

**In this edition:**

- Dr. Mac's Minute: Seize the Day
- It Happened at a Board Meeting

**Around the Dakotas:**

- Mercy Gate Church in Box Elder to launch on Easter Sunday
- Associations hold spring meetings
- Mandan church calls familiar new pastor
- Sovereign Grace in Aberdeen renovating old newspaper building
- Online Youth Camp registration opens
- Next CP Ambassadors meeting scheduled for April 9
- Virtual Assistants available through ministry started at Restore Church

**Celebrating Church Planting... Dakotas style:**

1. Celebrating what God is doing in Piedmont and Custer
2. Getting involved in church planting

**Around the SBC:**

- BP: FIRST PERSON: How gambling preys on the longings of the heart
- CP story: Ray & Sarah Crew



**Dr. MacDonald's tentative schedule:**

**April 2022**

- 3 Hot Springs, SD: Cascade Road
- 10 Hazen, ND: Hazen Christian Fellowship
- 17 OPEN
- 24 Hot Springs, SD: Cascade Road

**May 2022**

- 1 Olieven, South Africa: Olieven Baptist
- 8 Hot Springs, SD: Cascade Road
- 15 Edgemont, SD: Edgemont Baptist
- 22 Grand Forks, ND: Faith Community
- 29 Mitchell, SD: Cornerstone Baptist

# Dr. Mac's Minute

## Seize the Day

**Passage:** John 4:1-42

*Carpe diem* is Latin for “seize the day.” Life is filled with daily opportunities that go unseized because of fear, busyness, or even laziness.

Jesus was the Master of seizing the day. He was so sensitive to His Father’s work that He never missed an opportunity to advance His Kingdom. Surrounded by a crowd of hungry people, Jesus used a young boy’s lunch to teach trust. Watching the shenanigans of the religious elite as they made a mockery of His Father’s house opened the door to an object lesson on true worship.

John recorded an instance when the opportunity was a tiring day of travel, a ladle full of cold water, and a woman with a penchant for theological debates (John 4). The result was, “*many Samaritans from that town believed in Him*” (v. 39). Even though he was weary and thirsty (or perhaps *because* he was weary and thirsty!) Jesus seized the opportunity; and lives were transformed.

We are surrounded daily with opportunities to share Christ. In his book, *Turning Everyday*

Conversations into Gospel Conversations, Jimmy Scroggins writes, *“The average person has twenty-seven conversations per day. A recent study revealed that both men and women utter an average of about 16,000 words each day. We can talk about sports, weather, clothes, shoes, movies, and TV shows. We’re even willing to debate the nuances of politics, the intricacies of health issues, or the complexities of national economic matters. However, when it comes to bringing up the simple gospel, we shy away. We break out in hives, our palms sweat, our tongues are tied, and we find ourselves talking about everything **BUT** the gospel.”*

Why do we fail to seize these daily opportunities? Perhaps it is a fear of rejection or being mocked. Other times we are too busy with other “pressing” matters and, sometimes (go ahead, admit it), we are just too lazy. I am convinced, however, that most often the reason we miss chances to share Christ’s love is that we just don’t see them. The world’s bright lights often dull our spiritual eyes.

Have you noticed how hard it is to see the stars from the middle of a large city? Travel outside the city limits, however, and the night sky lights up with God’s beautiful handiwork. Are there more stars in the sky when you are standing in the country than when you are standing in the city? Of course not! Getting rid of the distracting lights that surround you in town clears your vision and enables you to see the stars.

The lost are all around us. Will we have eyes to see their need and ears to hear their cries? Only if we are sensitive to the Spirit’s direction will we seize those moments when someone is open to the gospel. For this to happen, however, we need to regularly step away from the glare of the world and its ways to spend more time in prayer and the Word. We must be like Jesus who, *“often withdrew to deserted places and prayed”* (Luke 5:16).

What obstacles do you need to overcome to share with the hurting in your world? What bright lights in your life are blinding your spiritual eyes? What everyday conversations can become gospel conversations? Pray for a sensitive heart that will see and seize opportunities to share Christ.



