

# Northern Lights

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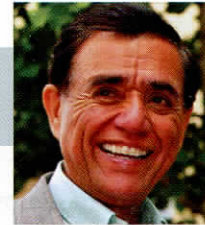


Lutheran Indian Ministries  
Christ's Kingdom—Every Native American Nation.

A Ministry of Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots U.S.

## LETTER FROM DON

### Genuine Healing in God's Son



Rev. Dr. Don Johnson (Makah)

Let's imagine that you and I happened to get on the same elevator. To ease the moment, you greet me and ask, "What is it that you do?"

In the short 30 seconds or less that I might have with you, I would tell you that I am the CEO of a Christian ministry to Native American and Hawaiian Natives. I would summarize our purpose by saying how we help those we serve in ministry to be all that God intended for them to be. We share with them how, through the grace of God, He offers His Son Jesus to bring genuine healing in their lives and repairs the damage that life's circumstances sometimes piles on our people.

Occasionally, I have the opportunity to share our ministry purpose on a plane trip from somewhere. This occurred recently, following a speaking engagement at Concordia Lutheran College in Selma, Alabama.

There, I was privileged to share our vision for ministry with a new acquaintance. I told her my own story of growing up on a reservation, the lost dreams that plagued my parents and how we were impacted as children. My experiences eventually led me to Jesus and His power to take our most difficult, even tragic circumstances, and transform them into blessings.

I told the lady I had written a book about my experiences. I happened to have a copy of my

book, *Broken Parts Missing Pieces*, with me and gave her an autographed copy. She seemed delighted, promised to read it and asked how she could contact me in the future.

In our brief time together, I could tell that this person had some disappointments in her own life. A divorce was not likely her only loss. My brief conversation reminded me what we all know so well. We are all in need of God's grace to repair the parts of our lives that have suffered due to lost opportunity, personal failure or trauma in our lives. Sin and its affects cause us all much suffering. All of us are in need of God's gracious hand of forgiveness and healing.

One of the keys to our ministry is understanding how much God loves us and longs for us to be in relationship with Him. I like to quote Brennan Manning, a Christian author, who wrote, "I am utterly convinced that on Judgment Day the Lord Jesus is going to ask us one question and only one question. 'Did you believe that I loved you, that I desired you and that I waited for you day after day, that I longed to hear the sound of your voice?'"

It is this sense of God's love for all men that drives our passion for ministry and our joy in sharing this ministry with you. Thank you for being a part of us. God bless you. »»

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**“I am always amazed at the way God brings us together into His sweet fellowship with Him and one another as part of the body of Christ – wherever we are and whatever our culture!”**

ROSEMARY STERNBECK,  
ALASKA/INTERIOR



## Arctic Conversations

By Rev. David Sternbeck (*Nu-chah-nulth*) – Fairbanks, Alaska

From the northernmost Indian village in the world to Emmonak in Southwest Alaska, we have followed God’s Spirit in all our comings and goings and watched how the Gospel created, sustained, and nurtured faith in the lives of the Native peoples.

Alaska is so vast that it is overwhelming to think of reaching out to 229 remote villages. We made it into 17 villages last year—a few of them multiple times. If we were to go into 229 villages a year, it would take about 11 years to make it once into each of them.

Those are daunting numbers to consider, but our focus isn’t on numbers. Our goal is to first develop relationships with the elders and leaders in the tribal communities. The entrance into the community has been largely led by our volunteers feeding us information that could be relevant to identifying potential spiritual leaders and making introductions to key people in the community. This way we have many eyes on the village.

Once we identify a candidate, we pursue a relationship. For instance, we met a young man who has been telling our volunteers for

several years that he thinks he would like to become a pastor. This young man will be coming to our mission center with 10 other youth.

Rosemary organized a weeklong camp/retreat for youth from the villages. The idea is to help village children learn to navigate in urban settings while nurturing their faith. Some of these kids have never been out their villages. At some point in their lives, they will have to spend time learning to navigate the dominant culture that you and I live in.

We also met a young man from Kotzebue who now lives in Anchorage. We have been developing a relationship for a couple of years. Vetting people takes time and prayer and relationship. Pray for God leading in this and all we do.

