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Dr. Mac's Minute

Unchained

Passage: Philippians 1:12-21

There is a saying in visitation ministry: "There's no such thing as taking the gospel to the wrong house." When I was a pastor, one of our outreach teams would occasionally arrive at the address on their assignment card, only to find the people living there were not the people named on the card . . . and then ended up leading someone to Christ or finding folks who needed a church home. It is amazing to see how God can create divine appointments out of our mistakes!

Isaiah explained how this happens: *"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever* (Isa. 40:8). God also said through the prophet, *"So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty without accomplishing what I desire and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it"* (Isa. 55:11). You cannot stop God's Word! It was true in the New Testament, too: *"The Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword"* (Heb. 4:12).

One of the most powerful truths Paul discovered was that, even though he wore chains (in fact, he said it was BECAUSE of his chains), God's Word does not. Under house arrest in Rome, he wrote to his friends in Philippi, *"My circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel"* (Phil. 1:12). He shared how members of Caesar's family and the royal guard had come to faith in Christ and that other believers were stepping forward for Christ to stand in the gap for Paul. In a letter to Timothy, his young student of ministry he wrote, *"I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the Word of God is not imprisoned"* (2 Tim. 2:9). The apostle was willing to suffer if souls were won to Christ and the Kingdom of God advanced.

Dr. MacDonald's Tentative June & July Schedule:

June	6	Minot: Cross Roads Baptist
	13	Nashville: SBC Annual Meeting
	20	Vermillion: Grace Baptist
	27	Hazen: Hazen Christian Fellowship
July	4	Not Available
	11	Hot Springs: Cascade Road Baptist
	18	Hot Springs: Cascade Road Baptist
	25	Hot Springs: Cascade Road Baptist

What Paul learned then is still true today. There are many that want to stamp out the name of Jesus from all public discourse. Some would be happy if Bibles could be removed from every home. Try as they might, though, God's Word is as powerful today as it was in Isaiah's and Paul's times. Stand firm in the Word. Keep telling the story of Jesus. Don't be discouraged by the carping critics of the gospel. Don't be defeated by the challenging circumstances of the gospel. Rather, be driven by the unchained conquering Champion of the gospel . . . Jesus Christ!

Registration opens for pastors/family retreat



John & Marcia Hinze from First Baptist Church in Tucumcari, NM, will share with Dakota pastors and wives at this year's Pastors & Family Retreat

Online registration for the 2021 Dakota Pastors & Family Retreat will open on June 1. This year's retreat will be August 19-21 at the Ramkota Inn in Aberdeen, SD. The deadline for registration is Monday, July 26.

John Hinze, pastor of First Baptist Church in Tucumcari, NM is coming to lead the sessions for pastors and wives. The focus will be on cherishing your mate and cherishing God. A team from First Baptist Church in Artesia, NM will lead the activities for school age children and youth. A nursery will be provided for babies and preschoolers.

One of the highlights for the retreat will be an all-family picnic at Wylie Park on Friday afternoon. Pastors and their family will have the afternoon free to engage in water sports, walk through Storybook Land, and other great recreational activities. The Brown County Fair is also in Aberdeen that week.

The retreat is open to pastors, associate pastors, and other ministry staff leaders (such as youth ministers, music ministers, etc.) of Dakota Baptist churches along with their family.

There is no cost to the pastors and families for the retreat and the activities at Wylie Park. Because of the county fair, the July 26 deadline will be a hard deadline this year. Extra rooms at the Ramkota will have to be released after that date, so we will likely not be able to accommodate late registrations this year. To register go to the DBC website at www.dakotabaptist.com.

I ♥ VBS!

by Karen Holmes, First Baptist Church-Wolsey, SD

I don't know about you, but this is my favorite time of the year. My favorite season. It really starts in June of the previous year, and goes to the first week of June this year.

It's **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!!!!**

At First Baptist Church of Wolsey, we do VBS the first full week of June every year. During that week, Lifeway will unveil their theme for the next year. And that is when I start planning, and thinking, and planning, and dreaming, and planning for the next VBS.

Every year we look forward to having the kids come to our church and learn about Jesus and how they can have a personal relationship with Him. As with many of you, we couldn't have VBS onsite during 2020. Our church decided to do VBS "virtually". We met at the church and made 5 videos. Some of the girls at our church helped me do a Worship Rally each day, and then our VBS teachers each took a day and told the story. We then uploaded the video to our church's Facebook page. You must have Lifeway's permission to do this, as they have certain guidelines you must follow prior to putting them on your church's Facebook page. But they were very accommodating, and we were able to upload them. While this worked, it was not the same as having the kids face to face with you. Being able to answer their questions. Watching them do the motions to the songs, the crafts, and the games that we play at the end. It was good, but it wasn't the same.

