

In this edition:

- Dr. Mac's Minute: Presents or Presence???
- DBC Office closed Dec 22 - Jan 2
- DBC 411 debuts
- DBC to introduce CP Ambassadors in 2022
- Sabbatical greatly impacts Dakota pastor, both personally and in his church
- Around the Dakotas
 - Matt Hadden to shift his ministry focus at Sharp's Corner
 - Black Hills pastors and planters receive encouragement and training from longtime seminary professor
 - Church van needed
 - End of year giving
- IMB: First Person -- "I'm asking for it"
- CP story: Skip & Kim Meyer

Dr. Mac's Minute

**Dr. MacDonald's Tentative
December & January Schedule:**

December 2021	5	Hot Springs: Cascade Road
	12	Not Available
	19	Box Elder: Outreach Community
	26	Hot Springs: Cascade Road
January 2022	2	Hot Springs: Cascade Road
	9	OPEN
	16	OPEN
	23	OPEN
	30	OPEN

Presents or Presence???

Passage: Psalm 118:35-36

There are many words that can be used to describe God: holy, just, righteous, merciful, sovereign, gentle. I'm sure you can think of many more. One of my favorite adjectives for the Father is gracious. Our God is no Scrooge when it comes to sharing what is His with those He loves. He is a giving God. His kindness overflows with great abundance. Whenever I

give what I consider to be gracious to someone, He always give more.

In **Psalm 18:35-36**, David challenges us to enumerate all of God's grace gifts. In these two verses he starts the list with four blessings he had personally experienced from the hand of God:

- 1) *"You have given me the shield of your salvation"*
- 2) *"Your right hand supported me"*
- 3) *"Your gentleness made me great"* ("Your humility exalts me"—CSB)
- 4) *"You gave a wide place for my steps under me and my feet did not slip"*

Salvation, support, strength, security . . . four spiritual treasures for which the shepherd king would willingly trade everything or pay any earthly price; yet, given freely by the One whom David called, *"my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold"* (**Psalm 18:2**).

Interesting. Do you see a parallel? Each word or phrase David uses to describe God in **v. 2** to open this

psalm is also descriptive of the four gifts from God that he exalts in **vv. 35-36**. These blessings were not simply spiritual items that God went shopping for and thought David could use. The real present was God Himself. As Israel's king opened his presents of salvation, support, strength, and security, he recognized that the true gift was the Giver . . . the King of kings.

Throughout his life David learned the best way to seek and enjoy God's presents was to seek God's presence, to seek God Himself. When the Ark of the Covenant was brought back to its rightful place in Jerusalem in the early days of his reign, David called the nation to, "*seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face always*" (**I Chron. 16:11**).

Then, as his life and reign drew to a close and he was ready to pass the scepter (along with the responsibility of building the Temple) to his son, Solomon, David challenged his young heir and his people to, "*set your mind and heart to seek the LORD your God*" (**I Chron. 22:19**). He invited them to receive God's presents by seeking His presence.

Nearly 1000 years later, God stepped boldly into history with another present. Imagine the surprise of those who were at Bethlehem's manger and those who came to know Jesus in the years to come to discover that this gift was none other than Emmanuel . . . God with us! In presenting Himself, wrapped in humanity, God was once again giving salvation, support, strength, and security! Our awesome God never changes!

The best gift that will be given this Christmas is the gift of God, Himself; or, as the song goes, "*The best gift of all is Jesus.*" As you seek God's hand of blessing, seek God's face. As you enjoy His gracious presents, recognize that it is His holy presence that brings salvation, support, strength, and security. Have a blessed Christmas and a Christ-filled 2022.

By the way, one final thought . . . if God's best present is His presence, what present should we make of our presence in the life of those we love? It's just a thought.

Note: *We are taking a one-month break from a seven-part series of devotionals, "The Life of Moses . . . the Early Chapters."* If you missed the first four in the previous issues of *Dakota Happenings*, email us at fred@dakotabaptist.com and we will send you copies. We will resume with part five in January 2022.