Yes, it has been a busy year with lots of good things happening and plenty of challenges. We covet your prayers and value your friendships. Thank you for allowing us to share the greatest story of all—the story of God with us.▶▶▶

# Hawaii to Alaska: Lessons Learned

By Clarence De Lude III (Native Hawaiian) – O'ahu, Hawaii

Like our other Lutheran Indian Ministries staff who serve Native Americans, Alaska Natives and First Nations People across the continental U.S., we in Hawaii also share the Good News of Jesus with our Native Hawaiian people and others. Last summer, we also had an opportunity to share the Gospel and our culture with Natives in Alaska.




literacy and outreach since they will not get this in their public school curriculum.

In Alaska, our main priority was to bring to Native peoples the Good News of our Savior Jesus Christ. We did this by sharing each other's languages and stories. We had been given seven puppets to use in storytelling, including a raven. I was surprised when all the children wanted to play the raven. I asked why and many could tell us their

traditional oral stories of the raven in their beautiful Gwich'in language, as well as all the other puppet stories such as the wolf, bear, rabbit and even a skunk. We highlighted those animals in our Bible stories and let the children act them out. The Holy Spirit used those cultural links to touch their hearts and bring understanding.

There is tremendous need for Bible literacy and Gospel outreach among all Native youth, including our Hawaiian Native young adults. By God's grace, your continued prayers and support help make it happen. You are connected to our outreach in this way as a result.

*Mahalo Nui Loa* (Thank you very much)! 

Several of our young adults from the island of O'ahu took part in a life-changing mission trip to Alaska. We served as a vacation Bible school (VBS) volunteer team in Chalkyitsik, Alaska, with the Gwich'in Athabaskan people, and we participated in the restoration project in Old Minto, Alaska, among the Tanana Athabascans. Upon our return, the young adults from Hawaii gave presentations to their home congregation on how they grew in spirit and love for the Lord and His desire to see all people saved. We felt the Holy Spirit at work on that day!

After our experiences in Alaska, I came away with a desire to start VBS mission trips to Hawaiians in my area. As in Alaska, we Hawaiians face the same needs and concerns.

**please visit:**

**For more information on how you can volunteer with Lutheran Indian Ministries,**

<http://bit.ly/LIMVolunteer>

## Great Is His Faithfulness!

Deaconess Cathy Benzler (*Cherokee*) – Port Angeles, Washington



Last November at the Lower Elwha Tribal Center, we filled rows of tables topped with knitted mittens, hats, scarves, sweaters, gloves, baby blankets and baby items, quilts and blankets, all handmade from volunteer quilters and knitters and LWML groups from all over the United States. We also had several tables filled with holiday food for families to cook their own Thanksgiving or Christmas dinners.

As people came in, we handed them a bag to pick up what they needed. It was such a joyous time helping them shop. The room was filled with laughter as people mingled and made their selections. Everyone was so grateful as they took only what they needed.

We were amazed by the stories we heard from people as they left. Teachers from the Native head start and preschool picked up sets of hats, scarves, sweaters and coats for students who were so cold that they were unable to stay focused in class. Another couple thanked us as they were leaving, eyes filled with tears as a tribal elder's wife explained that her husband was out of work

and needed shoes. They were so happy that they found a pair of shoes in his exact size along with warm socks! What is truly amazing about this is that, due to our lack of storage space, we don't collect shoes or clothing for adults, yet God miraculously provided them on that day for this tribal elder. We still don't understand how that one pair of shoes and socks got put in with all the stuff we brought from the Hope House. Afterward, this couple invited us to their home to share the Gospel with them.

That day, more than 160 people found just the items they needed. Praise the Lord! Looking forward, from now until September of this year, we will be collecting NEW backpacks for children in grades K-12. Last year there was a shortage for our Native children and we want to make sure that doesn't repeat itself this year. Our goal is to collect 500 new backpacks for the Lower Elwha and Neah Bay reservations. If you are interested in the project, please contact the Brookfield office at 888-783-5267 before mailing any items. »»

“Hope House is such a powerful and unique ministry, as it not only serves the physical needs of our Native people on the Olympic Peninsula, it also enables us to meet the spiritual needs of the people as we develop relationships and share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.”

