



Church Family

“Sow for yourselves righteousness;
Reap in mercy;
Break up your fallow ground,
For it is time to seek the LORD,
Till He comes and rains righteousness
on you.”

Hosea 10:12

The fallow ground of our hearts is indeed being broken up here in Oglala as we seek His Face in fasting and prayer; we sincerely await His Coming which we know is only a matter of time... Then even from the soil of these “Badlands” God can and will reap a most beautiful harvest!

There is a new thing that has taken place here on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and it has everything to do with prayer and fasting. Last September, our friends Ted Standing Soldier and Wade McHargue were praying together and discussing some of the issues we face as Christians on the reservation. The Holy Spirit prompted them to start a prayer meeting. It was to be every Monday morning with the purpose of bringing the body of Christ together across the reservation, to encourage one another, and to seek the Face of God together in prayer. It was a very simple yet complicated task. You see, here on the reservation (as I'm sure it is the same with whatever community or city you live in), unity among churches and Christians is a very rare and all but given up on “luxury.” There is so much that divides us that we figure it's best to stay neutral and have the mentality of “you stay on your side and we will stay on ours.” We think it wisdom, when really it grieves the Heart of the Father. Just read John 17 and you will see His wish and desire on this subject of unity.

Anyway, they started meeting at the Pine Ridge Gospel Fellowship and invited all the area ministers and believers to just come with no other agenda than to pray and seek His Face. At first, I myself was apprehensive. I could give you theological excuses, but in truth it was just my pride and laziness that kept me. Thank the Holy Spirit and the persistence of my friend Ted that I finally got over myself and started attending and since, I haven't been the same.

Charles Finney says, “Nothing knits together Christian hearts better than united prayer.” I can testify to that. Now we are seeing God tear down walls of division and strife that have stood for many years, separating His people and not allowing for His Spirit to move freely here among the Lakota. There have been tears of forgiveness and repentance, sighs of joy and relief; bonds between brothers and sisters that were once broken and shattered are now made new and whole—and this is only just the beginning.

From these prayer meetings on Monday, the Holy Spirit has also directed us to call our churches and ministries to pray and fast along with us. Since January, we are now in the process to take one day a month and call a sacred fast. On that day, we meet in a different community every month to celebrate with a time of prayer and rejoicing. So far we have gone to four different churches across the reservation and have made plans for the other eight months of this year.

Moreover, on Sunday April 13th three churches including ours joined together for Sunday morning worship. Three different denominations, three different pastors and congregations who have “found encouragement in Christ, comfort from His Love, fellowship of the Spirit, affection and mercy and so since, fulfill His Joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind” as we worship “our One Lord, One God and Father of all” (Philippians 2:1-2)! Amen! How's that for something different?

As you can tell, I am excited about all this! I see God setting the stage for something Beautiful and Mighty that will Glorify His Name here in Oglala and across the reservation as He brings His lost sheep home. We ask that you join with us in this season of prayer and fasting and who knows, maybe you will find yourself praying and worshipping alongside that person who at one time was your enemy but now by the Grace of God has become your brother or sister.

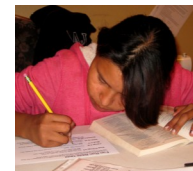
Sincerely in Jesus, Pastor Eric & Ela Sutton



OASIS Youth Ministry

Working with the youth is not a one man show. It is a collective effort of all our staff here at the RecCenter, and as we all share in the labor, we also rejoice in its fruit together! There really is no greater reward than seeing children faithfully go through kids' church, then grow out of it and into our youth, and later join the church family. I'm not saying that this actually works yet, but it is what we pray and work for!

I would like to highlight one of the good things that are happening with our youth. On Tuesday nights, my wife Mary teaches a teenage Bible study group. It lasts for an hour, and the number of teens attending has been very constant. It is an interactive, very personal time with the small group. This past winter she challenged them to memorize the four key verses to the gospels plus Psalm 119:11, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against you.” As an extra incentive, the teenagers were promised a trip to Evan's Plunge, an indoor water park in a nearby town...



