glow in the north marks the nearest town of Sykeston, nine miles north as the crow flies.

This glow was much broader and rose much higher than the town glow.

Interesting, I thought to myself. It's too broad to be the reflection of Sykeston off a low-hanging cloud. The arc-shaped swoop of the glow reminded me more of the shape of the whole earth.

Then it hit me: this must be the northern lights! Funny, I thought. It's not nearly as impressive as I keep seeing in the photos taken by people who are awake at o'dark-thirty. Other people's photos all showed an ethereal green, and sometimes iridescent blues and purples as well. That's not what I was seeing at all; just a faint white glow.

But I took some pictures anyway as I tootled down the gravel and then again as I headed east on the highway from Sykeston. I even buzzed down my window and opened the moonroof so I could enjoy the starlit sky and that faint white glow in the north.

When I got settled in the hospital room, I took a look at my photos.

Lo and behold, my camera picked up that beautiful green glow. Wow! The plain, boring white northern lights I see with my naked eye are so much more magnificent through the "eyes" of my cellphone camera.

As I'm reflecting on this, Mom is in the process of taking her last breaths. So much is happening during this process that we don't see from our earthly perspective. We see Mom's body slowly fading away. We listen to her breathing, and we wonder if she will open her eyes again today like she did yesterday and silently hold our gaze. From our perspective, her world is getting pretty dark.



What we don't see with our naked eye is the ethereal glow of the presence of the Holy Spirit permeating this hospital room. If I get very still, I can feel that presence, but I can't see it with my naked eyes.

One of Mom's favorite scriptures is this one from Psalm 34:7: "The angel of the Lord encamps round about those who fear Him, and He delivers them."

The angel of the Lord is surrounding my mom, that's for sure. My mom is safely abiding under His wings. Mom photocopied Psalm 91 during a particularly challenging time of her life—She pulled that page out of her bag often as she sat in her usual spot in the pickup at the bin site. Over and over she read those words, and they comforted her. She also highlighted and underlined them in her Bible.

"...He is my God, and I trust in Him...He will cover you with His feathers. He will shelter you with His wings...He will order His angels to protect you wherever you go..."

God's protective hand is here, even at death's door. Not seen with the naked eye, but here nevertheless. Amen for that.



Worship Thoughts and photos by Brenda Klein, member of the New Home Adventist Church in North Dakota. Follow Brenda on Facebook for more devotional thoughts at <u>Farm Girl Faith</u>. Photo above mentioned in the story, photos below were taken of the New Home Seventh-day Adventist Church and Cemetary.

Celebration of Praise 2023

Last weekend, the Dakotas experienced a heartwarming festivity as individuals from across the region gathered at Dakota Adventist Academy for the annual Celebration of Praise Weekend. This event serves as a special time for the community to unite, express gratitude to God, and reflect on the significance of Jesus' birth and sacrifice.

Celebration of Praise Weekend has a rich history, tracing back to 1988 when Dakota Adventist Academy reopened its doors after a year of closure. Initially conceived as a means to showcase and celebrate the Academy, the weekend has evolved into a platform for highlighting the talents of the students and community members. Students not directly involved in musical performances contribute to the event in various ways, reflecting a collaborative effort to make the weekend a success. From distributing programs to warmly greeting attendees and assisting in various capacities, the involvement of students adds to the sense of community and shared purpose.

Elder Hubert Morel Jr., the vice president of the Mid-America Union Conference, took center stage as the keynote speaker for the weekend festivities. His powerful messages resonated during Friday evening, Sabbath church, and an enlightening afternoon session, inspiring attendees with the timeless message of hope and salvation found in the Christmas story.

On Sabbath afternoon, there was an option of participating in a delightful Christmas singalong, accompanied by Karen Boyko from the Turtle Lake Adventist Church. This set the stage for the much-anticipated Christmas program presented later that day by Dakota Adventist Academy.

Community members also contributed to the festivities of the weekend with a music program on Friday evening, creating an atmosphere of joy and unity, followed by Elder Morel's message.

The Academy staff played a crucial role in ensuring the weekend's success. From providing delicious meals and Christmas treats to creating a festive environment, their dedication and hard work were evident. Development Director Lynette Miller and other staff members facilitated the Christmas decoration at the school, adding a touch of warmth and holiday spirit to the celebration. It is important to note that this achievement was a collective effort, and the indispensable support of all staff members and local church pastors was instrumental in its success.

President Mark Weir shared an engaging children's story during the church service. Additionally, he showcased his musical talent by performing on his baritone, accompanied by Conference Trust Director Judy Weir on piano, for the offertory.

