

The Oaks Arrow

The Changing Look of Campus Life

Despite the challenge that Covid-19 has posed, for all of us, life goes on here at the Oaks, we're delighted to report—by the grace of God! We have tried to follow certain protocol, limiting the traffic on campus, both the coming and the going. Kids being admitted into the program must be tested first.



That said, again, ministry continues to happen on this campus, in the face of it all. Thank you, generous donors, for being so faithful in making sure that happens, that indeed the Oaks not only survives, but thrives, despite the situation. Even growing stronger because of it!

Speaking of thriving, we wanted to begin this newsletter on a very positive note, celebrating the fact our new cottage is, finally, having overcome a hurdle or two, taking shape—the foundation poured, framing is soon to follow. And what a blessing it will be for the kids who call it home.



Given the challenge that the community's limited water pressure presented, the fact the project is now off and running makes this moment even sweeter. A few months ago, we were wondering, alright. The guidelines for the sprinkler system needed to be met, in order for the state fire marshal to officially grant approval to our plans. Our appeal for help on this matter was answered by a couple of entities, including the Cherokee Nation.



Thanks be to God! The answer came in the form of a special water tank and pump that will be installed inside the cottage and provide the necessary pressure to serve the sprinkler system. Chief Boyd, our erstwhile architect, stayed the course and we are full steam ahead. What an exciting time it is! The kids are already reserving bedrooms!



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Jordan, member of the Miami Nation, who begins her third year at the Mission, will be a senior this Fall semester. During this past year, she was baptized, completed her Confirmation studies, served in various capacities at worship, traveled to congregations throughout the Midwest, represented the Mission at the Nebraska & Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod Assemblies, attended church camp & Synod youth lock-ins & retreats, was hosted as a guest student at the University of North Alabama, and completed her Junior year of high school as a cheerleader with a majority of A's on her report card, scoring in the 20's on her ACT, qualifying her for college classes during her Senior year at Oaks Mission School.



Cedric, member of the Creek Nation, alum of Oaks Indian Mission & graduate of Oaks Mission School, is set to finish his studies at Northeastern State University this summer and graduate in August with a BA degree. He has been in an independent living situation here at the Mission these past few years, attending college and working on campus, as well as serving as an intern coach at a nearby elementary school.

Scenes of A Mission, 2020



Tending a Summer project, the Mission garden...planting potatoes



John, Ponca, and Sol Bird Mockicin, Cherokee/Choctaw, spending time together after dinner at the dining hall. Sol, an Oaks Indian Mission Alum, was eating dinner in this dining hall seven decades ago!



Our youngest resident, Robert, member of the Choctaw Nation, with campus mascot, Max



John, member of the Ponca Nation, and his cottage-parent, Ken, playing mind games



Making cake...



...and about to eat it, too - at the celebration of birthdays earlier this year



Elizabeth, Cheyenne-Arapaho, excited about her Acceptance Letter to the cosmetology program at the local Vocational-Technical College, which she can do while a high school student at Oaks Mission School. Beside her is Dave Sanders, parent at Creek Cottage.



Needs List

<p>~Pantry Items~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookies • Crackers • Bottled Water • Tea 	<p>~Sports Items~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing Poles/Lures/Tackle • Corn Hole Games • Horseshoe Sets <p>~Outdoor Items~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawn chairs • Ice chests • Patio Sets 	<p>~Home Items~</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dish Soap • Shampoo • Tampons & Pads • Room Fans • Clock Radios
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School Term Finishes Early

It was in the midst of Spring Break, mid-March, that Oaks Mission School closed its doors due to the pandemic, along with schools throughout the state and nation. But our kids finished their work on-line and with packets prepared by the faculty. All of them completing their studies in good standing, ready to begin again at the end of Summer, the Fall semester—if, indeed, the school is permitted to reopen. It is a mystery right now. We will prepare for whatever the contingency. If it's a matter of on-line learning, we will have the campus set up for that, with some additional staff monitoring the students' progress and providing special tutoring, as well.

