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"Serving one another in love" — Galatians 5:13
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"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord..." - Colossians 3:23

"Renewing Hope, Strengthening Our Future"



EXCITING NEWS!!

In 2016, much time was spent praying, evaluating, strategizing, and planning on how to best and most impactfully demonstrate, teach, and infuse the transforming love and hope of Jesus Christ within the communities of the Crow Creek Sioux Hunkpati Oyate Reservation. Through this prayerful strategic planning process, God's call and direction to empower the community resonated strongly.

Diamond Willow Ministries has a renewed commitment and clearer focus than ever before to pour ourselves mightily into **God's redemptive and transformative work; empowering the youth, leaders and families of the Hunkpati Oyate community.**

Upon much reflection and evaluation of past, current and potential future ministry programs and outreach, it was clear that one of the most effective and impactful manner in which we can be a part of God's work here is through what began just over two years ago now at the **Tokata Youth Center.**

Diamond Willow Ministries is excited to announce that property has been purchased for the construction of a permanent Tokata Youth Center facility!



"Bursting at the seams" with youth is a daily blessing, and a challenge in the current facility.

The Tribe generously provides space in a Tribal building for Tokata Youth Center meals and programming to take place.

The dedicated Tokata Youth Center Staff do a fantastic job serving the youth as best as they are able within this very limited space.

A new permanent facility is much needed and will impact generations!!

THE LAND

There are very few available properties in Fort Thompson suitable for a youth center. Well, God is so good, the owner of the most suitable property agreed to sell. The second part of the equation was having funds to purchase it. God provided a very generous donation through a partner and friend of the ministry associated with Ashworth Road Baptist Church in West Des Moines, IA. The land purchase was finalized on December 30th, 2016!

The Crow Creek Sioux Tribal Council, and Tribal Chairman Brandon Sazue, were delighted to hear the news! Great trust and confidence is shown toward the ministry by community leaders that represent people that have had so many promises made and not kept. A mighty God is at work in this!

It was anticipated that the community would be very supportive, but the response has been exceptionally so! There has been tremendous support and thankfulness expressed for this purchase and the vision for a place for youth and families to come together.

Several community members stated that this is the single most exciting development that has happened in their lifetime within the community! Wow!! The hopefulness is tangibly felt within the community and incredible! The end product, the new Tokata Youth Center, will be a place that will empower and develop generations to come, but it is already having an impact right here and now.



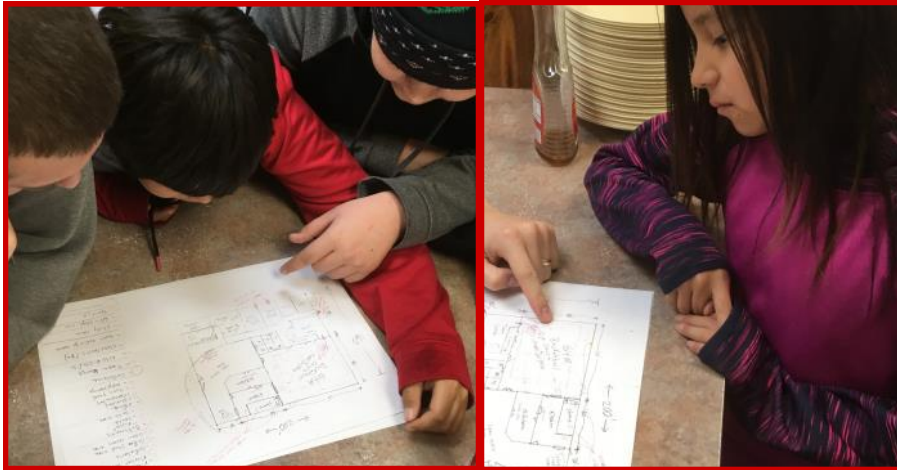
A group of the youth were anxious to see the property and the location where “THEIR” building is going to be someday. How awesome to see their excitement after a short walk to the centrally located site on a recent crisp winter day! GOD IS GREAT!

IN GOD'S TIMING

This project will move forward as God provides. There is much excitement, but the process will move forward wisely and in God's time. As always, the ministry will not take on debt. The need is great, but due diligence will continue to be taken; following God's wise counsel in passages such as Proverbs 19:2, "*Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.*" All steps will be taken to ensure that this project will remain firmly in the middle of God's will.

Teams are assembled to work on the facility design, as well as a team to develop and implement a Biblically sound strategy in forming partnerships with those that want to support this monumental venture. If you have talents that may be of assistance in any part of this process, please contact us. This is a big project and it will take many folks all using their God-given talents to make it a reality. Again, God's word states in Proverbs 15:22 that, "*Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.*"

God is so good! This all is so very exciting. There is much to pray about and plan over the coming months! Thank you for your partnership. Please keep this all in prayer.



The youth are intently looking over some ideas and drawings; already dreaming of what will be.

The vision is for a place where youth will be able to learn and grow safely, but also where families and community can come to grow together.

PRAYER & PRAISE POINTS

- ◆ Continue to pray for those contemplating suicide and families that have already been impacted by completed suicides. The community has been shaken by several more recently.
- ◆ The tribal building that is being utilized for the Tokata Youth Center is operating over capacity. Please pray that we can find a way to serve the youth that want to be there NOW.
- ◆ Praise God for the funds for the air conditioning unit in the Mato Family Center so it can be used effectively at this summer's Cantemawaste Youth Camps.
- ◆ As our opportunities to share Christ have increased, so has staff size and expenses. Ongoing regular financial support and special financial gifts are greatly needed and appreciated.
- ◆ Praise God for the opportunity to purchase the property and that everything came together so smoothly for it to take place.
- ◆ Several of the Diamond Willow Ministries and Tokata Youth Center staff members are dealing with critical health concerns and traumas within their close families. Please pray for God's healing and peace for all involved.
- ◆ Wisdom, and discernment for the staff as they focus on loving, supporting, and empowering the youth, families, and leaders within the community of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe.
- ◆ Of course, please do keep the whole Tokata Youth Center planning process in prayer.

Toksa Ake

We close out this newsletter with a hearty “toksa ake” (See you later)!

Although we may have to wait until later to see you, we would still certainly like to keep in contact. We want to keep everyone “in the loop”, especially with all the new developments and plans at the Tokata Youth Center. So be sure to visit us at:


- www.d-w-m.org (Diamond Willow Ministries)
- www.tokatayouthcenter.org (Tokata Youth Center)
- Facebook: “Diamond Willow Ministries” and the “Tokata Youth Center”
- Instagram, follow the Tokata Youth Center on “tyclife”

Also, we have been utilizing Skype more to stay in touch. We use skype to speak to groups at VBS, visit with Sunday school classes, Wednesday night Bible studies, and mission committees. It is useful as there can be a dialogue and discussion and although not as good as face to face, at least we see each other. So if there are any occasions where we can do something like this, please let me know. We are always more than willing to setup a time to visit on the telephone as well.

- Rod Vaughn



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