Under the guidance of music director Mr. Leonard Hild, the students of Dakota Adventist

Academy and Brentwood Adventist Christian School demonstrated their musical prowess with a Christmas program titled "It's not that far to Bethlehem!" The students' enthusiasm was palpable, and their excellent performance left an impression on the audience, emphasizing the joy and anticipation of the Christmas season.

As the echoes of this Celebration of Praise Weekend linger, the community looks forward to continued traditions of unity and gratitude in the years to come.



Article and photos by Jodi Dossenko, Conference communication director.

Four Baptisms and Youth-Led Worship

This past weekend, a significant event took place at the Rapid City Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Dakota as four individuals were baptized into the congregation. The journey leading to this special Sabbath began when a man walked into the church several months ago, expressing a newfound interest in the Sabbath and a desire to become a member.

Pastor Brian Mungandi played a key role in guiding the man and his family through the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The outcome was a collective baptism of

the entire family, symbolizing their commitment to their faith. Additionally, another individual also embraced baptism, contributing to the overall sense of celebration within the church community.

The weekend's celebration was further highlighted by Children's Church, a quarterly event where young people take on various roles typically handled by adults. From collecting offerings to delivering special music, leading praise time, and even preaching, the youth actively participate in the church service. This initiative not only showcased the talents of the young members but also emphasized the importance of intergenerational connections within the church.

During the Children's Church service, the youth shared their personal experiences with the Lord, focusing on the Christmas Story. As baptisms unfolded and the youth-led service took place, the Rapid City Seventh-day Adventist Church celebrated not only the expansion of its membership but also the shared sense of faith and community that unites its members.



Article by Jodi Dossenko, Conference communication director. Photos by Stephen Wasemiller, Rapid City Church member and communication director.

Knightly Knews: DAA Newsletter



Knightly Knews

Your way to stay up-to-date on the happenings of Dakota Adventist Academy

If you are interested in receiving the *Knightly Knews*, *a* monthly newsletter about the happenings at Dakota Adventist Academy, <u>click here</u> to sign up!

Voyage of Discovery

"Students, please open your social studies textbook to pages 47 and 48 to read about the 'Voyage of Discovery."

On those two short pages, the lower-grade social studies class found the only information provided about the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Two pages for an epic voyage that was pivotal in the growth of this nation. The students at Prairie Voyager School in Grand Forks, North Dakota needed more!

With the help of a parent volunteer, the teacher had an extended evening of decorating to set up stations along the voyage.

Station 1: The voyage begins in the classroom with a letter from President Jefferson detailing the purpose and goals of the expedition. The students are then handed a list of items needed for the voyage. Shopping for the items involves a hunt around the classroom for the hidden objects. Once their boat is packed, they proceed to Station 2.

Station 2: The Great Plains—A green, blanket grassland where images of American bison and prairie dogs are scattered about. The students have to "capture" a prairie dog to send

back alive to President Jefferson, as part of the Voyage directive was to identify new species of animals.

Station 3: The travelers meet Sacajawea and Pomp. She stays with them at Fort Mandan (the students built the fort from Lincoln Logs) and joins them for the rest of the journey.

Station 4: The first major obstacle of the journey is the Great Falls in Montana. Unable to take their large boats over the falls, the voyagers portage around them. Once on the other side of the falls, the voyagers proceed with dugout canoes.

Station 5: Luck is with the voyagers. At the base of the Bitterroot Mountains, they meet a band of natives hoping to trade for horses. The natives, reluctant at first, change their minds when Sacajawea recognizes Chief Cameahwait as her brother.

Now, with horses, the expedition can continue over the Bitterroot Mountains.

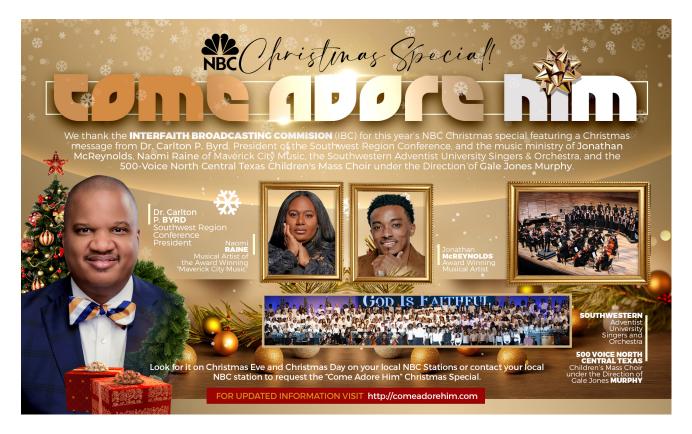
Station 6: The ocean at last! The expedition has made it to the Pacific Ocean in time for winter. Fort Clatsop is built, and the beach is explored. Shells and a dead whale are discovered. Lewis carved his name on a tree. The students write their names on a tree ring to honor their own "Voyager of Discovery."

