

South Dakota Mission Updates, July 25 to August 1, 2010

The Pine Ridge mission team arrived Sunday evening by 5 pm. The Lakota Native Works organization and pastor Leon were making dinner for the group. The girls are in the basement of the church building, and the guys are in a gym in another building with a basketball court between the 2 buildings. They are on a combination of bunk beds and air mattresses. Leon wanted them to know that culturally, things move slowly, and they will need to be patient with things this week! There is a coffee shop that the Lakota run right by where they are staying that I'm sure the youth will frequent. I picture their location in the main part of town because there is a Pizza Hut right across from their location as well! At&t phones do not seem to be getting reception there. They will be working with a Kid's club and probably painting and building a porch.

Prayers for a safe and meaningful week!

From Cindy Klick Monday afternoon:

The group has experienced the "slow to get going" cultural norm at Pine Ridge on their first day! Keith and Dave drove in to Rapid City for supplies in preparation of house painting on Tuesday. The group worked with a Kid's Club of 25 kids in the morning cleaning up trash in a park and playing games. Lisa and Kirsten took a group in the afternoon to clean up a Veteran's Memorial Garden. There they spoke with an older peace-time vet who had lost a son and nephew in Iraq whose names were on the memorial wall. He was appreciative of their efforts. Cindy had a group working to prepare a house for painting today—hammering nails back in siding, scraping old paint, clearing weeds and trash. Today the whole group will have a guided tour of the Lakota heritage cultural center. Each morning the group will work again with the Kid's club, doing more games and crafts. The afternoons will include more of the physical construction or cleanup work. It has been hot but not unbearable. The food team has provided great food, Pastor Leon preparing the evening meal. Leon's wife runs the local coffee shop, "Higher Ground". The group has enjoyed this lovely garden oasis for coffee or smoothies in the mornings and after work. Prayers for patience and new awareness as the group experiences "walking in another's shoes"!

Another update from Cindy Klick Tuesday:

24 of the group of 33 were painting a house across the street from the church. Keith, Dave and 7 boys are working on a plumbing project in a trailer home. Wednesday this group will work on a porch on another trailer home. Last evening they had a husband and wife team speak to the group about Native American singing and dancing. All of the youth were part of their drum circle. Worship time focused on cultural differences and what they had seen that day. Things that had been hard to see—2 substance abuse rehab centers within 4 blocks of where they are; things that had been a bright spot—a tour of Red Cloud School which is the largest private school in the US for Native Americans. This school has 600 students in grades K-12, all funded by donations. The maximum a family will pay per year is \$200 for books. They have a 92% graduation rate and several students have gone on to distinguished colleges like DU and Princeton. The worship team will use the themes from the book "5 Practices of Highly Effective Churches".

Tonight the group will see a buffalo ranch and have a BBQ dinner with families from the neighborhood at the nearby park.

Thank you for your continued prayers!

From Cindy Klick,

Today they split into 4 groups: one worked on the painting of trim on the house, one cleaned and organized an office that coordinates youth activities, one continued on the porch build, and one continued on landscape work near the veteran's memorial. Today they ate lunch with the Kid's Club kids, who take a bus to a public school on a college campus for the free lunch program. Any youth 18 and younger can get a free breakfast and lunch in this program.

Yesterday's trip to the buffalo ranch included riding in open air busses and feeding the buffalo!

The ranch had a taxidermy white buffalo calf that was a treasure because of a Sioux legend about a white buffalo. Yesterday Pastor Leon hopped on our bus and gave a tour of Pine Ridge.

When President Clinton visited the town, a first class hospital had to be available, so their hospital got a great upgrade. Keeping medical personnel is a challenge. One difference Cindy noticed, there are hardly any garages, and we know what winter is like in the Midwest! He pointed out a "Children's village" that has been used for care of children whose parents are being arrested.

Tonight the group will head to the Wounded Knee site.

Thanks for your continued prayers of support!

From Cindy Klick:

The group's trip to Wounded Knee, which had been scheduled for last night, got pushed to this morning; it was great to learn history about this area! On their fourth work day Keith and Dave's group are working on the stairs the gym next the church that the guys are sleeping in. The rest of the group continues to work with the Kids Club in the park. They have been doing all sorts of crafts and playing games, yesterday they all made puppets. The kids really appreciate the attention from older kids, children as young as four are at this day camp! The youth went on the 20-30 minute bus ride to the free breakfast and lunch program at an elementary school with the kids as well. This afternoon Lisa, Kirsten and Cindy's group will be working with some different agencies around town and neighborhood clean up while Keith and Dave's groups finish their morning project.

Friday, the last work day, the camp is doing a day at the lake, so the youth will spend the day swimming, playing water games and having a barbeque with the kids.

The worship team's worship focused on intentional faith development from the Five Tenants of an Effective Congregation, this was the third of five that they have addressed in their worship times. Closing worship will be on Friday night while they are still in Pine Ridge and they will exchange their share partner gifts at that time. On Saturday night they will do a brief devotional while on the road towards home.

No trips to the doctor so far and they are well fed and happy (15 dozen eggs!!) Cindy noticed that the 28 youth on the trip come from 14 different high schools! All the youth are really getting to know people they would never have met other wise.

Thanks for all your prayer and support, it sounds like they are having an amazing time!

*Katie Flansburg
Youth Ministry*

Hello family and friends of those individuals who are currently in South Dakota! And Happy Friday!

First off I want to remind all of you that this is the last email that will be going out before the youth return this Sunday.

Today, the work team will be taking a group of about 16 kids from the daycare to a lake for a day of fun. They will also have a cook out this evening. And Keith and Dave's group is finishing up on the staircase in the gym. Tonight the youth will be having a talent show and will be exchanging their share partner gifts.

Bright and early tomorrow morning the group will be leaving Pine Ridge to go through the Bad Lands and to visit Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial. They will end up in Hot Springs where they will visit the Evan's Plunge Hot Spring Pool and stay the night at the Super 8 there.

Sunday morning the team will begin their journey home and will be home by 5pm on Sunday. But it is possible that they will get in a little earlier than 5pm.

Thank you for keeping your prayers and thoughts with the work team as they do some truly amazing work in Pine Ridge!

Meghan Bentheimer
Youth Student Assistant