

Kickapoo Friends Center
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BRAD & CHRISTINE WOOD

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20,21 NKJV

It would be very easy to focus on the negative aspects of the last year. Most of us have experienced difficulties we would classify as “unprecedented” in our lifetimes. But let us focus on what God is doing in the midst of a world in turmoil.

Certainly we pray that God will break through to not only our Kickapoo, but other native tribes in the area and that many in mass will come to know Him. We ask you to join us in this prayer. However, currently victories are won on a one by one basis.

For example, there is the opportunity that comes from a covid death of a Kickapoo person that brought over 150 people who would not normally attend any kind of worship service at a church, who heard the gospel and three of whom asked me to pray with them afterward. Or, just a few weeks later, another covid death brought a similar amount of traditional Kickapoo who also intently listened to the gospel. These were the parents and grandparents of some of the youth we work with, which has opened a door for more of them to attend regularly.

Or just as we are also part of the broader McLoud community, we held the funeral of a lifelong neighbor and farmer. This man was not a Christian most of his life but his daughter had led him in a prayer of faith before he became too ill. In the years before that, Kathy Burris had led both her mother and sister to Christ on their deathbeds. Everyone needs a daughter like Kathy who prays and won't give up until the battle is won. I would have never believed God would have used Jr. Loman to give me an opportunity to preach the Gospel of Christ to so many of the older and founding families of McLoud. Often at a funeral, people pay their respects but tune out the message, but it was obvious that people listened intently that day.

As our Wednesday youth gatherings have been very small and inconsistent this last year, it has been challenging to teach. But we have been able to share and build into our youth some foundational beliefs like: Who is God? Why did Jesus come? What is sin? Why is the Bible important? Why is your life important? All this has been actually a way to teach systematic theology to youth and teens. And with all this, there has been the opportunity to lead over a dozen Kickapoo youth to pray to receive Christ into their lives.

There is Isabel, an eight year old Kickapoo Girl, who is excited about coming to church and praying. When we ask for prayer requests, her hand is the first one up. She has a long prayer list which mostly includes praying for family to stop drinking and using drugs. Recently, she

shared how God had answered one of her prayers for her father. Isabel is coming to church because her grandfather, Tommy Kaskaske, who has been sober now for several years and trying to serve the Lord, brings her. Although Tommy has had many struggles, his decision to follow Christ has begun to have a big impact in his family. Now, over this last year, his older daughter has begun to attend regularly and you can see faith growing in her.

Of course there have been negatives. We lost two of our long time families, who chose to worship elsewhere. However, that has challenged some of our others to step up and serve. To see the growth in them is exciting.

Our Easter service in 2021 was the best we have had in years. Traditionally, we host a breakfast on Easter Sunday. I asked everyone if they wanted to do that but indicated that I was not going to make it happen. They said we want to have it. We ended up having more people for breakfast and church than we have had for years, Praise God!

We also were personally affected by Covid 19. On Saturday, January 9th, Christine developed a high fever. After a visit to the emergency room on Sunday, it was determined that she was positive. They sent her home but she continued to worsen. By Tuesday, we were back at the hospital where they admitted her with pneumonia. With medical help, she stabilized at the hospital and slowly began to recover. Her progress has been very slow but steady and now she seems to be near complete recovery. We are very thankful for everyone's prayers and support during this time. Thankfully, I did not get the virus and tested negative.

As we look forward to the rest of the year, it seems unlikely that we will have Quivering Arrow Camp this year because of the youth group situations at both Wyandotte and Kickapoo. We do however, look forward to Vacation Bible School June 7 - 11. Hopefully as things continue to normalize we will be able to again start our work training classes and host other events to touch people, help them in their daily lives and of course share the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We were saddened in February of the loss of one of our dear friends and long time supporters of the ministry, Steve Smith. Steve, as his father Horace before him, was an enthusiastic supporter of Friends Indian work. He will be greatly missed. Through our sadness though, we have been blessed by his family suggesting us for memorial donations. Steve touched many people and over eighty have made donations in his name. Thank you Smith family!

We ask you to pray that God will raise up Christian leaders among our Kickapoo believers. Leaders who will boldly live and proclaim the Gospel of Christ. We ask that you also pray that the congregation of the Kickapoo Friends Center can become a strong and faithful church that even sends out missionaries to other places.

Certainly, our Lord can do exceedingly more than we could ever ask or think to Him be all the glory!

All Because of Jesus