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

**February 2022**

- 6 Florida: SBC Executive Directors' Meeting
- 13 Hot Springs, SD: Cascade Road Baptist
- 20 Hazen, ND: Hazen Christian Fellowship
- 27 Hot Springs, SD: Cascade Road Baptist

**March 2022**

- 6 OPEN
- 13 OPEN
- 20 Langdon, ND: First Baptist
- 27 Miller, SD: First Baptist

# Dr. Mac's Minute

## Excuses! Excuses!

**Passage:** Exodus 4:1-17

**Focus:** vv. 13-14

If God, Himself, came to you personally and asked you to have a key role in a world-transforming strategy, would you do it? Absolutely! Without hesitation! No questions asked! No excuses! Right???

Moses has a reputation of being a tough, no-holds barred, straight-forward leader, eager to serve God. And, during the final 40 years of his life you can find a number of illustrations that bolster that reputation. But, as he knelt barefoot before the burning bush, listening to God tell him, *"I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel out of Egypt"* (Ex. 3:10), Moses wasn't so sure he was ready to pack his bags.

Moses had a list of excuses (pardon me . . . "reasons") as to why God should expand his job candidate search:

- 1) *Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh?* (Ex. 3:11)
- 2) *Who should I say sent me?* (Ex. 3:13)
- 3) *What if they won't believe me or listen to me?* (Ex. 4:1)
- 4) *I have never been very eloquent; in fact, I'm slow of speech* (Ex. 4:10)

God responded to each excuse (oops . . . "defense") with a personal enabling promise: 1) *I will be with you.* 2) *Tell them that 'I AM' has sent you.* 3) *Show them the miracles that I will empower you to perform.* 4) *I made you; I'll be with you; I'll give you the words to say; trust Me.*

At this point, Moses was out of excuses. It was bottom-line time. He was forced to get honest with God and himself: *"Please, Lord, now send the message by whomever You will"* (Ex. 4:13). Translation . . . "I don't want to do it. Find someone else." In a flash of holy anger, God replied: "I'm GOING to deliver My

people. You WILL lead them out of Egypt. Your brother Aaron will go with you as spokesman.”

At the end of all the excuses, reasons, defenses, explanations, and justifications, comes a point when we must get honest. Will we, or won't we?

Think again about the opening question: If God, Himself, came to you personally and asked you to have a key role in a world-transforming strategy, would you do it? Absolutely! Without hesitation! No questions asked! No excuses! Right???

In fact, God has done just that. Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20).

It's all there: key role (“make disciples”), world-transforming (“of all nations”), strategy (“go, make, baptize, teach”). Jesus even anticipated our excuses (or, whatever you want to call them) and promised His presence.

God, Himself, has issued the call (don't forget, reading His Word IS hearing His voice!). It's bottom-line time . . . will you, or won't you???

**Note:** This is the sixth in a seven-part series of devotionals, “*The Life of Moses . . . the Early Chapters*” If you missed the first five in previous issues of *Dakota Happenings*, email us at [fred@dakotabaptist.com](mailto:fred@dakotabaptist.com) and we will send you copies.

**Resources for the 2022 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering & Week of Prayer for North American Missions are going out this week. Each church will receive a packet with a few envelopes and prayer guides, a poster, and a DVD. If you need additional envelopes or prayer guides, please request them at the DBC website or email Bob at [office@dakotabaptist.com](mailto:office@dakotabaptist.com). The Week of Prayer is March 6-13.**

### Dakota Baptist CP Ambassadors meet for the first time

The first four CP Ambassadors met online in January to begin their work to learn what God is doing around the world the work of Dakota Baptists and through Southern Baptists as a whole. What they learn in the months to come will enable them to celebrate and share God's work in their churches and across the convention.

Willie McLaurin, Vice President of Great Commission Relations and Mobilization for the SBC, joined the team for the first part of their meeting. McLaurin, who was the featured speaker at last year's DBC annual meeting, gave the ambassadors an overview of the Cooperative Program. He commended them for their passion and willingness to serve. He said the Dakotas are blazing a trail in developing CP Ambassadors. He said that one other state convention has a CP Ambassador strategy and three other state conventions are laying the groundwork for their ambassadors program.

The group walked through the details on what qualities CP Ambassadors have and what CP Ambassadors do. They also began talking about available resources to learn more about the Cooperative Program.

The team are planning to meet again on Zoom in February and March and then quarterly after that. They are also going to plan an in-person meeting later in the year.

The inaugural Dakotas CP Ambassadors are: Jacob Olson (Restore Church: Yankton, SD); Karen Holmes (First Baptist Church: Wolsey, SD and Western Way Church: Huron, SD); Scott Brottlund (Journey Church: Fargo, ND); and Dave Utter (Black Hills Baptist Church: Whitewood, SD).

Each church in the Dakotas is invited to designate someone to be their CP Ambassador. To do this, send their name, cell phone number, email address, and mailing address to Fred MacDonald at [fred@dakotabaptist.com](mailto:fred@dakotabaptist.com).