### It Happened at a Board Meeting

The Dakota Baptist Convention Executive Board met on Zoom on March 11 for their Spring meeting. The meeting began with a devotional and prayer from DBC vice president Josh Brown (Rapid City, SD: Redeeming Grace Church).

Board chairman John Flowers (West Fargo, ND: Living Hope Baptist) opened the meeting with an orientation and reminder of the responsibilities of Board members. He encouraged members to be involved in the meeting by asking questions and voicing opinions and to “take an active interest in the DBC.”

Staff reports were received from each of the four Church Relations Missionaries (CRM). Paul Young (Fort Totten, ND: Dakota Baptist Church) spoke about the recent First Nations Association meeting and the study he is making regarding Native American work in the Dakotas. Everett Hornbostel (Mobridge, SD: Cornerstone Church) reported on the opportunity that DBC churches have to access Ministry Safe Training and a training that he is developing to help churches deal with security issues. Jeff Musgrave (Minot, ND: Waypoint Baptist Church) shared about several connections he had the chance to make with DBC pastors and churches. He also announced that Joe Ridl of Dickinson, ND became the first Dakota Baptist to complete all four courses of the Christian Leadership Development program. This is a training partnership that the DBC has with Midwestern Seminary.

In his Executive Director/Treasurer report, Fred MacDonald gave highlights of the final financial statements for 2021. Overall, income exceeded expenses by over \$62,000 and the Baker Offering exceeded the goal of \$40,000. The final Baker total was \$48,569.08 which has been allocated to pastor/church emergencies, Native American ministry, leadership development, and summer missions/interns. MacDonald also gave a summary of work that had been done in the past few months to begin implementing the new mission statement and ministry plan. This work included initial development of CP Ambassadors, developing a Dakota-focused evangelism strategy that would provide

a foundation for partnerships, and increasing the circulation for the DBC newsletter and updates. He also shared that the CRMs and the office virtual assistant, Marissa Shimer will be working over the next few months to get up-to-date information on churches and pastors.

MacDonald concluded his report with a report on his South Africa ministry. Two trips are planned for 2022. In late April he will travel with Pastor Ian Harp (Huron, SD: Huron Baptist Church) to conduct an evangelistic crusade in Olieven (a large city near Pretoria) and then help provide evangelism training to over 100 pastors from rural areas near Durban. In November he and Denise will travel with two or three other pastors/pastor's wives from the Dakotas. This trip will focus on providing training for South African pastors and their wives on the role of the pastor.

The report period continued with reports from various Board members about several of the associations.

In his chairman's report, Flowers reported that Sean Donnelly (Whitewood, SD: Black Hills Baptist Church) had resigned from the Board after taking an office staff position in the DBC office. Donnelly is serving as the financial assistant. The DBC Nominations Committee will make a recommendation for his replacement at the annual meeting in October.

In business matters, the Administrative Team made four motions: First, the team moved that \$44,500 from the 2021 net income be used to replenish three restricted (designated) funds: the Capital Improvements Fund, the DBC Promotion and Video Fund, and the Vehicle Replacement Fund. The remainder of the excess income from 2021 will remain in reserves. After discussion the motion was unanimously adopted.

A second motion from the Administrative Team proposed adopting a target of \$435,000 for the 2023 Cooperative Program budget. This is a 1.5% increase. This motion was discussed and approved unanimously.

The third motion was to set the percentage of CP giving that is sent from the Dakotas to worldwide causes at 25%. This motion was discussed and approved unanimously.

The final motion proposed a goal of \$45,000 for the 2022 Baker State Missions Offering. Beginning with the 2022 DBC budget, the Baker offering is now part of the regular budget income. The motion was discussed and approved unanimously.

The meeting concluded with general discussion by Board members.

The next Executive Board meeting will be August 5-6 in Mandan, ND.

