



## December 2023 Update

### Struggling Parents

"You took my kids," the mother shouted from the hastily-opened classroom door. "You don't remember me, do you?" she demanded, as she burst into the class. "No, I don't remember you," the elementary teacher calmly stated. Now standing face-to-face with the parent—who was "tweaking" (ie, high on meth) & upset—the teacher quickly positioned herself between the young students and the distraught woman, as she'd been trained to do. She then began edging quietly back toward the door. "Are your children in one of my classes?" The woman followed.

**"You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not!"**

**—Matthew 7:9-10 NLT**

The mother named her children—one of whom was watching, wide-eyed from among the students in the classroom. Then, she began sobbing. "Let me give you a hug," she whined to the teacher. The teacher gently took the woman's arm and brought her to the side, disguising the search for a knife lodged in her hand or a gun hidden in her bag. "It's so hard being away from them.... But, it's the best thing for my family. So I can get clean. So my babies can be safe." The pair of women moved out into the hallway. "Thank you for helping us!"



### An Imperfect Analogy

The only parenting experience I have is as a "dog mom." But, when I shared about Addie's major anxiety attack in **September**—which resulted in two window wells that still need repair and a disturbing amount of broken blinds—my friend, a retired teacher, said it reminded her of families grappling with addiction. For instance, though I desperately want to help my girl, I can't trust her at home on her own. I resent the need for repeated repairs and the destruction of beloved family heirlooms. Her deep-seated anxiety must be addressed daily. Since I don't know how to help her long-term, Addie's been temporarily accompanying me to work—staying in the back of our SUV.



**But [Creator] said to me, "My kindness and strength is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is strong." So then, I am very glad to talk about how weak I am so that the power of Christ may live in me.**

**—2 Corinthians 12:9 WE**

But, I'm increasingly weary, and it seems the people who can help—trainers and rescue organizations—are short on resources and time ... especially for those whose "kids" require the most help. I love Addie. And part of me is fearful of what may happen if I relinquish her care to someone else. Another part of me is ashamed for not being able to help her myself. In these ways, as I work on trusting God in the midst of this situation, I can empathize with addicts' struggling families.

## Seeking Support

To take part in strengthening Native families here, I need your support. This year, NAIM is holding both our Men's Retreat & Women's Retreat on the same site, so we can have a few combined sessions for special training. Since I missed the annual conference last year, I need to attend *both* the Women's Retreat in the spring and the NAIM annual conference in the fall. If God gently nudges or loudly speaks to you, please give toward my conference or retreat expenses. This will help me to complete NAIM ministry requirements and to be equipped and encouraged!



Ronan or a music circle at Polson Movement! Please pray, plan and hope with me for the coming year. And glory be to God as we work together alongside First Nations peoples!

**God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! [God's Spirit] does it not by pushing us around but by working within us ... —Ephesians 3:20 MSG**

Or, if God whispers to you about coming alongside Native believers in the Mission Valley, funds given to my ministry project through NAIM could be used for ... a Native movie night at Pablo Naz or a Powwow in Elmo. A beading group in

## Year-End Highlights

The Tribal Ministry Conference in **April** in Tacoma, WA brought new friends & new connections in Native ministry. In **July**, Diane (& David) Norman made a quarterly supervision visit. I so appreciate their advice & encouragement! We were also able to attend the *Standing Arrow Powwow* in Elmo together. And Addie's & my **October** tradition—Trunk-or-Treat—was held again this year, with Addie as a sassy turkey & me as the turkey wrangler (see pic)!

## Praises and Prayer Requests

**SONGWRITERS' CIRCLES PRAISE!** Polson Movement has hosted a handful of music circles & our small group looks forward to more. **REQUEST** Please pray for our upcoming gatherings!

**HEALING HOMES REQUEST** Please ask Creator for healing (not just temporary help) for all those who need spiritual, mental & physical rescue—whether from addictions, anxiety/depression or diseases! Including my sweet furry girl, Addie.

**CULTURE SEMINARS REQUEST** I'm pondering whether & where/how to pursue continuing education in Communication & Culture, to then lead seminars. Please ask the Spirit for guidance!

Tara



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