DEACON TOM BENZLER (IOWAY), WASHINGTON/OLYMPIC PENINSULA

# 160+ PEOPLE

received knitted mittens, hats, scarves, sweaters, gloves, blankets during the holidays through our Hope House ministry in December 2014.



# -35°

The temperature in Arctic Village during the Sternbeck's Christmas visit.

# Other Ministry Updates:

**Washington/Neah Bay** – Makah Lutheran Church experienced another year of growth with their children's ministry, often seeing as many children in the program as they had for total church attendance.

**New Mexico/Navajo** – Eight women from the Utah-Idaho LWML District as well as a team from Risen Savior Lutheran Church in Wichita, KS, participated in servant events with Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in late Summer 2014.

**Canada/Manitoba** – Rick and Linda Martin attended the annual Embrace Life Forum in Thunder Bay, Ontario, a two-day conference where they provided a session on grief.

**Kansas/Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry** – Construction has resumed on the new Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry facility after winter weather slowed the work. With the return of spring came the return of Laborers For Christ volunteers to assist with the project. Concrete work was completed in late January, and steel beams were erected in March.

To learn how you and your congregation can support the building campaign, please call Lutheran Indian Ministries at 888-783-5267.



Laborers For Christ workers: Tom Wies, John Davito, Lender Wendling and Mike Crane



## Please Pray...

» for Bob (Rosebud Sioux) and Deon Prue as they begin serving among the Oneida people at Zion Lutheran Church, laboring alongside Rev. Mark and Joan Schumm.



» for Sampson, a new member of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Navajo, NM, who was injured in an accident at work and also beaten by an intoxicated group he was trying to help.



» for the many volunteer teams who soon will be traveling to Alaska to serve remote Alaskan villages.

» for the safety of everyone hard at work on the new Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry facility and for funding to start Phase II of the project as soon as possible!

Rev. David Sternbeck made it into **17 remote Alaskan villages** in 2014 to develop relationship with elders and tribal leaders.

# 140 NATIVE NATIONS

are represented at Haskell Indian Nations University, location of our Haskell LIGHT Campus Ministry.

**SIGN UP FOR OUR MONTHLY ENEWS!**

If you wish to receive more ministry updates on the lives changed through the Gospel's message, please subscribe at

<http://bit.ly/LIM-eNews>



# Lutheran Indian Ministries Vibrant Social Communities

JOIN US IN CONVERSATION ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

For all of our ministry staff, building relationships with the Native people and communities they serve is vitally important. It is through relationships that we are able to reach more Native people with the healing message of the Gospel and to identify spiritual leaders within Native communities.

Building relationships extends to our relationship with you and our community of partners in ministry. While this community is spread out across the United States, we can come together through our social media communities on Facebook and Twitter.▶▶▶

**“Amen! A beautiful devotion to begin my day.”**

*Mary Ann*

**Your congregation can play an important role in this vital ministry to reach more Native American people for Christ.**

Please ask your church to designate one Sunday in November as Native American Sunday and help every Native American Nation become part of Christ's Kingdom.

**New material will be available in August/September. Sign up to receive Native American Sunday info by email at <http://bit.ly/NASunday>**

Please join us in conversation around the work of Lutheran Indian Ministries.

Facebook.com/IndianMinistry Twitter.com/IndianMinistry



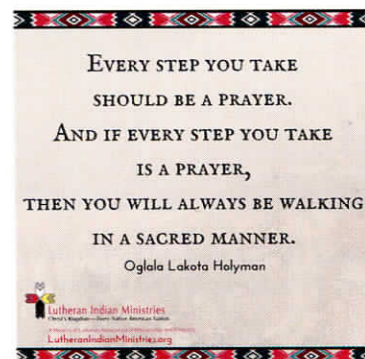
We give thanks to God for Timothy Yazzie (Navajo) and his zeal to serve his people with the Gospel message of Christ. Please pray for God's continued guidance and direction in Timothy's life.



Thank You, Lord, that Your grace provides what each of us needs when we need it.

**“Thank you so much for the Lenten Devotion booklet. I learn so much about the people and Christ's never ending love for us. I look forward to it each Lenten and Advent season.”**

*Vicki*



May you walk in the Word of God and in His steps this day.

