

INDIAN MINISTRIES OF NORTH AMERICA INC.

Hope for First Nations

Spring 2024

Volume 23 - Number 1



Church of the Cross
Bluffton, South Carolina



**Indian Ministries
of
North America, Inc.**

*Spring 2024
Volume 23 – Number 1*

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**Indian Ministries of North America
Hope for First Nations**

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Winter Issue - February

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Fall Issue - November

Native American Flute Music

By Johnny Hughes



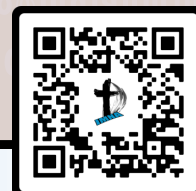
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Lead Me Holy Spirit

In the days that we are living, it is even more vital that we be lead by Holy Spirit in every aspect of our lives. It is through His wisdom and guidance that we proceed with the vision and the mandate that was given to our family many years ago, "Take My gospel to your people."

It is a constant battle in ministry to seek and listen for the still small voice with the God ideas, and not get caught up in all the distractions and voices around giving us good ideas. Working as a full-time missionary on the frontlines of ministry, challenges all of us to maintain our intimate closeness with our Heavenly Father. We spend so much of our time pouring into the lives of those we serve, that many times our own life gets physically,

mentally, and spiritually drained. It is during these times that we must take time to refresh and seek Godly counsel and brothers and sisters in Christ to come alongside of us and hold us up as our strength is renewed like the eagle. These are the last days, and we must keep our eyes on



the prize and the goal of a large harvest of souls. **We must stand strong as Warriors!**

**HARVEST
EYES**

Joyful, Humble Servant

In 2003, we first began ministering in Hammon, Oklahoma, among the Cheyenne Arapaho tribe. It wasn't long after we arrived that a truck driving, thrift store owner, and all-around trader began to stop by for visits. Jerry Gwartney, a friend to everyone, is always smiling and ready to tell you a story, and show off his fancy t-shirts with neckties or bowties printed on them. This is his trademark look!



Jerry worked for a while with our Camp Tuesday youth mentoring program at Grace Point in Hammon. He loves children, and it was always a wonderful sight to see the children chase him down on the street to give him a hug. Jerry loves Jesus and is always ready to share his faith with anyone who will listen. He traveled throughout the region as a Gideon representative, and stood faithfully with his wife, Mary, as she served as a missionary and missions representative at the Hammon First Baptist Church. Mary has gained her reward in heaven and Jerry now resides at the VA facility in Clinton, Oklahoma. We love you, Jerry!

TOUCHING PEOPLE WITH



“I liked watching them make the traditional meal and getting to eat it. And then also when we prayed with people during service” – River



In April of 2024, thirteen students and three leaders from House of Prayer, Blairsville, Georgia, traveled to Mississippi to partner with Indian Ministries of North America and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw people at the Macedonia Indian Baptist Church.

The team completed various facility renovation projects for the host church and participated with activities to reach the community. Revival services were held each evening. During this time, the students would purposefully sit next to a member of the church or visitor, and connect with them through prayer and conversation. During



“I loved interacting with the kids and making connections with them. Learning about the community as a whole was eye opening compared to where we live currently. Knowing that touching people with the love of Jesus was helpful.” - Reagan



Bible Translation



“Loved the people in the church and that we got to spend time praying with them and that we got to help the church in various projects. Also love that it brought our group together more.” – Jessie



THE LOVE OF JESUS

the services, a selection of students shared Bible lessons with kids, testimonials, and lead worship.

In addition to church activities, the team had the opportunity to visit the Conehatta Elementary School to interact with the students, attended the Standing Pine Elementary Spring Cultural Festival, visited the tribe's cultural museum, and met Chief Cyrus Ben at his office. They also participated in a skills and ministry day, visited the local Bible Translation Missionary Team, and delivered food boxes to needy families throughout the Conehatta community.

"I loved connecting with the people there, especially the 3 brothers, and being able to worship with them." – Hunter

"I liked cooking for the team, helping lead worship, and getting to know Mr. Billy." – Lily



"Loved helping with the projects, interacting with the kids, the revivals, and learning about the Choctaw culture. It was a very moving and learning experience for me and I'm glad we got to help out and show the beauty of Jesus to those around us." – Andrea



Conehatta, Mississippi



Teams of volunteers, from various churches, continue to travel to the small community of Conehatta, Mississippi, to teach and train the Choctaw youth in skills that will help them as future leaders. It is vitally important that today's youth learn they have a purpose and a value to their lives. The self-confidence and self-esteem that is developed through learning new skills and developing their God-given talents, is immeasurable. Every adult needs to be spending as much time as possible mentoring the future generations!