This year, we are so excited to be holding VBS in our building. While we are still doing things a bit different, (the kids will be more spread out in the sanctuary, and we will keep them in their smaller groups for snacks and crafts instead of all together) we are looking forward to being back with them and presenting the gospel in person!

One of the things I have already done, is put a message on our Facebook page letting them know our dates, and times, and that we are going to be at the church. I am also sending a letter to the kids that have come in the past, letting them know that, while we will still be doing some social distancing, we are not requiring them to wear masks. Our decision to conduct VBS this way, came from listening to what the school in town is doing. As of the beginning of May, the kids at Wolsey Wessington School are no longer required to wear masks. If you are planning to have VBS at your church this year, one of my suggestions is look at what your school is doing. Are they still requiring the kids to wear masks? Are they limiting the number of kids at events? Are they keeping the groups of kids divided into smaller groups?

Be sure that when you promote your VBS, you have a phone number, or email where parents can get in touch with someone to answer any questions, about how you are handling VBS. But most important, **BE EXCITED TO SEE THE KIDS!** I know our workers are looking forward to having the kids in town back to our church. Don't forget to register your kids and send a follow up letter to them. Maybe even a card to let them know you were so glad they came, and let them know about your Sunday School. Plan a big Family Night. Our family night will have the majority of the events outside, so that we can safely accommodate more people. Lastly, **HAVE FUN!** If the workers are having fun, the kids will too.

This is going to be a great year for VBS. I look forward to hearing awesome stories about how kids came to know the Lord!

MAY 26 · JUNE 2 · JUNE 9

A TIME OF PRAYER FOR **#SBC21**



2:00PM - 3:00PM CDT · [FACEBOOK.COM/SBCEXECCOMM](https://www.facebook.com/SBCEXECCOMM)

Greear hosts first joint prayer time for SBC meeting

NASHVILLE (BP) - SBC President J.D. Greear led the first of three Wednesday sessions of focused prayer for the 2021 SBC Annual Meeting today (May 26) at 2 p.m. CDT. Greear, who is pastor of The Summit Church in Durham, N.C., has issued a call for ...

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Youth Camp returns to Crystal Springs in June; Online registration open

Campfires, stars, memorable songs. It's summer camp! Mark your calendars for **June 7-11** because it's that time again! Camp will return once again to **Crystal Springs, North Dakota**, after a one-year virtual hiatus. Last year's camp was held via Zoom.

This year's theme is, "**Let Go.**" The camp will look at the idea of letting go of the past and what that means through God's eyes. We have always been told not to burn our bridges behind us, but when it comes to leaving our sin, we can't light them up fast enough! Campers will be challenged to let go of their past and their sins and look ahead to Jesus.

Camp pastor this year will be Chris Wallace, pastor at Hope City Church in Bismarck. Todd Fuehrer, pastor at The Gathering Place in Bismarck/Mandan will lead worship.



Rumor has it that camp will kick off with some kind of race that has been labeled "Amazing!" Other activities will include the high ropes course, water activities, roller skating, and other great camp fun.

Camp registration is open for students and leaders at the DBC website, <https://dakotabaptist.com/event/youth-camp-2021/>. Registration for the camp is \$210.



Around the Dakotas



Cornerstone in Williston celebrates milestones, hosts deacon training

The members of Cornerstone FBC in Williston, ND celebrated a couple of milestones in their church history on May 23. The church burned their mortgage (technically a photocopy of the mortgage) and marked the conclusion of a revitalization partnership. The celebration Sunday included the baptism of two brothers, a fellowship meal, and the keeping of an unusual promise by the senior pastor.



The church has been in a special drive to pay off the debt in order to free them to do even greater ministry in the Williston area and around the world. A few months ago, Cornerstone pastor T. J. Green told the congregation that, if someone would "come in and write a big check to finish paying off the mortgage", he would wear kilts when they burned the mortgage. To his surprise, someone took him up on the offer; so, Green donned a pair of kilts provided by some other church members. He jokingly told the congregation that he had learned, "to watch what I say!" Two of the church's young people were given the honor of burning the note.

DBC Executive Director Fred MacDonald preached at the celebration from Matthew 28. He challenged the church that they could have the courage to continue to move forward in new ways because of three things that never change: their Master, their mandate, and their mission.

On the day before the Sunday service, Cornerstone's deacons met to go through the training, "A Deacon on Purpose."

Baker Offering goal set for 2021

The annual Baker State Missions Offering goal has been set at \$40,000 for the 2021 year. This year's offering allocations will include pastor and church emergencies, Native American ministry, summer missions/interns, and leadership development.

The offering is received each year in

Christ Church has respite room for pastors and other Christian workers

Christ Church in Rapid City, SD has converted a room in the education wing of their building to a bedroom to accommodate pastors, missionaries, and other Christian workers, to provide a place to spend the nights when they are in Rapid City or the surrounding area. The bedroom

September. Resources for promoting the offering and a state missions prayer guide will be available in July.

