



SMOKE SIGNALS NEWSLETTER

The American Indian Christian Mission

924 MISSION LANE SHOW LOW, ARIZONA

***“EVANGELIZING AND EQUIPPING
NATIVE AMERICANS FOR CHRIST”***

Volume 03

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EXPERIENCING GOD...

The spiritual atmosphere at the mission has changed for the better. We are all studying the same Bible Study called Experiencing God. Each group of staff like houseparents, teachers, maintenance, cooks and office personnel are reading a chapter per week, discussing it and praying with their respected departments. We are meeting as a whole staff once a month to discover what each group is learning and praying about. Our fifth thru twelfth grade are going through it as well during their chapel services on Tuesday nights.

The changes are a welcome sight. The changes have brought calmer students, more caring for each other. We are becoming more aware of prayer needs around us too. This is very pleasant after a time of very troubled water. Our God is working MIGHTILY!! It is a time of knowing He is working, and we anticipate seeing the fuller picture soon.



Florabel Packard



MINISTRY TEAMS

Summer schedule is filling fast. If you want to shedule a short term mission trip, please contact us at MissionTeams@aicm.org

ROC AND KATHY ST. MARTIN

Roc and Kathy have been with the misson for the past two years. They will be leaving in October due to health concerns. Roc and Kathy have gone beyond their roles to make an impact on many of the children. They will be missed! Join us in prayer for them as they have many unanswered questions ahead of them.

ATHLETICS

The students have been working hard and running every day to be ready for the Cross Country season. They have placed in the top 5 in both JV and Varsity. Our course is the most difficult of any and they are proud to be running it with such success.



FROM PATRICK LESTER

Ephesians 4:22-24 states, “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

On behalf of the American Indian Christian Mission I want to thank you for all your continued prayers and support that you give. We at the mission are so excited about what God is doing here and the potential that we have, through Him, to do exceedingly more than we can ever imagine. As we prepare for this year and anticipate the favor of our LORD, I can’t help but tell you that the past several weeks have been rough yet rewarding. We at the AICM have experienced death from three different families. One of our students lost his mother, another AICM student lost his sister in a tragic vehicle accident, while one of our older girls lost a cousin in an accident in the forest. Three deaths--yet these three deaths have affected the staff and the children. I was so proud of the staff and their willingness to “Evangelize and Equip” during this time. Many of our staff attended the wakes and funerals of these people. We gathered in front yards and prayed for the individual needs of these families and watched how the LORD was literally ministering to them.

Several members of the AICM were asked to speak at one of the funerals. The very people that you support through your prayers and financial giving were able to minister to a large crowd at the very moment when they needed ministered. That, my friend, is what Evangelizing and Equipping is all about. It’s meeting people at their point of need and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It’s taking the Message to a world that so desperately needs it.

Another great thing that we all experienced through the past weeks was our staff orientation. My friend in Christ and mentor came for a week of intense study and spiritual leadership. The staff at the AICM appreciated so much the spiritual tone and emphasis of this year and how we all feel as ministers of the Gospel. As a supporter of this anointed place, I want to let you know that the staff, in which I believe that God has strategically placed here, is 100% ministry focused and ready for the task of Evangelizing and Equipping. There is a presence in the air with the staff here, and I believe from watching and leading them, that this group has been in the waiting for quite some time now and it’s time for the unleashing of ministry. Because you have walked hand in hand with us and continued to pray for us, it is my belief that God is ready to deliver some things here that we have never seen before. I believe as a minister of the Gospel that we are about to enter a season of restoration as well as deliverance. God has literally been restoring us and He’s brought us through many things, and you have traveled with us.

On a personal level, God has been teaching me trust and stretching my faith tremendously. Over the past year, I have seen the hand of God work through His servants and His children. Make no mistake; I have had times of frustration as well as trying

to understand what God is doing. Through all of this and through the countless encouragements and letters, I believe that God is using me not only to minister to His kids, but He is also using me as a conduit for you as a supporter. He has allowed me the opportunity to visit many of you and share with you the great things that God is doing. He has allowed me to see that you the supporter have a huge investment here with our children. Thanks be to God for His children and for allowing us the opportunity to minister.

