



Thus says the LORD:  
 “Stand by the roads, and look,  
 and ask for the ancient paths,  
 where the good way is; and walk in it,  
 and find rest for your souls. ~ Jeremiah 6:16

*Bigger, Better, Faster, Stronger* has been the prevailing, unspoken philosophy of our collective human culture. From the beginning, the idea of progress has driven mankind to great heights and unnatural wonders. We turned a stone wheel into a robot on Mars, a simple wire between two receptacles into a 3” x 5” piece of plastic that not only connects us to the world but puts the entirety of human knowledge (and folly) in our pockets. The ever-increasing desire and need to seek progress in all manners of life whether they be socially, politically, culturally or scientifically, has led humanity to places of both great light and terrible darkness. But in the end, mankind, in our pride and selfishness, always crosses a line and goes too far, (the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11), and in the name of “progress” we end up worse off than we intended.

*Sadly*, this misguided philosophy has been integrated into the modern church. In the name of “progress,” we have developed methods, strategies and ministry models (most that we have borrowed from the world) in order to fulfill the Biblical mandate of Matthew 28 to make disciples of the nations. Yet with all our “progress,” we find the church worse off than we intended. Instead of making disciples of Jesus, Biblical and full of His Spirit, we are in danger of “making disciples that are twice the son of hell that we are” (Matthew 23:15). But then I read this Word given through Jeremiah almost 3,000 years ago, and I’m reminded of Jesus’ admonishment to the church of Ephesus in Revelations 2:4,5 **“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works.”** Or, as Jeremiah said, ask for the Ancient paths and walk in them.

*You see*, the only true “progress” in Christianity is to always return to our First Love, Jesus, because there is no better, there can be no better!, than Him. The essence of progress is to fulfill that desire and need for the “Bigger, Better, Faster, Stronger” because the current state can always be improved upon. But not so with Christ. There is no improvement possible, there is nothing lacking in Him, nothing in Him that needs tweaking or changing. He was, is, and will always be the absolute Best in all existence. Our concept of perfection falls infinitely short of describing His Nature and Person. So for the Christian or Church to “progress” or to grow always is in the direction of Christ. He is our goal, our ambition, and the culmination of fulfillment. Progression in the Church is always a returning to our First Love by way of the first works, those Ancient Paths of Christianity that were trailblazed by Jesus Himself. Remember the Church he established, that ancient church, those ordinary men and women, are the ones that turned the world upside down with the Gospel preached in signs, wonders and miracles, bringing deliverance and salvation as they walked in the steps of the Ancient of Days, exercising His Love and Authority to the Glory of His Great Name.

*Don’t we want* to be that Church once again? A church that turns the world upside down, that walks in the Authority and Love of our King Jesus, experiencing the Power and Presence of His Spirit in the deliverance and salvation of those lost souls He died to save? Of course we do. Then we need to get back to those first works, those Ancient Paths that lead us to our First Love. And they are not complicated! All we have to do is look in the Scripture; the way is marked clearly. Here in Oglala, that’s what we have been pursuing, those first works, that Ancient Path spelled out in Scripture. Starting in June, we started praying together more consistently and fervently. Jesus said His house shall be called a house of prayer, and through the leadership of the Morales, that’s what we have aimed to become. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, we meet for prayer from 11am—3pm to simply seek His Face as we learn to minister to the Lord. We have also started studying through the Book of Romans together as a church family to not only grow in our understanding of and intimacy with Jesus, but also to allow His Spirit to reveal to us what His Mighty Work of Redemption has accomplished for us and who we are in light of it, the sons and daughters of the King!

*Although ministry* looks very different for us than it did almost 2 years ago, our pursuit is the same, to know Jesus, our First Love, and to be found in Him. We know that as we walk this Ancient Path in Christ, we will see Oglala and the Lakota people turned upside down from despair to hope, cursing to blessing, and death to life. Jesus is King!

Pastor Eric & Ela Sutton

## YOUTH MINISTRY

*We are still living* in a topsy turvy world. There is not much ministry going on at the Rec Center in the way we have done things in the past. A while back though I got to preach at a wake. Many from that family are like my own family members. I was glad to be able to speak to them in a time of need. Many people I had not seen for a long time were at this funeral, and we got to even speak with one person about getting into treatment.