Connection Church in Belle Fourche hits new record attendance

Connection Church in Belle Fourche, SD established a new attendance record in their worship services on May 16. They had a total of 399 that morning. Connection-Belle Fourche recently started a third service to accommodate the growth. The church also recently added a new family pastor, Chad McCord, to their staff. Connection's pastor is Stephen Carson.



can accommodate a couple and there is also space to accommodate children, using an air mattress. There is a bathroom with a shower down the hall from the bedroom.

If you need a place to stay or you need a get away from the church to relax, recreate, or spend some down time, call Christ Church at 605-791-5591. There is no charge for the use of the room, and we would be glad to have you take advantage of this opportunity.

Who's going to Nashville?

The annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention is June 15-16 in Nashville, TN. Several Dakota Baptists are planning to attend. Are you one of them? If so, send an e-mail to DBC Executive Director Fred MacDonald at fred@dakotabaptist.com and let him know. If possible, he would like to get together with all of our Dakotans at some point during the meeting.

Temple Baptist honors Pastor Dude Garrett

Temple Baptist Church in Fargo, ND recently honored Pastor Dude Garrett and his wife Karon as they celebrated their 40th anniversary in ministry.



Dude began serving as Temple's pastor in October 1987. Prior to that he was the pastor at First Baptist Church in Devils Lake, ND. Over his four decades in the Dakotas and in the South Valley Baptist Association, Dude has been a key leader in the Dakotas. He currently serves as chairman of the DBC Executive Board. Karon is a Doctor of Nursing Practice and currently serves as a Health Care Provider for Sanford Occupational Health in Fargo.

Capitol Heights in Pierre, SD seeking bi-vocational pastor

Capitol Heights Baptist Church in Pierre, SD is receiving resumes in their search for a new pastor through June 23. The church is looking for a bivocational pastor to lead their congregation in South Dakota's capitol city. For a full description and profile, click the link below. Resumes and sermon recordings can be sent to Mick.breske@gmail.com.

Learn
More

Dakota Baptist leads call to God's people to care for orphans

Editor's Note: *The following was shared by Damen Woolsey, a former DBC pastor in Mobridge, SD. He and his wife Kristi are now members at Connection Church in Belle Fourche, SD. Damen was tapped to help spearhead a foster care effort in South Dakota known as "Stronger Families Together."*

My name is Damen Woolsey, and my wife's name is Kristi. We are adoptive parents who have been foster parents. I am currently one of the leaders at Connection Church Belle Fourche and was the pastor of Cornerstone Community Church in Mobridge, SD. Over the years, God broke our hearts for the hundreds of kids in the SD child welfare system. So many times, kids in care are unseen and feel forgotten. Currently, in SD, there are not enough adoptive and foster parents for these children.

As of May 11, 2021, there are 1730 kids in state care and 995 kids in foster families, leaving 100's of kids who need foster families. Seventy-nine of those children are available for adoption and desperately need church leaders to call the people they serve to care. The kids who do not find families and age out of the foster care system are vulnerable to trafficking, homelessness, and suicide. Your church can make a difference by leading the way to become foster parents, adoptive parents and create ministries that support these families for the glory of God.

To set the stage for this to happen, God has created fertile soil in SD to see something supernatural, where the faith community and government have come together to help vulnerable children. To one day see more than enough safe, loving families for kids in foster care and support youth aging out. South Dakota Kids Belong has partnered with governor Kristi Noem, Secretary Laurie Gill, DSS/CPS, and faith and business leaders to initiate a statewide movement called Stronger Families Together. Our goal is to recruit 300 new foster parents from May 1, 2021, through April 30, 2022. A pillar of this initiative is the faith leaders to boldly step in the gap on Sunday morning and be a voice for kids who can't speak for themselves, calling God's people to live out James 1:27. The church is the solution and Gov. Noem and her administration are inviting faith leaders to unite with them to ensure every child in SD belongs in a safe, loving family. Are you willing to follow the call and equip the saints to see the redemptive work of Jesus Christ heal vulnerable children and families in your state?

I would love to serve you in any way to equip the church you shepherd to help kids in foster care find belonging for the glory of God. If you are interested in caring for the orphans in your backyard. Please call me at 605-210-3079 or send me an email at dwoolsey@sdkidsbelong.org or visit <https://americaskidsbelong.org/sd-faith-impact-partner/>.



Former DBC pastor Damen Woolsey met recently with South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem to kick off an effort to increase foster care in the state.



IMB introduces Church Connections - IMB

What would happen if the more than 47,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention were directly connected to International Mission Board missionaries and actively engaged in fulfilling the Great Commission? IMB leadership estimates that...

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