For the Oaks Indian Mission, Just Another Challenge

Not to minimize the present health and economic crisis which has affected us all in various ways, rather dramatically reordering the life we had been accustomed to. But throughout the long and storied history of the Mission, there have been numerous and momentous interruptions, including the forced removal from its original site in Georgia to the trek westward across half a continent to begin again here in Indian Territory, now Oaks, Oklahoma. Within another couple of decades then being caught betwixt the Union forces encamped just north of the community and Confederate forces just to the south, the Cherokee Nation, itself, split asunder. There was the major transition, after a hundred years of being Moravian, to the oversight of Lutherans, and the continuous change going on since within Lutheran church bodies over the course of this past century.

By God's Grace, the Mission has been able to meet and grow from each of these challenges. This being no different, we trust. In fact, the financial strength of this ministry, thanks to our beloved donor base and gifting partners, is as firm as it has been in some time. We are coming off a very positive audit and are catching the attention of some interested Foundations. Our relationship with the Cherokee Nation has perhaps never been so encouraging.

So, as we continue to celebrate the richness of our heritage, our gaze is ever focused on the future and all that awaits us, in Christ.

Congregation Suspends Sunday Services



Eben Ezer Lutheran Church closed its doors, as well, about the same time as the school, mid-March, again, as did congregations throughout the Synod and Nation.

But it hasn't kept the Mission staff and children from regular worship, conducted within the cottages and, during Holy Week, outside on the grounds—an evening Maundy Thursday service near the Mission garden, a Good Friday morning service near the fire pit and flagpoles and the Easter Sunrise in the middle of the cemetery, faithful to a Moravian tradition much in tune with the gospel accounts of that first Easter.

It's when you break the mold, sometimes, thinking and doing outside the box, as they say, that special things happen. The kids getting an opportunity to experience worship beyond the walls of a church building. It became more up close and personal, more intimate and participatory.

Amazing, how God turns lemons into lemonade—or, as I heard it recently, manure into fertilizer, more fitting, perhaps, given our summer gardens. The congregation anticipates a June reopening of service held in the sanctuary.



Honors, Memorials & In-kind January - April 2020

Honorariums

Anette Kezbers
Steven & Nancy Krause
Richard & Patricia Ayling
Chris & Terry Beloncik
Marvin & Phyllis Abbott
Risa Powell
Sue Krominga

Rev. Dawn Enderwood
Marilyn Thies
Dr. John & Sally Houck
Rev. Roger Bruns

Rev. Don Marshall
Rev. Bill & Jane Shaner

Rev. Carl Petering
Todd Petering

Ken & Cindy Perkins
Sally Turner

Donald Pedersen 82nd Birthday
Theodore & Ayda Pedersen

Stuart & LaVerne Mills 65th Anniv.
Moneca Mills
Stuart & LaVerne Mills

Phil & Florence Larsen
Myrvin Christopherson

Rev. Carl & Ginger Petering
Roger & Katherine Wallenburg

Jon B.
JoAnn Metternich

Memorials

Abelone Nielsen Larsen
Rev. Don Marshall

Rev. CA & Tomina Vammen
Rev. Don Marshall

Detlef Leerskov
Rev. Don Marshall

Dorothy Ann Romer
Marshal Baskin Romer
Susan & John Laverty
Morris & Patricia Hammer
Kay Hutchinson

Viola Hahn
Zion WELCA, Johnson, NE

Memorials

Roy Joseph
Wayne & Joan Stageman
Pastor David Klump
Duane & Jane Winegardner

James Ray Chambers
Tom & Cherry Jerlow

Rev. Don Riechers
Wanda Riechers
Paul & Marilyn Dumke
Alice Srp
Cindy Mudroch

Beth Conrad
Tabitha Circle, Bessie, OK

Lorena Francis
Tabitha Circle, Bessie, OK

Alberta Lenaburg Smith
Tabitha Circle Bessie, OK

Gene Turner
Cary Ledbetter

Rev. Harold Laursen
Elizabeth Kaldahl
Rev. Don Marshall
Barbara Laursen
Ruth Ellen Rebelein
Rev. W.O. & A.L. Lawson
Alison Nelson
David Jr. & Karen Rankin

Robert Goettsch
Tabitha Circle Bessie, OK

Woodrow Chessman
Fran Burns
Christine Sisk
Theodore Ferguson
Gibbs & Register
Cynthia Turner
Harry & Mary Hunt
Joel Covitz
Ray & Connie Mortvedt
Earl Whittaker
Lil Gates
Terry & Mary Glenn

