

A GREAT SPIRIT
NATASHA NATEWA, 5TH GRADE TEACHER

A mesmerized Zuni medicine man spoke, "Janta, I sense a great spirit in you." She said in her ever-calming, humble as-the-setting sun voice, "It's because I believe in God."



My grandma was a wandering sheep searching for a soft, sincere shepherd; and an explorer searching for her place in this broken world. As a daughter of God, she found her place in His loving embrace because He constantly showed her He wanted her.

My grandma had to play two roles in life—the understanding Zuni, who respected the Zuni religion, and the devoted daughter of Datchu

Father God. Both roles collided with us when she passed away – like a tsunami colliding into land already ripped apart by an earthquake. We knew that because grandma chose God, the Good Doctor had fully healed her in heaven. With that mindset, we wanted to honor her wishes by using her funeral to celebrate her homecoming.

However, the other role that my grandma played caused the hornet's nest to stir, and the swarm left welts. Claims such as, "her body belongs to the aunties" and "you are horrible for not letting us do the traditional Zuni wake, spread the corn meal, and feed her and the ancestors.," left deep scars on our hearts. Threats were delivered, and blame was cast. I never fully understood the burden my grandma faced as a Christian with relatives firmly set in the Zuni religion. My siblings and I were free to choose to follow our paths - we had chosen God, which led our grandma to choose God too. Feeling all that frustration from the other side of the family amid our sadness allowed me to understand my grandma fully.

Our Grandma was a perfect example of a Christian who demonstrated love and understanding for both worlds. She always said, "Even if you don't believe what they believe you have to respect them." That lived in my mind when I interacted with that side of the family – when I felt the painful sting of their words. I listen to my grandmother's wisdom - "respect and love everyone." My grandma had a great spirit inside her - the Holy Spirit. God was with her in this life, and she is with Him now in heaven. I love my grandma so much, and I miss her dearly.



Zuni Christian Reformed Mission
P.O. Box 445
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PLANTED IN BIBLICAL TRUTH, SURROUNDED BY GOD'S GRACE



FALL 2022



"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that

2022-2023 SCHOOL THEME:
FIXING OUR EYES ON JESUS

far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." 2 Corinthians.4:16-18





In this season of thanksgiving and joy, we have many reasons to celebrate. Here are a few highlights from the Zuni Christian Mission:

- Barlow Gasper is leading a youth group that has a dozen middle and high school students who are growing in their faith. Please join us in praying for them as they continue to work out how they can be faithful to Jesus and still be distinctively Zuni.
- Please join us in praising God for the boldness of Zuni believers who refuse to compromise their faith in God, sometimes at great pressure from family and friends. When you think of them, put yourself in their shoes and pray for continued boldness, humility, grace, and the ability to forgive.
- Our 93 students in grades K-8 continue to hear and respond to the good news of Jesus. Please pray for our students as they prepare a Christmas program where the central message is the incarnation of Christ. Also pray for open and curious hearts among those who attend the program.
- In a recent Bible lesson, one of our middle school classes spent some time in confession, and reaffirmed that they want to help make our school a healthy environment where all our students feel safe. As a staff, we strive for this each and every day, and it gives us joy to see that the students find it important and take ownership of it as well.

In this season, we are also thankful for those who lift up our ministry in prayer. We are encouraged by your support and strengthened by your prayers. Thank you for your partnership in this Kingdom work.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. (Psalm 100:4-5)

STUDENT TEACHER REFLECTION

Ms. Jenna Kortenhoeven, Taylor University



"I am so grateful that the Lord led me to Zuni. In praying about my student teaching placement, I felt God nudging me toward working at Zuni Christian Mission School. However, I never could have known the ways in which God would meet me here in this school. In the middle of a dark world and a community worshipping other gods, it is evident that God is at work in this school. ZCMS is a place of light and hope for these students, full of teachers who are committed to the learning and more importantly, to the hearts of each student they have. This wonderful community has taught me generosity, selflessness and the importance of building up followers of God. No matter where they are from, there is the light of Jesus in every student, and it has been an honor to spend a few months learning here in Zuni."

Are you a college student looking for an experience that will challenge and enrich your faith and grow your skills while learning and serving within another culture? We invite you to come and join our family as a student teacher!

CURRENT NEEDS

OUR CURRENT 2022-23 ANNUAL FUND NEED IS \$407,249.89

To date, we have raised \$165,715.01 from our total need of \$572,964.90. Unlike most Christian schools, tuition payments from our parents do not cover our operational costs. ZCMS parents pay on average 13% of the full cost of tuition. We raise the remaining 87% so that Christian education is accessible for them. From paying our teachers to keeping the lights on, your gifts keep the Mission going – and provide our students and their families with an opportunity to meet Jesus, every day. Elahkwa, thank you.

SPECIAL NEEDS

URGENT! MS Science Teacher: We are in urgent need of a full-time MS Science teacher who can begin at the start of the new semester on January 3, 2022! If you or someone you know would like to apply or even offer temporary help, please contact principal Tim Becksvoort.

Amazon Wish List: Sometimes it is a lot more fun to give items rather than writing a check! Our teachers have updated our Amazon Wish List with some of their current "wishes" for their classrooms. Receiving these items always brightens their day! Scan the QR code to shop!



Gardening Project: Come spring, we hope to construct a small greenhouse for our developing garden to extend the growing season. Help purchase building materials and fencing to deter critters (and elk)!

Zuni Christian Reformed Church: James Zwier, Pastor
Email: jzwier@zunichristianmission.org

Zuni Christian Mission School: Tim Becksvoort, Principal
Phone/fax: (505) 782-4546 · tbecksvoort@zunichristianmission.org

P.O. Box 445, Zuni, NM 87327 · Give online at www.zunichristianmission.org

ZUNI CRC MISSION STATEMENT:

"Forgiven by God through Jesus, we are growing together to be a people of grace, truth, love, and light."

Greetings from the Zuni Christian Reformed Church! Since arriving in mid-July, my family and I have been settling into life in Zuni. I pastored Ellsworth CRC in Northern Michigan, where I met Mike and Ardy Meekhof during their summer visits. They listened to the Spirit's prompt and asked us if we'd consider ministry in Zuni. After a half year of prayerful conversations with the search committee, we said yes!



My wife Sarah and I lived in Laos for about 8 years doing Christian community development work with World Renew. We have two children, Judah, who loves kindergarten at ZCMS, and Abram, who toddles around church with delight. I've been taking a Zuni language class at the local college and am learning a great deal about Zuni culture by participating in funerals, weddings, and community events.

This fall I've been preaching on the God of Covenant through the Old Testament. God makes and keeps covenant with his people, even when we fail to live in God's covenant ways. As a church, we take comfort in how God's covenant welcomes people from every nation. Thank you for your support in helping us proclaim Jesus in the Pueblo of Zuni.

MINISTRY UPDATE

ZCRC Youth Group Update - Barlow Gasper Jr., Youth Director: Working with youth is like being on a roller-coaster, with all the ups, downs and spinning all around. It can be tiresome, but I know it is worth the ride. I've seen the "ups" – great moments of spiritual growth in the youth. I've also seen the "downs" – moments where it seems the youth only come for the fun. We have around 10-15 youth attending regularly, which is wonderful, but we are in one of those "down" type of moments. God is continuously working on



their hearts, but the enemy has been distracting and discouraging them in different ways. We will march on, helping them through the rough road in their faith journey, trusting in God's guidance, leading and strength. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." - John 16:33 We ask you to join us in this spiritual battle with your prayers.