We’re excited to see what God is going to do next. He has been gearing us up and readying us for the next season of ministering. The students that we have here are pumped and excited about what is taking place. It is also very obvious that the spiritual climate of the students is high and on the rise.

Communication has not been the greatest lately and for that, we are sorry. It is the AICM’s intent to keep you fully informed and aware of situations that arise and what we are doing about it. If you are an investor or a potential investor or even a past investor, you have the right to know what is going on and how your prayers and financial offerings are going. So where do we go from here? Where do you as a supporter fit in? The AICM along with the Board of Directors feel that we are moving forward and we are putting things behind us. Many lessons were learned over the past year--some hard, some easy. Lessons that were needed because they caused growth. We as a mission cannot continue to dwell on what was. We have to move forward for the sake of the kingdom and for the sake of the children. In moving forward, we have a new vision. We have a new direction that we know the LORD has shown us. In moving forward, we need you to come alongside of us



with prayers and financial offerings. The AICM has been blessed with so many supporters and the finances to do ministry. We need more. We need it in order to stay the course and do what the LORD is calling us to do. I am asking that you the supporter give and give generously. I am asking that you would “up” your giving and in doing that, it would allow us the opportunity to stay the course. We at the mission are cutting costs and even sacrificing. We are being the best stewards of what we have and we still aren’t making it. We need your help in order to stay afloat. Would you please consider helping us? We are determined to be a God honoring ministry; would you continue blessing this ministry with your financial gifts?

You will notice that there is a new vision for the AICM and we are extremely excited about the possibilities that await us. God has already been working through this new vision and we cannot wait for more opportunities to minister. It is our belief that we should be accountable to you in regards to our vision. We want to let you know how we’re doing and what we need from you. Please take some time to visit www.nehemiahproject.wordpress.com and enjoy!

So on behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and Students, we want to say thank you for all you are doing and the prayers that are going up on a daily basis for the work that is being done here. I can assure you that what is being done here is bathed in prayer as well as in line with what we believe that God is moving us towards. We’re going to keep on keepin’ on until the LORD tells us otherwise. As the verse says...

Ephesians 4:22-24 states, “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

We’re putting on a new self—and a new us—will you stand with us?

Will you continue to travel with us as we Evangelize and Equip Native Americans for Christ?

You are greatly appreciated!

THE NEHEMIAH PROJECT

Building Lives; One Life at a Time

AICM 10 Year Vision (2009-2019)

I. The AICM will provide a quality Christian education through a combination day and boarding school.

a. We will increase the number of day students and boarding students at the American Indian Christian School.

b. We will begin a vocational training program within the school utilizing a donated building and equipment (welders, saws, planers).

c. We will maintain our K-8 accreditation.

d. We will provide a Christian education for 9-12 grades.

II. The AICM will partner with organizations engaged in ministry to Native Americans.

a. We will establish relationships with several native pastors.

b. We will continue to be a major conduit for the AICM through the ACC (Apache Christian Connection).

c. We will train and equip Native Americans for Christian ministry both on and off campus.

III. The AICM will with the help of supporting churches become involved in planting churches

a. We will become involved in planting churches within the reservations to effectively Equip and Evangelize.

b. We will plant 2 churches within 5 years and 5 churches within 10 years.

c. We will utilize Native Americans to support and minister the churches.

IV. The AICM will in conjunction with other interested churches and supporters build and fully operate “The Bruised Reed Ministry” to assist the parents of AICM students.

a. We will be a safe haven on campus for AICM children and mothers for 20-60 days.



b. We will provide the opportunity for parents to acquire a GED while participating in the program.

c. We will require all participants of this ministry, to complete a Spiritual Emphasis Study.

d. We will also require that participants volunteer their gifts and talents at the AICM.