*School has also started up*, and Mary and I are excited to teach again. I go in once a week to teach a Bible class to the 4th through 8th graders (pictured above). I guess I’m that teacher whose subject everyone finds boring, but I know that seeds are being planted and God will be faithful to water them. Please pray for the students and the school.

Leon & Mary Schwartz

## OUTREACH

*This year*, the Lord has led us to establish a prayer room in our church sanctuary to minister to Him as well as to intercede for all the issues going on in our nation and the reservation. This came in light of us taking a year to study the book of Revelation where it declares that Jesus has made us kings and priests. It also declares that the incense before the throne are the prayers of the Saints. So now we have prayer Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 11 am to 3 pm. The Lord has been faithful to meet and lead us during those times. I (Elliot) also have been able to once again go into the jail and meet with both the sentenced and pre-sentenced males for services on Monday. I’ve been in there twice so far, meeting with an average of 16 men from both groups, and the guys have really been open to hear the gospel. Please keep those times in prayer.

Elliot & Crystal Morales, Outreach



## HEIDI'S NOTES



Autumn is officially here, but summer weather remains and the garden harvest continues. Oddly there has been no frost or freeze yet in South Dakota, which has given the red raspberries a chance to produce a delicious second crop, and a fall blooming clematis has flowers for the first time since I brought it here from Pennsylvania.

Just like I have expectations for nature's ebb and flow, so I had expectations on how to minister to my community in Oglala. Well, the gym has been closed for more than a year, and not too many people attend church. But Covid has provided me with new opportunities to go to the highways and byways (my front porch, the playground, funerals, rides to appointments, etc.). The other day some kids and I had an impromptu prayer meeting on the playground which included a discussion on the seven trumpets in Revelations and meeting Jesus in the air. (They brought it up!) So instead of dwelling on what Covid has taken away, I want to always think of it like this:

Christ  
Overcomes,  
Victorious  
In  
Difficulties!

"These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." ~ John 16:33

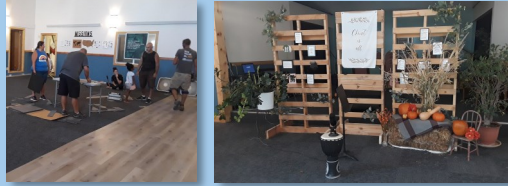
Heidi Martin



## BULLETIN BOARD

### CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

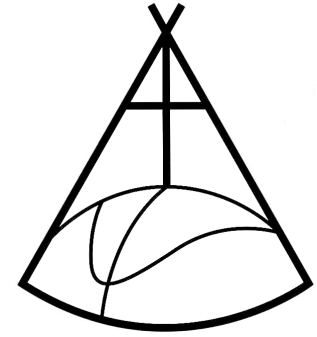
The Rec Sanctuary has been fully remodeled (for now, anyway 😊) and the new floor—half carpet, half vinyl—is installed. What we need now is for people to come and fill these chairs!



Meanwhile, we've begun with the planning and preparations for our annual Christmas outreach. Last year's "Drive-thru" event was an amazing opportunity to bless the Oglala community with personal prayers, a festive meal, and a gift bag. (Pictures of the event are still up on our website [www.ogllalarwc.org](http://www.ogllalarwc.org)) Please consider supporting the outreach for this Christmas! We are in need of your prayer covering, and—if you are able—your financial support. We are also looking for donations of blankets, altogether about 500. PLEASE contact Heidi if you'd like to help in any way, or send a check directly to us. Thank you! 605-867-2510 -or- [heidismartin@yahoo.com](mailto:heidismartin@yahoo.com)

### PRAYER REQUESTS

- ♥ Thank Jesus for always faithfully and lovingly drawing us back to Him, our First Love
- ♥ Thank God that we are still here and that the RecCenter is still standing
- ♥ Continue to pray for wisdom and direction and provision for our ministry
- ♥ Pray for our upcoming Christmas Outreach, December 11, 2021—May Christ's Light shine brightly and lives be touched deeply
- ♥ Pray for our Church Family to grow in the Fruit of the Spirit, knowledge and understanding of the Word, and in numbers
- ♥ Pray for the Oglala community for Hope and the strength & courage to step up for Jesus
- ♥ Pray for the youth, especially the students, that they would find their purpose in Jesus



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AND WORSHIP CENTER  
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A Light In The Darkness



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