NOTE: *The DBC office will be closed from December 22-January 2. If you need anything during this time, call Bob Hayford at 716-0130 or one of our Church Relations Missionaries.*

DBC 411 Debuts

DBC president Jeffrey Mueller and vice-president Josh Brown are debuting a new monthly podcast called "DBC 411." The podcast will feature interviews with people around the Dakotas to celebrate what God is doing in, through, and around North and South Dakota through Dakota Baptists.

The first podcast features a discussion with DBC Executive Director Fred MacDonald. This podcast will be available towards the end of the first week of December.

Mueller is pastor at Restore Church in Yankton, SD and is planting a new work across the border in Crofton, NE. Brown is pastor at Redeeming Grace Church in Rapid City.

Mueller and Brown are the first president and vice-president team to both be native Dakotans serving in their hometowns.

DBC to introduce CP Ambassadors in 2022

Since 1925 Southern Baptist churches have worked together to put missionaries on the field here in the United States and around the world. This effort, known as the Cooperative Program, puts into practice the principle that Solomon discovered, "two are better than one" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). Over the years the Cooperative Program has enabled the SBC to support and equip missionaries, provide ministry training for pastors and missionaries, as well as other ministries that impact society and culture with

the gospel.

In 2022 the DBC will introduce a new opportunity for churches across North and South Dakota to celebrate and help believers understand the work that is being done by Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program. In January churches will be invited to designate a CP Ambassador. CP Ambassadors will receive training, resources, and encouragement regarding the Cooperative Program and the DBC state missions offering. This will equip them to champion this cooperative mission strategy within their church.

CP Ambassadors are Christ-followers who meet three qualifications: (1) have a commitment to see the Great Commission fulfilled in their community, across the Dakotas, and around the world, (2) are enthusiastic about the Cooperative Program and the Dakotas state mission offering as tools to share the gospel, and (3) are prayer-focused and mission-minded.

The role of the CP Ambassador will be to serve as an ambassador and communicator for Great Commission cooperation by educating members of your church on how the gospel is being advanced through cooperative mission work of Southern Baptist churches in the Dakota Baptist Convention and beyond. They will share stories of the great things being accomplished through cooperative ministry that inspire and encourage church members to engage in cooperative missions through generous giving, persistent prayer, and mission action. Their work will encourage fellow church members to keep informed on work being done through other Dakota Baptist churches.

Training and encouragement for CP Ambassadors will take place beginning in February 2022 through Zoom meetings and occasional in-person events. Later this month and throughout January, DBC churches can begin to designate their CP Ambassador by providing the individual's name and contact information. Each ambassador will need to have the affirmation of their pastor.



Sabbatical greatly impacts Dakota pastor, both personally and in his church

Answering the call to serve as a pastor is not for the faint of heart. Preaching the Word, equipping the saints to do ministry, shepherding the flock, and doing the work of an evangelist is a full-time calling, whether the pastor is bivocational or fully funded.

Will Page has been in ministry since 2007, been in the Dakotas since 2012, and has served as pastor at First Baptist Church in Miller, SD, since 2016. He said, "I never took more than a few days break in those years." A medical scare a few months ago opened his eyes to the reality that he was experiencing burnout.

Page said his situation became so severe that, "I ended up in the emergency room with a heart attack and clinically depressed. 'Heart attack' is what the doctor at the emergency room called it." An angiogram found no damage to his heart, but the doctors did confirm that Page was experiencing depression. He discovered that, "mental stress and depression is as real as a bacterial infection and, like an infection, can be treated. But I had to admit that I did indeed have them."

An "older pastor and Christian brother" told the Miller pastor that he needed to take a sabbatical, something that Page had not thought was possible for a bivocational pastor like himself.

For a pastor, a sabbatical is a period of several weeks away from his ministry. He is paid while he is away. Sabbaticals can serve various purposes. They can be, as with Page, a time to be renewed and refocused on the ministry to which God has called him. Others use the time to study and grow in particular areas of their ministry. The pastor may even engage in other unique kinds of ministry.