V. The AICM will provide F.E.A.S.T. (Family Encouragement and Study Time).

a. We will provide spiritual food for our brothers and sisters in order to better “Equip and Evangelize” the families of students at the AICM Christian School.

b. We will offer lunch and or dinner to parents and allow the AICM more of an opportunity to minister to each family member through small study and devotion (This will happen on pickup and drop-off days).



FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dear Supporters of the American Indian Christian Mission,

My name is Ron Schlatter and I would like to introduce myself as the new chairman of the Board of Directors at AICM. I reside in Francesville, Indiana with my wife, Jodie, who is a teacher at our local elementary school. We own a family business that specializes in selling and servicing drainage machines and the equipment and accessories that go along with agricultural water management. We are members of the First Christian Church of Francesville, where I currently am an elder, and Sunday school teacher and on serve the mission committee.

My relationship with AICM began with a short term mission trip in the summer of 1994. Every year since that time I have spent at least one week during the summer and on occasions during the spring, on the AICM campus. Each one of my family members has worked on at least one mission trip at AICM. Our oldest son was the maintenance director for several years. Another son even met his wife while ministering with the mission! Needless to say, AICM is a large part of my life and I have made many lasting friendships because of the work begun at AICM.

This past year has been a trying time for AICM. The leadership of the past Board Chairman, John Hayes, proved to be beneficial in keeping us on task and faithful to "evangelizing and equipping Native Americans for Christ." I thank and congratulate John for his many years of service to AICM.

When we look at our 40 years of existence I give thanks for those who had the vision for AICM. Gods' faithfulness to those who seek his will is demonstrated every day by individual and supporting groups whose prayers and financial gifts allow us to minister to those on the reservation and students in AICS. As we move ahead it will be the board of director's responsibility to

provide clear, achievable goals and the leadership necessary to insure completion. All the while being worthy stewards with the resources put at our disposal.

If there were to be any questions, I will be available at

Ron Schlatter
P.O. Box 601
Francesville, In 47946
219-567-2278 home
219-789-1531 cell
ron@schlattersinc.com

FROM THE BOARD

As a Ministry that's devoted to Evangelizing and Equipping Native Americans for Christ, we think it's important to review and look at where we have been and how God has literally taken us and answered prayers as well as preparing us for the next season of ministry. Through prayers, emails, hundreds of phone calls and letters, you the supporter have traveled with us and prayed us through this trying time. The following is a sample of what God has done through countless hours of prayer and fasting. On behalf of the AICM, thank you for not abandoning His children. God is not done and neither are we.

It was just over a year ago in August 2008, the AICM Business Manager resigned and left the Mission and the AICM savings and bank accounts were found to be depleted.

An audit by a CPA firm hired by the AICM to investigate the situation and review the financial accounts have concluded that the money in the savings and bank accounts was used to pay the operating expenses of the AICM, and none was taken for personal gain.

Your generosity has enabled the AICM to pay its bills throughout the past year, and to continue its Christian school and outreach ministries to Native American children without interruption.

Since then, the AICM has reduced overhead costs and has put in place new financial control procedures



to ensure that the past financial mismanagement does not happen again.

The AICM staff is unified, and the rapid turnover of staff so prevalent in recent years, has ceased.

The AICM continues to offer an accredited Christian education to elementary students.

The High School program has been revamped to enable the AICM high school age students to attend Show Low High School where they have a wider choice of academic subjects, and can participate in high school sports and social activities. Parents and students are enthusiastic about this opportunity, and the number of high school students at AICM has doubled.

The popular Blue Bus Ministry continues to take Bible School programs to children in 21 communities on the White Mountain Apache Reservation each month. Ministry teams from four different churches led week long Camp





programs on campus for over 350 Native American children this summer. And because of the prayers and working of the Spirit, we witnessed over 23 baptisms!!

The girls dorm was remodeled this summer to improve the "home life" for the girls who live there each week during the school year.