Barb Nielsen
Ruth Bennett
Rev. Don Marshall

Memorials

Bob Brase
E.C. & Shirley Peper

Junior Janssen
Bob & Kim Butler

Erlene Meier
Herbert & Helen Bechthold

Beverly Johnson
Russell Family

Jerry Reese
Rev. Carl & Ginger Petering

Victor Fleury
Lora Neddenriep

Max Howard
Alice Howard

Elsie Wendel
Stephen & Elizabeth Wendel

Charles & Hilda Beck
Susan Beck

Bill Svoboda
Kathleen Svoboda

In-Kind Donors

Dr. Sheryl Hill, JBU, Nursing Program

St. Paul's LC, OKC

St. Paul LC, Cole Camp, MO

Advent LC, Olathe, KS

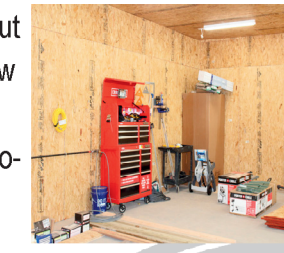
J.P. McGay, Catoosa, OK

United Lutheran, Bella Vista, AR

John & Barbara Nelleremoe, Wayzata, MN

Note: All individuals, families and churches are listed to the best of our knowledge. It is not our intent to omit any donors and contributions from our lists. If you see we have made a mistake, please accept our apology, and let us know so we can make a correction.

Another thing we're pretty excited about around here is the vo-tech building now completed and about to be equipped with the tools necessary for various projects, including welding and carpentry, auto mechanics soon to follow.



We have been blessed with a substantial gift from the Immanuel Vision Foundation, as well as generous contributions from a Mission Festival held last Fall at Zion Lutheran, Johnson, NE, the congregational endowment fund of Reformation Lutheran, Wichita, KS, and a grant from the Lutheran Women Missionary League (LWML), Oklahoma District. All of which has allowed us to purchase some high quality equipment that will well serve our purposes. There are also funds available to support stipends for instructors to teach the various skills and guide the kids in the use of the equipment.

We anticipate that this facility will become a useful addition to the larger community, as well as the Mission, itself.

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Thanks to the skilled labor of a group of southeast Nebraskans, composed primarily of our faithful friends from St. Paul Hickory Grove, Auburn, who spent a weekend on campus this past February, just before the Covid-19 issue, our two bunkhouses, where we have hosted numerous groups over the years, have been converted into small apartments that will serve an internship program for teachers which has recently been established between the Oaks Indian Mission and the University of North Alabama. The Nebraskans, during their servant project this time, stayed in the former Seminole Cottage, which will now serve our visiting groups, offering bedrooms, a kitchen and dining room, as well as a spacious living room to kick back and relax from all that labor!



WELCOME TO TEAM MINISTRY



Joe Hill has been in construction for 29 years, starting out as a general laborer barely knowing how to read a tape measure, steadily progressing to owning and operating Rockyford Hill's Construction. As Joe's skills progressed, he began taking on more leadership roles, managing large commercial jobs. Joe and his crew have sub-contracted work for numerous educational and medical facilities in Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Arkansas and Kansas. But he really enjoys this new change in pace and is extremely thrilled to be working within the community where he was raised, Rockyford, OK, a graduate of the Class of '89 from Oaks Mission Public Schools. Joe has a wonderful wife, Deena, and delights in their two boys: Zachary & Trace. He is known throughout this community for his fishing, hunting, gardening and carpentry skills.

Finally, Joe thanks Don & Dan for the opportunity to work at the Oaks Indian Mission and looks forward to working many years here, honing his skills as a well-seasoned handyman, passing these skills on to the kids he is so gifted, as well, at inspiring.

Greetings! My name is Stormey Manes. I am 27 and mom to a beautiful, fun-loving, out-going little girl, Namine. I really enjoy working with kiddos and watching them grow into their lives. I was recently the girls' cottage-parent; now I have moved to the office in the position of Activities Coordinator, more involved with all the kids on a daily basis. Which I am really going to enjoy.