## AROUND THE DAKOTAS

### **Mercy Gate Church in Box Elder to launch on Easter Sunday**

Mercy Gate Church in Box Elder, SD will launch regular Sunday morning worship services on Easter Sunday, April 17. The service will be at 10:30 a.m. at 475 Villa Drive, Suite 2 in Box Elder. Andy Daniel, pastor for the church plant, said that the church has been meeting on Sunday evenings since last August 2021 at his home. The church has a fellowship dinner and Bible study every Sunday evening with children's church as well.



Pastor Andy and his wife Tabitha moved to South Dakota last June from Springfield, MO in answer to God's call to start a new work in Box Elder. They have three children, Aaron, Benjamin, and Rose. Daniels said, "We are very excited for the upcoming launch and excited to see how God moves in Box

Elder!" They are planning to have several mission teams coming from Mississippi and Missouri over the summer to reach the community through evangelism and block parties.

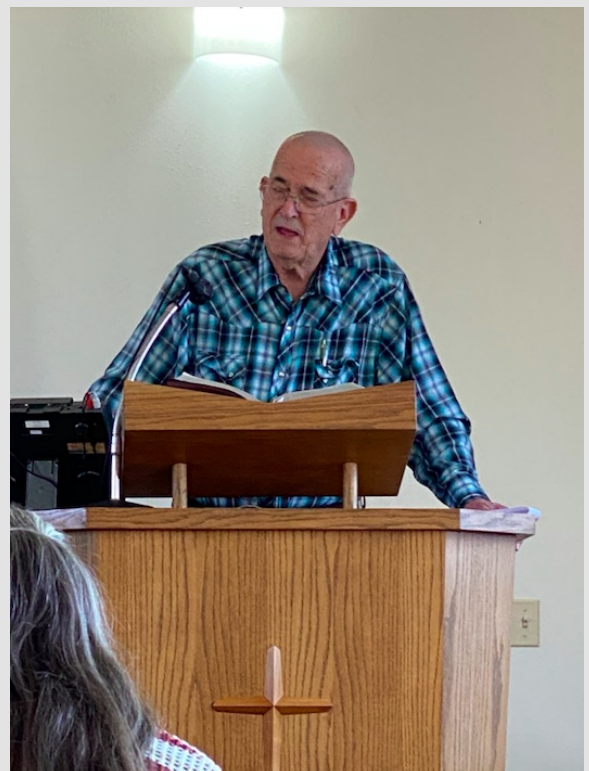
Mercy Gate Church in Rapid City, SD is the sending church for the Daniels.

## Associations hold spring meetings

**First Nations Association** gathered at First Baptist Church in Sisseton on Thursday, March 10. Pastors and leaders from several different Native American churches came together to share what God is doing on the reservations across the Dakotas. The meeting featured a transition in leadership. Steve Osage, the longtime director of First Nations and his assistant, Sisseton pastor Nippy Owens, passed the mantle of leadership to Christian Little and Rob Greywater. Little is the pastor at Hilltop Baptist Church in Lower Brule, SD. Greywater is a deacon at Dakota Baptist Church in Fort Totten, ND, and a DBC Executive Board member. After the meeting, the pastors and churches came together to ordain Mike Redday as a deacon for the Sisseton church.



**Badlands Baptist Association** held their semiannual meeting on Saturday, March 19, at Belfield Baptist Church in Belfield, ND. One of the highlights of the meeting was the approval of a project to encourage churches to engage in a mission project this year. The messengers set aside a significant amount of funds to help each church conduct some kind of mission action. During the meeting the Badlands associational missionary Larry Vickery shared that he and Lillian would be retiring sometime next year. Badlands moderator and Hettinger, ND pastor John Lewis presented two special songs in the meeting.