Facilities for a vocational training program on campus are being planned to help prepare students for job placement.

Please be in prayer for the following:

- The AICM would glorify God in ALL things.
- God would continue to work in His children.
- Pray that God would continue working in and through the staff to fulfill His purpose.
- That Apache Christian Connection would multiply its efforts and help bring forth a revival on the reservation.
- Nehemiah Project (AICM Vision)

FROM THE BUSINESS DEPT.

Time has passed so quickly since last year's shocking discovery that our funds had been exhausted and our request of the supporters of AICM for help.



We praise God for your responses that allowed us to meet the financial needs associated with the commitment to make a difference in the lives of impressionable Native American children in Northeastern Arizona.

Over the course of the last several months our office team has been able to reconcile the bookkeeping and give us a clear understanding of the costs involved with doing the ministry that God began here more than forty years ago. The cost of staffing the classrooms, operating the campus, and reaching out in the native communities is projected to be \$1.25 million dollars this fiscal year. This is a 20% reduction from last year. As a supporter we want to make you aware that the staff here at the AICM have taken pay cuts and other sacrifices in order to continue ministering. As well as sending our High School students into our local High School. The staff we have are so stretched with doing various other aspects of the ministry, that they need your prayers.

The Lord has been pleased to use several hundred churches and individuals to channel the money to accomplish His objectives at AICM. About 75% of that is derived from general contributions from churches and individuals and 25% is gained through the Child Sponsorship Program, the Arizona Tuition Tax Credit giving, the state School Lunch Program and nominal tuitions paid by student families.

Having allocated the income and expenses over the individual months by historical data we now find the ministry at a place where operating costs will exceed income for the first eight months by nearly \$140,000. Then we expect to receive the Tuition Tax Credit monies from the state which will balance out the negative cash flows. This analysis gives us the knowledge to pray specifically that God will provide immediate dollars to carry us through until we see the state monies come in February of 2010.

Please pray with us for these immediate needs and that God will be



pleased to provide at least \$104,360.00 per month in revenues to sustain His ministry at AICM. Thank you for your continuous prayer and financial support of the work here at American Indian Christian Mission.

SCHOOL

All praise and glory to God, Our Father for your continued interest, prayers and support. Your prayers are so vital for the mission and the mission of God here at AICM. Since I wrote to you many events have occurred. School finished very well and we celebrated with our first high school grade graduate, Leo Nez. Leo was with the school for 14 years! We had an awesome graduation for him. Please pray for him to stay free of alcohol and drugs and to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

During the summer we had 4 weeks of summer camp. How do students sign up, you ask. The Blue Bus passes out applications to any and all children on the Apache Rez. A bus schedule and place for pick up is included. On Monday morning the bus sets out and goes to each pick up site and who ever is there with a permission slip gets on the bus. The camp is broken down into 4 week segments: 5-8 years olds, 8-12 years olds, 12-18 years old boys and then 12-18 year old girls. The first





week the Blue Bus (if you don't know the Blue Bus - go to www.aicm.org and learn about this ministry) and three other buses went to each pick up site. By 5:00pm there were 90 5-8 year olds on the campus. We had beds everywhere and I mean everywhere! It was awesome. By the end of all the summer camps 20 student missionaries and campers had accepted Christ. God is at work on our campus.

The Lord sent 3 fantastic teachers for our school. Rie McGoarty - 2nd grade, Sarah Minott - Middle school English and History and Linda Ireland, Reading Specialist. Please pray for a hedge of protection around them as Satan likes to especially attack newcomers as well as all who work here because he knows we are about God's work.

More school news: 95% of last year students returned. Praise God as this has been unheard of. Transition here is high. The k-4 teachers looped this year. Looping is the teacher and the students move up to the next grade. Teachers and students already know each other, the students have developed a trust relationship with the teacher, the teacher knows the students ability and literally pick up where they left off in May. It is working extremely well. The students are very happy and so are the parents. When visiting a classroom the other day, my heart leaped for joy as students were humming songs of praise they have been learning as they went about their work! They are content and happy, secure and safe.

