

2012 Convention Report of the Indian Ministry Committee

During the past three years, the Indian Ministry Committee (IMC) has continued working primarily on two reservations, as well as with some Native pastors. Rev. Park Timber, Northern Cheyenne, was ordained and installed as associate pastor for Circle of Life Lutheran Church, Muddy Cluster, Northern Cheyenne Reservation, Aug. 14, 2011. The Montana District via the IMC helped Park with financial aid for his academic training to become a pastor.

The IMC has established mentoring relationships with Pastor Deputee (Pentecostal), St. Xavier, Crow Reservation; Pastor Buffalo (Assembly of God), Ronan, Flathead Reservation; Pastor Steve (Assembly of God), Wolf Point, Ft. Peck Reservation. Pastor Jacobs meets with Pastor Deputee about once a month. They discuss Scripture and ministry. They also pray together. Jacobs has provided Deputee with a *Small Catechism* and various devotional books which he shares with his congregations.

Jacobs meets with Pastor Buffalo a couple of times a year. He has provided him with various devotional books, as well as a Bible study on Walther's theses on Law and Gospel.

Jacobs has been able to meet with Pastor Steve about once a year. Along with providing him devotional books, Jacobs has given him Bible studies on justification and Law and Gospel.

There have been on-going visits on the Ft. Peck Reservation. These include visiting our LCMS pastors at Wolf Point to discuss cross-cultural ministry and to introduce Pastor Draper and now Pastor Vallie, to member of the Native community. Member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Wolf Point, have also been visited to encourage them because of their minority status in the community.

Relationships with Native members of the Ft. Peck communities have increased in number and in depth. This has opened doors for witnessing with non-Christians, as well as nurturing the faith among Christians.

The IMC has managed to find funding to keep the Gospel Minute radio program going throughout these past three years. Pastor Draper started the Gospel Minute, which airs Monday-Friday just before the 8:00 a.m. news on the local radio station. Pastor Vallie has faithfully continued this work which can be heard across much of the reservation and surrounding area.

There have also been on-going visits on the Flathead Reservation. These include Pastors Whaley and Gordish to discuss cross-cultural ministry. Devotional materials are made available to the students of Salish-Kootenai College, Pablo, via the free literature table at the college library. CD recordings of Crow Lutheran Ministry's worship services are

going into two homes. The Brien family in Arlee is being disciplined by visits, correspondence and phone calls. Evangelism work continues with the Weasel Head family.

One of the ways of meeting people in these communities has been by regularly participating in powwows. This provides an open setting in which to visit with unchurched, as well as non-Christian people. Many of our contacts originated at powwows.

A further ministry service is to St. Anthony House, Nashua. Two monks of the Evangelical Orthodox Catholic Church in America live at this monastery. Opportunities have arisen to discuss Scripture with them and to encourage in ministry.

The Lord has been doing much good these past three years. However, all is not rosy. There has been a steady rise in syncretism and in traditional nativism on Montana's reservations. Christianity is often still seen as "white man's religion" because "Christianity" is often presented as a theology of glory. Because of the continual suffering of Native individuals and communities, many have concluded that this foreign religion only works for "whites".