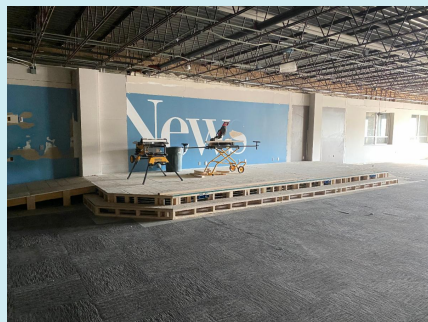
### **Mandan church calls familiar new pastor**

First Baptist Church of Mandan, ND has called Tim Butler to return to the church as their new pastor. Tim and his wife Kristie served the church from 2003-2009. Butler served in the army from 1975-1999. While in England he surrendered to God's call to ministry.

### **Sovereign Grace in Aberdeen renovating old newspaper building**

Sovereign Grace Church in Aberdeen, SD, recently closed on the purchase of the old Aberdeen American News Building. Located on a major thoroughfare in South Dakota's third largest city, the building will provide significant space for the future.

The church, led by Pastor Sam Ellyson, is currently renovating the building. They hope in a future phase to be able to purchase some adjacent property to increase parking space.



### **Online Youth Camp registration opens**

The annual Dakota Baptist youth camp is June 6-10 at Crystal Springs Campground in eastern North Dakota. This year's theme is "Real Love." Richard and Cheryl Hardy from Harleton, TX will return to lead the Bible times. A few years ago the Hardys led teams from their church in Texas to help with the camp over several years. Chris Wallace, pastor at Hope City Church in Bismarck, ND will lead worship.

The camp will focus on helping teens understand what real biblical love is. The theme verse is 1 John 3:16: *"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."*

Registration and more information for both youth and adult leaders can be found at the DBC

## DAKOTA BAPTIST YOUTH CAMP 2022

Crystal Springs Camp  
Medina North Dakota  
June 6-10th



website. Adult leaders are required to go through the online Ministry Safe training. The registration fee is \$195. This will go up to \$210 after May 13. Youth camp is open to all young people currently in grades 7 through 12.

Click here to register  
online

### Next CP Ambassadors meeting scheduled for April 9

The Dakota Baptist CP Ambassadors will have their next Zoom meeting on Saturday, April 9, at 1:00 p.m. (Mountain Time). The CP Ambassadors are members from the churches of the DBC who are interested in learning more about the cooperative work that is being done across the Dakotas and the SBC. So far, seven churches have designated an ambassador for their church. Each time the ambassadors meet they learn new ways the name of Jesus is being carried around the world that they can share with their church.

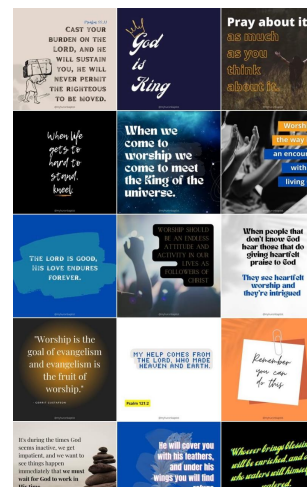
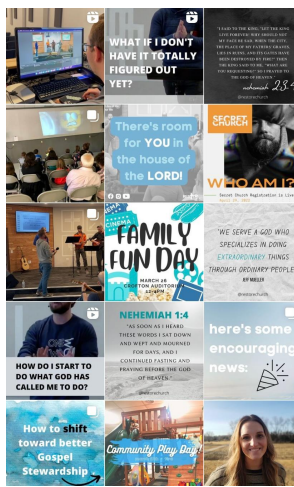
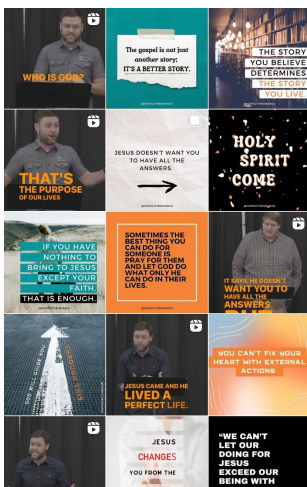
If your church would like to designate a CP Ambassador, send their name, email address, and phone number to Fred MacDonald at [fred@dakotabaptist.com](mailto:fred@dakotabaptist.com). They will receive an invitation and Zoom link so that they can join the next meeting. CP Ambassador Zoom meetings are open to anyone that would like to participate. If you would like to sit in on the April meeting, email Fred and he will send you the link.

