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**N.A.I.M.** NORTH AMERICA  
INDIGENOUS MINISTRIES



## June 2023 Update

### Repetition & Reminders

As I was pondering what to share with all of you who pray for me and Native ministry in MT, I found a striking reminder in a previous letter: "We are all people living with "wobbly legs". Scripture says we are "being filled" and in the process of healing—not that we're whole right now. Instead, as we experience Christ's love, we will be made complete. And Scripture implies we can't be whole on our own. Instead, we are a body, a tribe ... a family (1 Corinthians 12, Exodus 28, Genesis 6 & 12 and Philippians 2). The LORD puts us in community to help one another!"

**"May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God."**

**—Ephesians 3:17-19 (emphasis mine) NLT**

This is a reminder I need *repeatedly!* And, in contrast to most people, I don't think God minds repeating Himself. In fact, Scripture is *full* of our God's reminders to His people: "I'm with you. ... I'm the LORD your God. ... Don't be afraid." Followers of Jesus are a family. With different backgrounds, strengths, gifts and personalities, we need *each other* to be a whole, healthy community. Whether we are **encouraging** one another. **Teaching** each other. **Comforting** those who are hurting. Or **celebrating** with those who are rejoicing. God is making us whole ... *together!*



### Becoming Whole Together

The **Tribal Ministry Conference** held in Tacoma, WA **April 21<sup>st</sup> – April 22<sup>nd</sup>**—and hosted by four diverse churches there—found me at Emmanuel Lutheran church, with its beautiful stained glass windows and domed fellowship hall. The focus of Native-led opening & closing sessions: Mission Field to Mission Force. The center of Native-led worship: "They'll know we follow Jesus by our love." And the essence of Native-friendly teaching sessions: healing and unity through our Creator.

**"... Each one of us is joined with one another, and we become together what we could not be alone."**

**—Romans 12:4-5 (emphasis mine) VOICE**

After sitting in classrooms long enough to earn advanced college degrees, I'm comfortable with lectures & teaching sessions. I'm even familiar with concepts in cultural studies such as an "incarnational model of missions" (based on Philippians 2:5-8). And I love singing in worship ... even with lyrics adapted from the original music. But, I'm uncomfortable with dancing in worship. The gangly, uncoordinated introvert in me balks at the idea of dancing while tripping over myself! But, this is a distinctive of Native cultures—for whom dancing is a form of prayer!



## Generous Giving

Another cultural distinctive of Indigenous peoples—one that always touches me—is their generosity. I experienced this again in WA. My supervisor in Colville, **Diane Norman**, let me know there would be a group dance as part of the worship sessions. I struggled to come up with an appropriate outfit. I'd hardly entered her home when she called me into her room and gave me a choice of beautiful regalia! (I now have no excuse but to "get over myself" and dance!) Further, my gracious hosts in Tacoma, **Chet & Carol McVay**, presented me with a handmade necklace & bracelet set on my arrival, a drive around the harbor during my stay, and a hand drum before my departure!



**"Those who sing and those who dance will say together, "All my fountains of joy are in You."**

**—Psalm 87:7 VOICE**

**"[E]verything comes from You, and from Your hand we have given [back] to You.**

**—1 Chronicles 29:14 TLV**

To me, this generosity so clearly reflects the giving nature of Yahweh, our God! Let me remind us of just *some* of God's gifts to us: living water [ie, **eternal life**] in Yeshua Jesus (John 4:10, Romans 6:23), **the Holy Spirit** indwelling and empowering believers (Acts 11:17), **Godly wisdom** (Ephesians 1:17), our **faith** in/relationship with God (Ephesians 2:8), **God's grace** through the Anointed One [ie, Jesus] (Ephesians 4:7-8), **spiritual ways** to help each other (1 Peter 4:10) ... and **everything good** and perfect (James 1:17)! May we humble ourselves to keep receiving Yahweh's gifts to us.

## Praises and Prayer Requests

**TRIBAL MINISTRY CONFERENCE PRAISE!** Thanks to God for safe travel to/ from Tacoma, WA. And even more for **new friends & new connections** in Native ministry. I didn't realize how much I needed time away to connect with like-minded followers of Jesus!

**FRESH WIND PRAISE!** Polson Movement hosted our 1<sup>st</sup> **Songwriters' Circle** on **April 2<sup>nd</sup>**. How encouraging to share fresh lyrics & music within our small group! **REQUEST** Please pray for our next music circle, an **"Acoustic Jam Session"** at the local park on Memorial Day weekend!

**VIRTUAL GATHERING REQUEST** Please continue to pray for all those who (virtually) attend this bi-monthly Zoom online/phone gathering for those in Native ministry!



Tara

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