This engaging learning experience allowed the students to immerse themselves in interactive stations and relive key moments from Lewis and Clark's journey across the country. Leaving their mark at the Pacific Ocean, they mirrored the expedition's historical significance while embarking on their own memorable educational expedition.



Article and photos by Mrs. Leanne Erickson, head teacher at Prairie Voyager Adventist Elementary in Grand Forks, ND.

Come Adore Him



The NBC Christmas Television Special, "Come Adore Him," produced by the Southwest Region Conference, Southwestern Union Conference, and Texas Conference, in collaboration with the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission, will be shown this year on NBC Television affiliates across the United States on Christmas Day, December 25, 2023. "Come Adore Him" features the preaching ministry of Dr. Carlton P. Byrd, along with the music ministry of gospel recording artists, Jonathan McReynolds and Naomi Raine (of Maverick City Music), Southwestern Adventist University Singers and Orchestra, and a 500-voice Children's Choir comprised of students from our Adventist Schools in the Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas area, directed by Gale Jones Murphy. For more information and broadcast times/cities, please visit comeadorehim.com.

Youth & Young Adults

At the beginning of the month, Lynnette and I had the opportunity to go to the AACP (Association of Adventist Camp Professionals) Convention. At this yearly convention, individuals who run our Adventist camps from around the North American Division (NAD) come together to network with each other and to discuss accreditation, best practices for safety, and a multitude of other topics related to running camp ministries and facilities.

This year the convention was held at Glorieta Camp just outside of Santa Fe, New Mexico. This non-denominational camp has 84 year-round staff, an amphitheater that holds more

than 6,000 people, and more activities than I can even name. The staff had never before hosted such a large group of vegetarians, and it was great to see their warm hospitality to us as they prepared delicious vegetarian food for the group.

Our theme for the convention was *Better Together*. During our general sessions, we were encouraged and reminded how we all are working toward the same goals as camp professionals, and we should help one another the best we can. We each have gifts, strengths, and knowledge that can be shared to build the best possible Christian camp programs in the NAD.

Lynnette and I were happy to attend these meetings and represent our Conference and our Dakota Adventist Camps. Few of those in attendance knew that we run two camps during each summer. On Sabbath, I had the opportunity to address the entire convention and share how we hosted DiscipleTrek at Flag Mountain Camp this summer. I also talked about the positive effect on the young adults who attended, and I encouraged leaders from around our division to help other young adults come to Flag Mountain this coming summer and learn how to be followers of Jesus. Right after my presentation, a woman who works at another camp within the NAD, came up to us and shared how her daughters had attended the DiscipleTrek program at Flag Mountain; she excitedly told us how her girls' lives had been transformed since attending. It was awesome to hear how God is leading in their lives!!

During the convention, Lynnette and I were also able to talk with other camp professionals about the miracles we personally have witnessed at our two camps the past two summers. I am reminded of the quote—which I will paraphrase—we have nothing to fear for the future, unless we forget how God has led us in the past. It's so true! We have so much to be thankful for and to share with others about our Dakota Adventist Camps. Lynnette and are grateful that we get to share what God faithfully does through our Dakota Adventist Camps ministries.



Article by Pastor Ted Struntz, Dakota Conference youth director. Photos by Lynnette Struntz, Conference associate youth director.

Prayer Ministries - Monthly Prayer Emphasis

Please keep the following in your prayers for **December**:

Theme: Coming Advent - Remembering the First Coming, Applying the Spirit, Looking for the Second Coming

Pastoral Staff: Roy Morris, Darren Purdy

Education Staff: Greg Ratter, Karen

Ratter

Office Staff: Mark Piotrowski, Mark

Seibold, Mark Weir

Adventist Entities: Sioux Falls, Mitchell, Yankton, Hurley, Brookings, Vermillion, Yankton Reservation

Southeast South Dakota: Fargo, Moorhead MN, Wahpeton, Ellendale, Jamestown, Cleveland, Edgeley



Other: General Conference (GC) & World Divisions

<u>Click here</u> to visit the Prayer Ministries webpage.