### Virtual Assistants available through ministry started at Restore Church

by Marissa Shimer, Virtual Assistant

A couple of years ago, Pastor and church planter Jeff Mueller of Restore Church in Yankton, SD and Crofton, NE was faced with the need to hire an assistant, but didn't have the funds available for an in-person assistant. After going through multiple virtual assistant companies, he found the turnover rate was so high that he had to retrain assistants every few months. It then occurred to Pastor Jeff that he had amazing people in his own church that could do the job part time, and they were not going to leave every few months! Pastor Jeff says "After a few months of working with my virtual assistant, I realized we could do the same thing for other churches, and we had identified a critical need for smaller churches, an affordable assistant that can work as many or as few hours as a church or pastor needs!"

From that Assist, a virtual assistant service for pastors by church staff was created. Pastor Jeff shares “My motto for Assist is: give your assistant everything you shouldn’t be doing as a pastor, and that you couldn’t just hand to a volunteer in your congregation.”

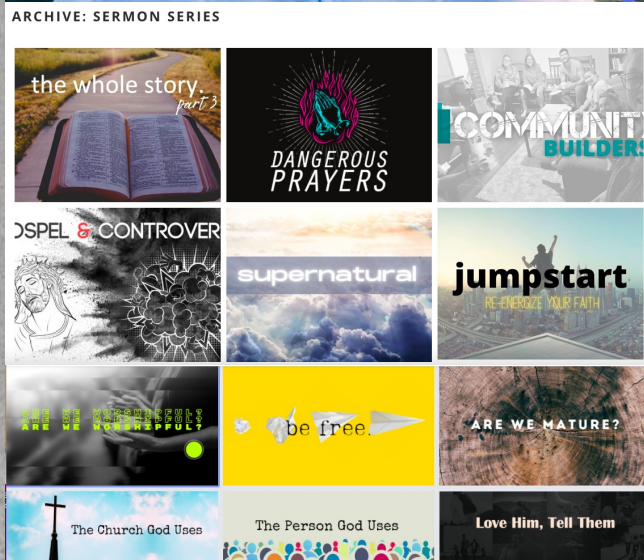


Since the launch of Assist in early 2020, the company has provided virtual assistants for six different churches/conventions. One of the churches currently utilizing Assist is Hope City Church in Bismarck ND. Pastor Chris Wallace shares “As a church planter, there are a lot of things that fall on my plate. When we decided to start using Assist, it immediately freed me up to focus more on what God has called me to do in Bismarck. Our social media outreach is better than ever, and there are endless options to get help with. Assist is such a great blessing!”

Assist’s virtual assistants are able to help pastors and churches with a variety of tasks including strategic social media management, website design and maintenance, bulletin design, phone monitoring and appointment scheduling, graphic design, letter printing, and more! The goal of the assistant’s job is allow the pastor to focus more time and energy on the important aspects of ministry that only he can do while delegating other tasks to their virtual assistant.



Ian Harp, Pastor at Huron Baptist Church in Huron SD shares “It has truly been a blessing to be able to utilize a Virtual Assistant. When we began with Assist we did not have a website, Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube and our bulletins were old, dry, and dingy. Our assistant has created an amazing website along with Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube pages. This has saved me so much time as well as the church money. People have come to HBC because they saw our website or social media tell me that it was part of the draw for them.”



Executive Director, Fred MacDonald shares how Assist has helped the Dakota Baptist Convention: “We were in between ministry assistants and needed someone to help with some of the office communication functions such as emails, monthly newsletters. Our virtual assistant has become such an integral part of what we do that we continue to utilize her gifts and skills to maintain our website and perform other critical tasks that help us to communicate with others.”

If you would like to learn more about the services offered through Assist or get your own virtual assistant, text 605-215-1818, email us at [connect@myrestore.church](mailto:connect@myrestore.church) or click the button below!