We also have 3 new dorm parents, 2 for the boys and 1 for the girls 11-14 year olds. The huge boys' dorm was

split in 2 and remodeled this summer. Many volunteer carpenters, plumbers, electricians and church volunteers worked diligently after the first week of camp to complete this project. God has richly blessed us in so many ways. Please pray for those individuals who gave so much of their time in service to the Lord.

We have been in school for a month now and things are going well. We had a teacher meeting on Friday from 9-2. At this time our focus is Writers' Workshop - a method of teaching writing. Rosie Nutlouis, Navajo teacher, shared her experience with writing as a student in a boarding school. She wrote a story about her Dad as her hero. The teacher wrote across the top -You didn't write enough-. She shared with us how hurt she was and thanked all the teachers for learning about writing, implementing what they are learning and the individual attention to each student. This touched all of us. The Lord was speaking through Rosie letting us know what we are doing is His will.

As for high school! We are doing something new this year. Our 12 high schoolers attend Show Low High and live on campus with us. It is working out well! Students receive bible study at home with their dorm parents and a local pastor and youth minister. The first day they wanted to be driven to school and thus it was done. They were a bit scared going from a school of 55 kids' k-12 to a high school of 700. This choice was made as we did not have the finances to support a high school with electives and sports and all the subjects needed at each grade level. Sit down for this! One of their subjects at the high school is Bible taught by a Youth Minister from Calvary Baptist in Show Low. When walking into the school there is a huge plaque that says "In God we Trust". God is alive and well in Arizona!

That first day it was decided that all who wanted to would go down and greet the bus when it arrived that afternoon. The bus came but no kids! So we waited and waited still no kids. I called the school and

there were no kids there either. They called the bus no kids there either. As we continued to try and solve this issue a bus arrived. The kids had gotten on the wrong bus! Relief!!! As they got off the bus the 8 -10 people who had gathered to greet them start applauding, beeping horns and cheering the kids. They had grins from ear to ear! It was an awesome moment and still brings a tear to my eye when I think about it! Keep these high schoolers in your prayers.

Praises:

- God has returned our students safe and sound
- The high schoolers are liking their experience at the high school
- Sent the teachers the students needed
- Our new dorm parents have settled in and love the kids
- We are working well as a team
- God's love is everywhere on campus

Prayers:

- For a continued hedge of protection around our kids as they go home each weekend
- For the teachers to have open minds to learn and implement new educational methods
- For the Leadership Team to make decisions based on the will of God for the school
- For the high schoolers to do their best in school
- For all students to have open hearts, ears that hear, and eyes that see as they learn the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ
- For continued financial support
- For Kathy, secretary, whose cancer has returned. Blessing as they return to Texas to be with family and for treatments
- For Patrick, the Executive Director, as he visit new churches for support
- For me, stamina, good health and wisdom in directing/working with teachers and students

God bless all of you.

Karen Slack

BRUISED REED...

I remember a situation that occurred last year within one of our families. We had a young mother with two sons in our school; she is an alcoholic and was involved with a very abusive man. The family was turned in to Child Protective Services. The Mom was responsive to the help and sought out resources within the community. The boys could not go home for about 6 weeks and remained with families here on campus until Mom made some changes in her life.

The staff at the AICM attended family meetings with CPS and spoke for the boys and discussed how they were doing in this situation. Fortunately we had staff members who took an active interest in the lives of these 2 young boys and went beyond their regular service here to provide a safe place for them to stay. These people allowed God to work through them providing comfort, and an understanding ear as the children cried for their mom and prayed for God to help them be able to go home again.

Thankfully we recognized the need these two boys had and ministered to them, however we did not do the same for their Mom. We did nothing to help her. This lady found help through the Church of the Latter Day Saints who had the resources to help. They helped get her house in order; they provided counseling in their offices and accountability in visiting her home and open communication lines. This organization went out of their way to help as a result she was baptized and joined their church.