## CP Ambassador description



### A Conduit for the Lord

By Sarah Dixon Young

When the Lord works in the lives of His people, He includes His people in doing the work.

Pastor Steve Osage has served as a conduit of the Lord's blessings to ministries across the Dakotas for the past twenty years, exemplifying Philippians 2:13: "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

"God made it easy," he says. "I would just visit the churches to find out how they were doing and what their needs were. Then, I would call other churches who would give. It was really amazing to be able to connect them and watch the Lord work."

For Osage, serving others began with his salvation in 1981. A minister came to the hospital where Osage was recovering from a car accident and shared the Gospel. Osage continued a lifestyle of alcohol addiction for six more months, until one evening, walking to the bar, he remembered the Pastor's words and prayed to receive Christ.

"I just passed by the bar, went home, and told my wife, 'Let's go to church,'" he recalls. He was baptized, and three years later, he became licensed to minister. He began pastoring in Oklahoma. In 1993, he and another pastor took their families and traveled to Lower Brule, SD to share the Gospel with the Lakota people there. Thirteen people accepted Christ.

The next year, Dakota pastor Wilbert Robertson invited Osage to travel to the Lake Traverse Reservation in South Dakota to do a revival. While handing out fliers, Osage encountered the spiritual hardness of the people when one man took the flier, wadded it up, and tossed it to the ground. Later that night, Pastor Robertson shared about the immense need of the Dakota people and about the difficulty in reaching them with the Gospel.

Osage was intrigued. Later in the evening, he went to talk with Robertson again about the community's need for the Gospel.

Robertson told him, "Would you pray about serving here? I believe you could really help because you are a real people person. I am not, but I see that in you." Before the end of the week, Osage knew that the Lord was calling him to the Dakotas.

His wife, Rita, wasn't so sure; however, the Lord worked on her heart too, and by the next Spring, they were moving, along with their granddaughter, to pastor not one, but two congregations on the Lake Traverse Reservation: First Baptist Sisseton and Bethany Baptist.

In addition to sharing the Gospel, Osage also kept an eye out for young men he could mentor and train to be leaders in the church. Just as Robertson had mentored him, he came alongside others.

"One of the goals Wilbert had was to train indigenous pastors. Every church I pastored, I always picked somebody to mentor in that direction. I would build relationships with them and get to know their strengths," Osage says.



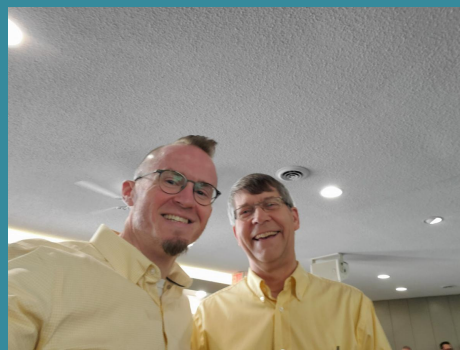
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## The Story of Journey Church, Fargo, ND

by Dude Garrett

As you read this title, you might be asking, “What is this Journey Church in Fargo? What is the story?” Let me answer that for you.

For almost twelve years the members of Temple Baptist have supported and worked alongside Sojourn Church in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area. Through those years those churches have prayed for each other, found ways to serve together (doing VBS and special projects together), helped in financial ways, and shared special services like Good Friday and Christmas Eve. There has always been a kinship in denomination, mission, and desire to see people find Jesus. Although the church families were very different, there was a respect and appreciation of each unique ministry.



Around 2018 changes happening in Temple Baptist caused some church leaders to be concerned about the downward trajectory of the church. In response, leaders began discussing church revitalization or other actions the church might consider as it looked ahead. In that discussion, our DBC Executive Director Garvon Golden met with Temple Baptist deacons to discuss church revitalization and how the DBC could help. After conversations circulated around the church and after an extended season of church wide prayer, Temple Baptist voted to embrace the DBC church revitalization process in the fall of 2019.

Here is the definition of revitalization the DBC plan promoted: *Church revitalization is doing the spiritual work that invites a movement of God directing the church toward greater health and wholeness, leading to growth and reproduction.*

As Temple Baptist progressed through the steps of church revitalization, there were changes happening at Sojourn Church too. In January of 2020, the second of the three original church planting pastors felt led to resign his position and seek a ministry in another part of the country. As Sojourn Church was adjusting to this change in leadership, and as Temple Baptist was surveying the church family to lay a foundation for revitalization plans, our whole country was rocked by the COVID pandemic. Services, plans, church gatherings and attendance were disrupted. Both churches hit the “pause” button and prayerfully sought the Lord for His direction in these radically changing times.