Click here to learn  
more



## CELEBRATING CHURCH PLANTING . . . DAKOTAS STYLE!

*“Celebrating Church Planting . . . Dakotas Style!”* is a monthly celebration of what God is doing around the Dakotas through our new work. Each month’s feature will have two parts. The first is an article on one of the newer churches in the Dakotas. The second is one of the fourteen ways that you and your church can be involved in church planting along with an implementation suggestion. You can find all fourteen of the ways listed under the “Resources” link at [www.dakotabaptist.com](http://www.dakotabaptist.com). Help us celebrate the new things God is doing across North and South Dakota.

### 1) Celebrating what God is doing in Piedmont and Custer

Church Planting in Piedmont and Custer  
by Stephen Carson

I wanted to give you a brief update on church planting here in the Black Hills. We are very thankful for all of the planting activity that is occurring in the Dakotas as God continues to raise up indigenous planters and send planters to our states.

Paul and Michelle Betts and their daughter, Rachel, arrived in Piedmont in January to plant Redemption Church. They were blessed to receive the former Foothills Community Baptist Church facilities as they embark on this journey. They are working hard building relationships in an effort to start a small group Bible study that will grow into a fall Sunday service launch. Please pray for the Betts family. Ask God to provide their every need and to help them make deep relationships in Piedmont and surrounding areas as they reach people with the gospel.

Ryan and Natalie McGehee will arrive in early May to begin their church planting journey in Custer. Ryan and Natalie have four children. They are very excited about God calling them to this task. They have been busy building partnerships with other churches, along with already meeting over Zoom calls with a core group of Christians in Custer. Please pray for them as they prepare to make this transition. Pray for provision and protection over their family.

Finally, please be faithful to pray for all our planters. And ask God to continue to raise up and send faithful laborers to the field here in our states.

*Stephen Carson is the pastor at Connection Church in Belle Fourche, SD and a NAMB Church Planter Catalyst (CPC) in the Dakotas.*

### 2) 14 Ways to be Involved in Church Planting . . . Dakotas Style!

**Way #2. Adopting a Church Planter and his family:** Be a source of encouragement to them: be a friend, send them to conferences or retreats, send them notes of appreciation, give them a gift card to eat out, and many more ways to let them know you care.

**Implementation Suggestion:** Select one of our church planters in the Dakotas and adopt him and his family for the next year. Find ways to express Christ’s love to them. Invite them to share information about their work with your congregation through video and/or in person.





### **FIRST-PERSON:How gambling preys on the longings of the heart**

It is estimated that Americans lost \$161 billion to all forms of gambling in 2018, with \$306 million of that going to online gambling. While this amount is for all types of gambling, the fastest growing kind of gambling is online.

[Read more](#)

[www.baptistpress.com](http://www.baptistpress.com)



COOPERATIVE  
PROGRAM

STORIES



April 3, 2022

RAY AND SARAH CREW\*

Northern Africa

Scan the code to read  
more about this story.



When IMB workers Ray and Sarah Crew\* moved to Northern Africa, they began looking for a tutor to help them learn the local language. They found Aziya\*, a bubbly young woman, who tutored them and their children.

Aziya went through many trials and during that time, the Crews were called to a town a few hours away. Even though they rarely saw her, they never stopped praying for her.

Years later, Sarah and Aziya reunited. Sharing tears and holding hands across the table, Aziya told Sarah about her life since they had been together. A girl who excelled at language and loved to giggle, showed no doubt as she told Sarah how her life had changed when she heard God call her name.

**THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM** is the financial fuel for reaching every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state, and every nation. Your support through the Cooperative Program provides missionaries with the tools they need to form Gospel-centered relationships with locals in their areas.

**PRAY** for the Crews as they continue to build relationships with those they meet; pray also for Aziya to continue to be steadfast in her faith no matter the trial.

*\*names changed for security*



FUELING THE GREAT COMMISSION

[sbc.net/cp](http://sbc.net/cp)

\*click image above to link to CP story with powerpoint image download