It was this experience and a few others that began to open my eyes to a greater need we must minister to the Native American communities, families, and Children. So often we repair wounds over and over within a child yet send the children back into less than ideal circumstances. We have families struggling, with little resources to make their life better and looking for hope and help. We must find the ways to offer this help.

The Mom in my story made significant progress, the boys were returned to her and things seemed to go OK for a while. But we know the resources she received were temporary without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, without the truth all our attempts at a better life are in vain. The boys were taken from her this summer and are now staying with another family member and by all sources we feel their situation is no better. We are still unsure about all that has happened to them.

I wonder if we had been better prepared to help this family how things would look, would the boys be living in a Christian home free of abuse, would I have a new sister in Christ, would they have in turn impacted their family and communities for Christ. I do not know, but I am positive that I will be better prepared to help other struggling moms and strive to help families live life in all its fullness.

It is a regular occurrence to hear children speak of the violence they see at home, so regularly do they see hatred and anger acted out it that it is expected. Rape and domestic violence is often not even reported, because that is just part of life. Most see no way out, our young people have very little to truly look forward too. They cannot imagine a different life.

We have had children stay on campus all but one weekend so far this school year. In each case it is because the kids have had no safe place to stay. We must provide a refuge for the hurting and be their strength and protection until they can stand on their own. John 10:10 states "The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy.

My purpose is to give life in all its fullness." So many of our children and their families know all too well the first part of this verse, it is time to show the Native American People the second part through taking them by the hand and showing what life in Christ looks like.

We want to give our families a chance to see change, to help them understand what Love is, and that God truly has a plan and a purpose in their life beyond meager existence. Please pray for the harvest that is in store for us by submitting ourselves to His will. That we would implement God plans exactly as He says, for the resources we need and most of all that hearts will be opened up to receive truth.

You'll notice that in our vision, the Nehemiah Project, God has laid on our hearts the Bruised Reed Ministry. The story that you have just read is like many others and we have to do something. God is and has been calling us to minister more effectively to our Native parents. We would be remiss if we weren't obedient to God's calling to offer this ministry. This story and others like it might have a different outcome if we were more prepared and more ready. God has given this vision for all of us to participate in, even you. Would you be willing to help with this ministry? Would you be willing to come alongside of us and support us in this endeavor? God is calling each one of us to a higher calling. He is calling us to prepare for the harvest that is about to come. Jump on with us as we Evangelize and Equip Native Americans for Christ.

Brennae Lewing
Director of Student Life





American Indian Christian Mission
924 Mission Ln #1
Show Low, AZ 85901

WEB: WWW.AICM.ORG
EMAIL: CONTACT@AICM.ORG

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F.E.A.S.T

As a part of F.E.A.S.T. (Family Encouragement And Study Time), we have been experiencing a great reward. Each Friday at 11:15, a number of parents will come and have a short time of devotion as well as prayer with us. This part of the nehemiah project is allowing us to actually bridge the disconnect that has been there between the parents and the mission. It also allows us the opportunity to minister to the parents and allow them time to relax in the Word. After a time of prayer, we welcome them to eat with us and then they are more than welcome to take their child home.

Please pray for this facet of the nehemiah project. We believe that if we are going to Evangelize and Equip Native Americans, then we need to be intentional in working with the parents as well.

OFFICE

The office is still collecting box tops and soup labels to earn rewards for our school. Please continue to send those to us. If you have any questions call the office at 928-537-5912.

We are also looking for donations of medical supplies and gift cards for Walmart, Lowe's, or Home Depot. There may be other more specific needs at any given time and you can call the office at to help. Thank you for sending them to us. It is much appreciated!

Students and Staff Cross Country Meet
First Place - Donald Dameron
(Houseparent)
Second Place - Miah Begay (Student)
Third Place - Mr. Begay (Wyatt's Dad)



The Princess Palace going through Renovations.