Recently, I had the opportunity to work on a more challenging sewing project with a couple of the Choctaw students in Mississippi. It was such a blessing and delight to watch them learn and discover new skills, and then to see their faces as they completed the item.



It reminded me of my own family challenges growing up, and how my grandmother's love and encouragement, while teaching me to sew, helped me get through tough times. I pray that when these students face challenges in their own lives, they also feel the hope and love that comes from our Heavenly Father.

Lynn Drost





David Klocke teaches students the art and craft of scroll sawing. They are learning how to draw and follow the intricate patterns, sand and file the finished pieces.



The youth prepare a gift for Mother's Day. They decorated pots and planted succulents for the Mother in their life.



Youth Mentoring



Getting ready for Summer, the youth enjoyed making patriotic door wreaths for their family home. They painted red, white and blue clothespins to create the wreath, and then added white stars





VBS 2024 Conehatta, MS

Christ First Ministries Church from Cullman, Alabama, once again conducted an exciting Vacation Bible School at the Macedonia Church in Conehatta, Mississippi. The Great Jungle Journey was the theme, and over 50 children participated throughout the week. The children took an imaginary jungle cruise to learn answers to many of the questions they have about life: Creation, Corruption, Catastrophe, Confusion, Christ, Cross, and Consummation.



Grace Point Worship



This Spring, IMNA's Grace Point Ministry Center in Hammon, Oklahoma, hosted a night of worship for the community. A group from the Sooner Harvest Church of God, Midwest City, Oklahoma, lead the night with anointed worship and a powerful word from Pastor Casey Cook. We are looking forward to future events together with the Heartland Region of the Church of God and Indian Ministries of North America.

Chihówa im Annopa Toshóli

“Those Who Share God’s Word”

In the early 1800’s, a Spirit-filled missionary, Cyrus Byington, obeyed God’s call to minister to the Choctaw in Mississippi. After a time, he gained permission for his team of missionaries to translate the Bible into the Choctaw language. To accomplish this task, they partnered with Choctaw men who had made a decision to follow Jesus. They translated the New Testament, as well as, portions of the Old Testament and hymns. However, the Bible was not yet completed.

In the 1970’s, a Choctaw pastor realized that not only was the Choctaw Bible incomplete, the young people had great difficulty understanding the

now-archaic language of the text. They reached out to Wycliffe Bible Translators and formed the non-profit, Choctaw Bible Translation Committee (CBTC) to translate the Bible into the language the people understood.

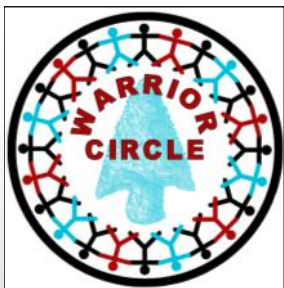
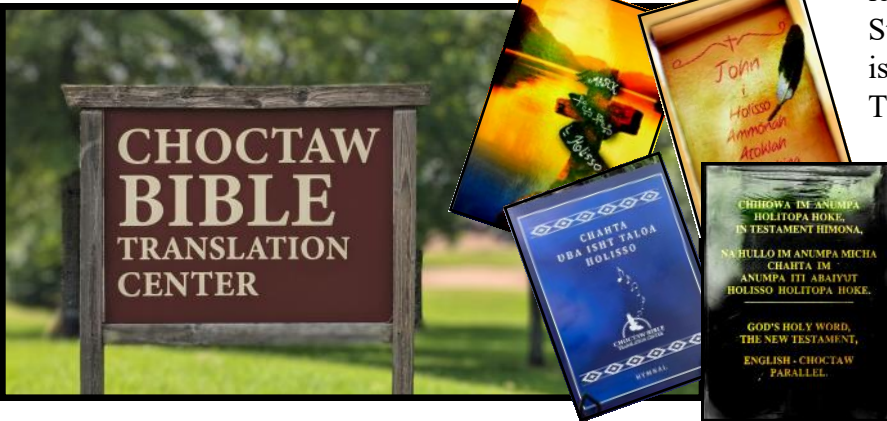
The mission of the CBTC is to strengthen and revive the Choctaw language through Scripture and Scripture related materials.

Translation goal: New Testament, digital and audio formats by September, 2027. When the it is complete, the CBTC plans to begin with the Old Testament.

CBTC also runs the Bible Story Series - an in-depth learning experience that leads people into what Bible Stories teach about God and His ways. Once the Bible is completed, the plan is to develop a full curriculum. This is already a part of the ministry of CBTC.