[Click Here to Finish Reading the Article](#)

[Click Here For Will's Report](#)



Around the Dakotas



Matt Hadden to shift his ministry focus at Sharp's Corner

For the past six years Matt and Amanda Hadden have led the Creator's Fellowship Church in Sharp's Corner on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. They first came to Sharp's Corner ten years ago when Hadden became the church's associate pastor. Over the past few years the Haddens have developed a ministry relief center, which is now part of the SBC's Send Relief network of ministry centers.

Hadden recently announced to the church that he will step down as pastor to devote himself fully to serving as Executive Director of the ministry center. He said that in addition to leading the ministry center, he and Amanda will be focused on "being good church members at Creator's Fellowship."

Chad Deible and his wife Sarah have been involved in the ministry at Sharp's Corner for the past four years. Deible, who is the associate pastor, will help lead the church during the transition and will be ordained to the gospel ministry on Sunday, December 5.

The ministry center provides medical and emotional care for people in the area. Hadden said that this opens the door to provide the most critical need that people have, spiritual care. Each summer the center sponsors a series of camps for area children and teens.

Under Hadden's leadership, Creator's Fellowship recently planted a new work in nearby Manderson. Jeremy and Sarah Mouw lead this work.

Black Hills pastors and planters receive encouragement and training from longtime seminary professor

Dan Crawford, longtime professor for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was in the Black Hills last month for a series of events focused on evangelism and prayer. He also served several years with the former Home Mission Board (now NAMB).



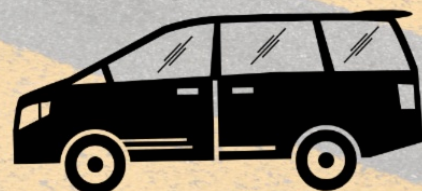
Crawford had dinner on a Friday evening with area church planters and their families. Using stories from his own years of ministry, he encouraged them to stay focused on their calling. The following morning he led a workshop for pastors and planters on being a prayer-shaped disciple.

He closed out his weekend in the area by preaching on Sunday morning at Christ Church in Rapid City.

NEEDED: CHURCH VAN

Do you or your church have a minivan or church van that you no longer need? Connection Church in Sioux Falls needs it! Connection pastor Jonathan Land said, "We haven't had a single parking space available the last three weeks and we are looking for a way to shuttle volunteers to another parking lot until we can expand our parking lot."

If you can help meet this need, contact Pastor Jonathan at 605-370-0090 or email him at jonathan@siouxfallsconnection.com.



Looking for a way to end 2021 taking part in the work of God's Kingdom around the Dakotas? End-of-year gifts can be made online to the Baker State Missions Offering, Cooperative Program, or other mission efforts of our Dakota churches through the DBC website. **CLICK HERE** to make your gift to help take the name of Jesus around the Dakotas.



First Person: I'm asking for it -IMB President Paul Chitwood

In this season, when I am meeting with many state conventions and associations, God has directed me to Romans 10:8-15. Paul's words are a great reminder of why God still has us on earth and why the IMB still has a job to do.

[Read more](http://www.imb.org)
www.imb.org



COOPERATIVE
PROGRAM

STORIES



December 5, 2021

SKIP AND KIM MEYER*

South Asia

imb

LOTTIE MOON
CHRISTMAS
OFFERING*

imb.org/lmco

IMB workers, Skip and Kim Meyer*, moved to South Asia with the desire to plant their lives in an area with a great need for the Gospel. Their lives on the mission field started, however, in South America where they grew up as friends—each the child of missionaries. After they married, they knew continued service in international missions was their calling.

God is using Skip and Kim's knowledge of the Spanish language and Latino culture to train and mobilize Hispanics and Latinos to serve in South Asia. Skip says he considers it a great privilege to mobilize and train Hispanics and Latinos to equip them to be faithful and effective long-term missionaries.

THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM (CP) is the financial fuel for reaching every person for Jesus Christ in every town, every city, every state, and every nation. Your support of both CP and **THE LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING** helps missionaries share the Gospel around the world and equip other believers to do the same.

PRAY for the Meyers as they serve areas in great need of the Gospel as well as for Hispanics and Latinos serving in hard-to-reach regions of South Asia.

**Names changed for security*



FUELING THE GREAT COMMISSION

sbc.net/cp

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