Please plan to join in "10 Days of Prayer," January 10-20, 2024. The Zoom link and Facebook live are scheduled for 7:30p CT / 6:30p MT. The theme this year is "Priorities of Faith." Resources are available at <u>tendaysofprayer.org</u>

For more information or to have your church lead out one evening, contact Pastor Barry at: dakota.prayerministries@gmail.com

Zoom Meeting ID: 841 1749 9925

Passcode: 382190

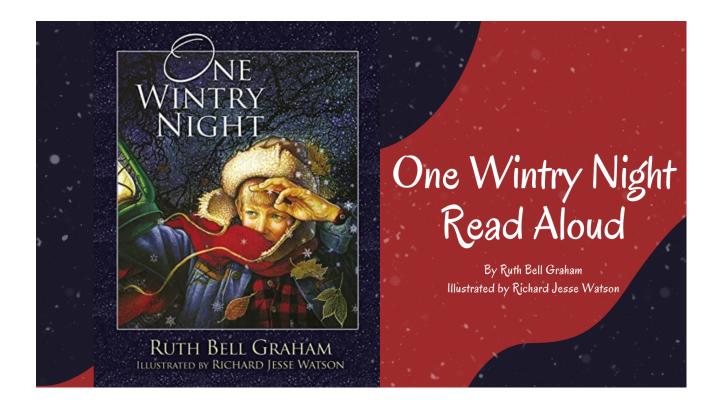
Kids' Corner

Enjoy one of Kelli's favorite Christmas stories on YouTube by <u>clicking here</u>:

One Wintry Night

Written by Ruth Bell Graham

Illustrated by Richard Jesse Watson



"Happy Birthday, Jesus" is a 25-day activity devotional for the whole family created by the North American Division (NAD) Children's Ministries Department. This devotional will take you through the first 25 days of December to help you celebrate and remember Jesus, the real reason for the season. Click here to visit the NAD website and print all sorts of fun resources including memory games, sticker sheets, and countdown calendars.



Due to Kelli's workload, she won't be creating any additional video series at this time. If you are interested in contributing devotional or craft videos to be shared with our conference kids, please contact her at dakotachildrensministries@gmail.com Visit the Dakota Conference Children's Ministries YouTube channel, Dakota SDA Kids, and explore the many videos available for children.



Kelli Wasemiller is the Dakota Conference elementary education superintendent.



Dakota Conference Calendar

The offering schedule is in purple.

The office preaching/visitation schedule is in blue.

Conference Regionals and Town Hall schedule is in green.

December -

- 23: Local Church Budget
- 25: Office Closed Christmas
- 30: Dakota Evangelism

January -

- 3: Fargo Constituency Town Hall Meeting (6:30p)
- · 6: Local Church Budget
- 6: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Fargo, ND
- 9: Rapid City Constituency Town Hall Meeting (6:30p)
- 13: NAD Religious Liberty
- 13: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Watertown, SD
- 15: Office Closed Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 19-20: Jamestown Youth Weekend
- 20: Local Church Budget
- 20: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Cleveland, ND
- 21: K-12 Board of Education Conference Office (10a)
- 21: School Board Member Training Zoom (2p)
- 22-25: Pastors' Meetings Conference Office
- 27: Dakota Challenge
- 27: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Manfred, ND

February -

- 1: Dakota Dispatch resumes regularly scheduled publications
- 3: Local Church Budget
- 3: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Pierre, SD (Revitalization Pt. 1)
- 4: Dakota Executive Committee Meeting Conference Office (10a)
- 10: Adventist TV Ministries
- 10: Elder Mark Piotrowski preaching in Pierre, SD (Revitalization Pt. 2)
- 17: Local Church Budget

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

Blessed & Kept

May the shortness of the day build anticipation for the coming day of light.

Though the lengthening of daylight is still beyond your perception, may you perceive that a day is coming when light will be thrust upon your senses.

May you begin to feel that something special is coming.

Nature needs no calendar to tell it the season, birds need no reminder to begin their migration, bears need no clock to awaken them from their hibernation.

May you, like nature, have a sixth sense about the rhythms of the created order.

May Christmas Day be a day full of sensory activation that something incredible is happening.

The darkness is retreating

The days are perceptively getting longer

The future is full of hope

Not because circumstances will change, but because of who is here among us.

Just as you can tangibly perceive the daylight getting longer,

May the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus be a day that you tangibly perceive a shift in the world around you.

May you never be the same.

Written by Casey Bartlett. To follow Casey's Podcast Blessed & Kept click here.

Merry Christmas from the Dakota Conference!



Photo taken by Elbie Piotrowski, member of the Bismarck Adventist Church in ND.

The Dakota Conference Communication Department is always looking for beautiful photos to use in the *Dakota Dispatch*, the *Dakota Messenger*, the website, and more. If you are willing to share, please send them to communication@dakotasda.org with the name of the photographer and a short description of where it was taken.

Communication Director / Editor - Jodi Dossenko E-mail: communication@dakotasda.org

If you have local church news or stories to share, please send event information, news suggestions and/or articles, and pictures to the email listed above.

Dakota 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 the Communication Department at communication@dakotasda.org. Cover photo credit: soybean field by Chrystal Rittenbach.

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- Dakota Adventist Academy
- Dakota Youth and Young Adults / Camps

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