Performing and distribution of Choctaw songs in print and audio formats, as well as, the Choctaw Scripture App with Christmas Songs and the Epistles of John, are other ways that the CBTC ministers to the community. Visit choctawbible.com.

By: *Laura Christel Lavallee,*
Program Coordinator



CONNECT WITH IMNA

NEW WEBSITE DESIGN

SCAN THE QR CODE



2024 brings new ways to participate and be a partner with Indian Ministries of North America, Inc.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY

Look for more to come on our Warrior Circle Partnership and Prayer Warrior Ministry. Check out the new website and follow us on Facebook.

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God's Goods Changing Lives

Indian Ministries of North America recently had the pleasure of visiting the campus of one our new partners, Church of the Cross in Bluffton, South Carolina. The church traces its roots to the late 1760's. The current church, pictured on the cover of this issue, was built in the 1850's.



One of the unique treasures of this church is the emphasis that they place on missions. They began a

Christ-centered store, God's Goods Thrift Store, that provides usable goods to the people of their community at a reasonable price, assists people in need with pass-through goods, and supports Christian outreach ministries. The store is maintained by over 300 volunteers and the proceeds from all the sales goes to fund the church's missions projects. In the 14 years that the store has been open, they have been able to fund missions around the world with nearly \$3,000,000.00. Thank you Church of the Cross and the God's Goods family.



Cherokee, North Carolina

Family Support Services of the Eastern Cherokee has been the recipient of the loving kindness of Indian Ministries of North America for more than 20 years. They have provided donations of baby diapers, adult diapers, food items, new toys, towels, wash cloths, electric heaters, and so much more. The generosity of IMNA is a much-needed resource for the vast number of families that receive these donations annually.

*Barbara Jones
Program Manager*



IMNA's Becky Hughes (L), and Barbara Jones, Family Support Svcs.



Flomaton, Alabama

Holy Ground Church, Flomaton, AL started in 1990 in a small wooden structure. It has been a blessing for us, but we have outgrown our little building. We are looking forward to what God is going to do and for what He is doing NOW! Thank you for the donation of new flooring, bathroom fixtures, kitchen fixtures, etc.

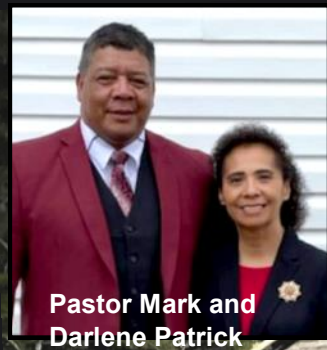
*Kathy Stophel
Pastor*



Pastor Kathy Stophel and Randall Ward, IMNA Board member, with the items for the new Holy Ground Church.

Kingdom Building

Pastor Mark Patrick, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, is leading the Canaan Missionary Baptist congregation in building their new facility. Mark has been preaching for 29 years, during which he has pastored 3 different churches on the Reservation. This is the fourth building program he has been involved with since 1990. IMNA and our partners have been able to assist in his last two projects with a variety of items and materials for use in the facilities.



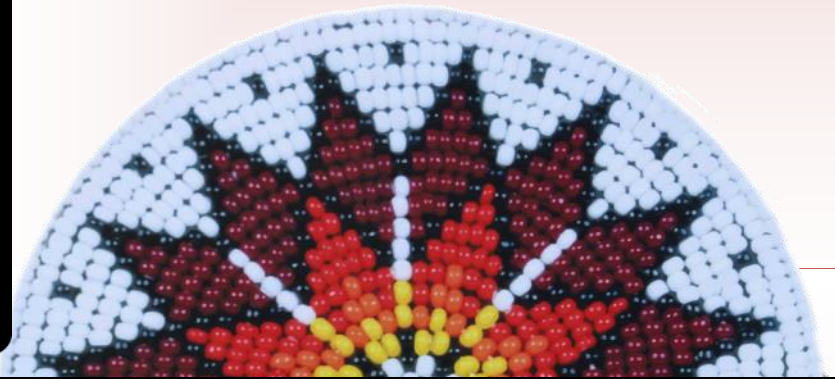
Pastor Mark and Darlene Patrick



Operation Compassion, Cleveland, Tennessee, blessed Indian Ministries of North America with a pallet of drinking water. The donation was offered to various Western Oklahoma Volunteer Fire Departments, along with the Grace Point Ministry Center in Hammon, Oklahoma. Pictured above is Johnny Hughes, IMNA Executive Director (Left) and Ethan Cloyd, Safety and Training Officer, Hammon Fire Department (Right).

MISSION:

To be frontline Warriors,
restoring the broken,
healing the wounded,
and setting the captives free.



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