Imagine her joy when every single teen memorized the five verses! What's even more amazing is that some of these youth do not go to school regularly and are not exactly great at reading. Still now they have a huge treasure in their hearts, one that can and will last for a whole life time. Please pray with us that the Word of God will indeed stay hidden in their hearts and keep their lives from sin and destruction.

Leon & Mary Schwartz, Youth Leaders



Kids' Church

The long winter is finally over, and even though the children did not seem to mind

the cold too much, they were always happy to come inside to kids' church and beading class. Actually we have quite a few committed beaders; they create and sell their artwork in order to raise funds for field trips. We spent many long winter afternoons beading and talking and building relationships

with the kids. God has blessed our ministry, and we are already looking forward to a great a summer season!

Terry & Kathy Michels, Children's Pastors

Royal Rangers

“We are Royal Rangers, marching in array...” That is the beginning of an old song written by one of my commanders, Buddy Creel, back when I (Eric) was in Royal Rangers. Even after all these years I can still remember it along with many other invaluable lessons from my time with Outpost 79. Royal Rangers is where I first met Jesus; it was a great tool to lead me to, teach me, and keep me for Christ.

This past fall, with the help of Terry Michels, we started our own Royal Ranger meetings at the RecCenter. Although the program has changed over the years, the goal is still the same: to disciple young boys to become men of God. Right now we have a great group of boys learning everything from building campfires to studying Scripture, and committed men teaching and learning right alongside them. We will have our first campout in June. I am so blessed to be a part of these boys' lives and hopefully give to them what my commanders gave to me, Hope and Life in Jesus Christ.





Garden notes

After a hard winter that started with a major blizzard in early October and since then seemed like it would never end, spring has finally come to South Dakota! It has

been very exciting to see the seeds that I planted just a few weeks ago start to grow and mature. The lean-to greenhouse is already in use; I am looking forward to a rich harvest of tomatoes, peppers, onions, etc.



Even more rewarding and just as exciting to see is the growth of the seeds that God is planting in the lives of people here in Oglala! The beginning of this year a young lady I call "Lucy" shared with me that she had tried to commit suicide and had really lost all hope in life. We talked for a few minutes and then our conversation was interrupted. I did not see her again for about a month when she came to the Rec to buy a pickle. I said, "Lucy, I'm sorry we didn't get to finish the conversation we had last month. But when you're ready to talk again, I'd be happy to!" She just said okay and shot out of the door like a lightning bolt. I had been praying for Lucy and kept on doing so until one Friday I felt led to pray that she would come in that evening for youth night. My lack of faith was revealed when she came indeed walking through the door—and I was shocked God actually answered that prayer right away! We were able to take some time alone and talk about the things that were bringing her down. I shared with her the hope that knowing Christ has brought to my life and how He can change her life too. We prayed together and while she did not accept Christ right then and there I know that God has planted good seeds in her heart. Join me in prayer that Lucy will have the courage to let Jesus change her life. I do love to grow plants and work the soil, but my whole garden can dry up and die if it means that even one person gives their life to Christ and gets saved!

Heidi Martin



BULLETIN BOARD



CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Above is a recent picture of our RecCenter and Church ministry team, sadly missing Harry's wife Robin as well as Eric's wife Ela. From left to right: Harry, Heidi, Wendell & Kim, Terry & Kathy, Leon with Sylvan & Mary, and Eric.

Much more has happened over the last months, and God is definitely moving on the reservation. We already had two early "summer" mission teams and also just witnessed the first baptism in the newly installed baptistry! Please stay updated through our website www.oglarwc.org

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please join us in prayer (and if you feel led even fasting) that the bond of unity between churches, ministers, and brothers and sisters in Christ on the reservation will strengthen, and that God will truly be glorified by the Love that we have for one another. We are asking for a transformation of this land, an awakening to the Truth & Light!

- ♥ The Rec Ministry Team for continued love, wisdom, passion, unity and joy in serving
- ♥ For the reservation-wide Body of Christ that He will be glorified by our love and unity
- ♥ For the Oglala community that they will join in to what God has already started doing
- ♥ For the upcoming mission teams for focus on what God wants to do, finances, faithfulness and strength, and for a rich harvest

Oglala Re*Creation & Worship Center

A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS



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