**“I love this ministry!! Praise God for all you do!”**

*Michele*

# Memorials & Honorariums

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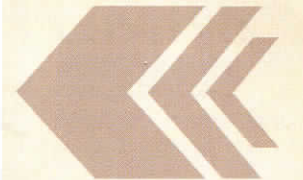
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BIRCH, Carol Jeanne & Son...Ms. Carol Corley  
 BURGESS, Pastor David's retirement...  
 Greater Detroit Zone LWML  
 CAMPBELL, Maureen & Family...Ms. Carol Corley  
 COOPER, Judson & Janet, Our 60th Wedding  
 Anniversary...Mr. and Mrs. Judson H. Cooper  
 CORLEY, Sean & Family...Ms. Carol Corley  
 DIETER, Cheryl, Blessed Christmas to you...  
 Rev. and Mrs. Robert Smith  
 FLANNERY, Rev. Michael...  
 Mr. and Mrs. William R. Braun  
 GOODMAN, Kathleen & Family...Ms. Carol Corley  
 GRUNOW, Mary...Mr. and Mrs. Paul E. Grunow  
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 Mrs. Lenore A. Poellet  
 HARMS, Elsie my mother...Mrs. Wendy H. Grose  
 HERTZLER, Ron & Kay's 50th Wedding  
 Anniversary...Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Johnson  
 Indian Friends...Ms. Evelyn A. Burk  
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 MUSCHINSKE, Rev. George...  
 Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Schield  
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 and Edna & Andreas Jensen...Mr. Andreas Jensen  
 and Dr. Beth Yankee  
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 SCHMITT, Dave's birthday...  
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 STELZER, Marvin...Mr. Julian E. Strucely  
 STOETZEL, Rhonda...Mr. and Mrs. William Frizzell

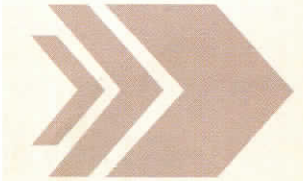
## Upcoming Events...

**HASKELL LIGHT FACILITY DEDICATION**  
 November 15, 2015

**NATIVE AMERICAN SUNDAY**  
 November 2015  
<http://bit.ly/NASunday>



**YOUR GIFTS SUSTAIN OUR MINISTRIES**  
 Your support, however large or small, is a blessing to us and to the many Native communities we serve. Make a gift online today at  
<http://bit.ly/LIM.MakeGift>



**“I am always amazed at the way God brings us together into His sweet fellowship with Him and one another as part of the body of Christ – wherever we are and whatever our culture!”**

ROSEMARY STERNBECK, ALASKA/INTERIOR



## Arctic Conversations

By Rev. David Sternbeck (*Nu-chah-nulth*) – Fairbanks, Alaska

From the northernmost Indian village in the world to Emmonak in Southwest Alaska, we have followed God’s Spirit in all our comings and goings and watched how the Gospel created, sustained, and nurtured faith in the lives of the Native peoples.

Alaska is so vast that it is overwhelming to think of reaching out to 229 remote villages. We made it into 17 villages last year—a few of them multiple times. If we were to go into 229 villages a year, it would take about 11 years to make it once into each of them.

Those are daunting numbers to consider, but our focus isn’t on numbers. Our goal is to first develop relationships with the elders and leaders in the tribal communities. The entrance into the community has been largely led by our volunteers feeding us information that could be relevant to identifying potential spiritual leaders and making introductions to key people in the community. This way we have many eyes on the village.

Once we identify a candidate, we pursue a relationship. For instance, we met a young man who has been telling our volunteers for

several years that he thinks he would like to become a pastor. This young man will be coming to our mission center with 10 other youth.

Rosemary organized a weeklong camp/retreat for youth from the villages. The idea is to help village children learn to navigate in urban settings while nurturing their faith. Some of these kids have never been out their villages. At some point in their lives, they will have to spend time learning to navigate the dominant culture that you and I live in.

We also met a young man from Kotzebue who now lives in Anchorage. We have been developing a relationship for a couple of years. Vetting people takes time and prayer and relationship. Pray for God leading in this and all we do.

Yes, it has been a busy year with lots of good things happening and plenty of challenges. We covet your prayers and value your friendships. Thank you for allowing us to share the greatest story of all—the story of God with us.▶▶▶