At Temple Baptist, the church revitalization team was stalled. Previous plans seemed irrelevant but openness to change was greater than ever. When the group tried to “restart” revitalization, there seemed to be no clear direction. It was time to think “outside the box.” Should Pastor Dude Garrett retire and the church seek its next pastor? Should the church close its doors and pass on its resources? Is joining with another church an option? In the end, after a summer of meeting outside on the lawn, after a concerted month of prayer and after the recommendation of the revitalization team, Temple Baptist voted to seek joining another Southern Baptist Church.

[Continue story](#)



## Around the Dakotas



### Eagle Butte church goes on mission to Louisiana

By Ben Farrar

This August, Hurricane Ida ripped through Louisiana, leaving a vast trail of destruction in its wake. Many

people's lives are upended, and there was many millions of dollars' worth of property damage. In sympathy with their plight, First Baptist Church of Eagle Butte resolved to do a mission trip (the second in our history) to help with the rebuilding effort.

I took with me two friends of mine, Reggie Kills a Hundred and Shane Brugier. We used our church van to drive down there, sleeping in two generous-hearted churches along the way. The Southern Baptist Convention directed our efforts and told us where to go to serve.



Houma, Louisiana is a coastal city, about an hour outside of New Orleans. Hurricane Ida caused the city to take heavy damage, and many suffered as a result. In that city was Christ Baptist Church, whose Sunday School building had been completely soaked by the hurricane. For three months, the building had remained soaked, and as a result had become eaten up with mold. They needed to have all the sheetrock and molding ripped out and thrown away, so the framing could be treated with fungicide and the rebuilding could begin.

The pastor of the church, who was 82 years old, had been trying to do this work all by himself. He had worked himself to exhaustion, and desperately needed help. So, the work of demolition fell to us. For more than four days, we swung our hammers, pried off molding, pulled out nails, and hauled wheelbarrows full of garbage.



We had to do all of it while wearing masks to keep the mold out of our lungs. But I was grateful for receiving the task that we did. I'm not a skilled construction person, but even I can swing a hammer! By the end, we had finished both floors, and the pastor told us we had greatly exceeded his expectations. He then gave us a tour of the bayou, and treated us to some delicious jambalaya!

We were all grateful for the opportunity to help in this way and thank the Lord for our safe return. And we thank the Dakota Baptist Convention for generously assisting us in our effort, supplying us with the gas money that was needed for the long journey. Blessings to you all!

*Ben Farrar is pastor of First Baptist Church in Eagle Butte, SD*



## Living Hope surpasses Lottie Moon offering goal

Living Hope Baptist Church in West Fargo, ND, surpassed their goal for the 2021 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. In the process, they also set a new church record for giving to this offering.

The church established a goal of \$2,000. When the year ended, Living Hope members had given \$4,264. Living Hope pastor John Flowers said that the church's previous best was \$3,100.

## Church planter updates

by Buck Hill

Here are a few updates about new planters in the Dakotas:

Paul and Michelle Betts moved to Piedmont with their eight-year-old daughter to replant a church in Piedmont, SD. Paul is currently taking part in a residency with Connection Church in Belle Fourche, SD, and will begin laying a foundation in Piedmont later this year.

Ryan and Natalie McGehee are moving to Custer, SD to start a new work in the spring of 2022. They are already in contact with the remnant of Grace Family Church about starting something new. The McGeehees will also be in a residency program at Connection-Belle Fourche for a few months to a year.

James and Aimee Kliewer have returned to the Dakotas from Michigan. They currently live in Sioux Falls and are planning to start a new work in Brookings sometime in 2023. They are doing their residency with Connection Church in Sioux Falls. James volunteered as a youth pastor and an associate pastor with three different churches in South Dakota while he was in college and in his first few years after graduating from School of Mines in Rapid City before moving to Michigan.

Moses and Oyebisi Orukotan are going for their church planter assessment March 1-2. The Orukotans are looking to start a new work in Fargo, ND. Their sending church is Northland Church in Fargo, which is where they will do their residency.

*Buck Hill is the Send Networks Dakotas Director with NAMB and also serves as the DBC State Missions Director*

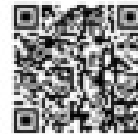


COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

STORIES



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February 6, 2022

MARK CHAMBERS\*

Northern Africa

IMB missionary Mark Chambers\* and pastor Michael Carter were lost. They asked for directions from a Northern African man sitting outside his home and a conversation began that led to the man hearing the Gospel and professing faith in Jesus.

This story didn't happen in Northern Africa where Mark typically serves, it took place in rural Oklahoma where Carter is pastor of First Baptist Church Guymon. For years, FBC Guymon has been trying to effectively reach a large refugee community in their small town.

Language and cultural barriers have been the biggest challenges to connecting with the refugee community and so Chambers, familiar with the people groups now represented in Guymon, came and helped the church locate and develop engagement strategies to reach these immigrants with the Gospel.

**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 helps missionaries like Mark use their missional experience to equip churches across the U.S. who now find the nations at their doorstep.

**PRAY** for Mark and his ministry in Northern Africa, as well as for churches in the U.S., like FBC Guymon, to engage the nations that have moved to their communities.

*\*name changed for security*



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