

2016 Pine Ridge and Lakota YouthStay Ministry Team Report

In 2016, our Pine Ridge ministry continues to be a strong expression of our faith in action.

Sanctuary approved the Lakota YouthStay program in January, 2016. The YouthStay ministry hopes to bring six to eight, 10 – 15 year-old youth from Pine Ridge to Medford for mutual cultural enrichment and exploration/discovery experience in late July, 2017. The youth will stay for a week in homes of local volunteer host families in Medford and surrounding towns. In April 2016, the YouthStay website, designed by Tom Hathaway/Small Steeple, debuted with high marks for design and content. Joy, Bruce, and Tosa Two Heart spent a week in August traveling around the Pine Ridge reservation promoting the YouthStay program at community meetings and on KILL radio. An advisory board was formed in August with five Lakota advisors, based on the reservation, including one teen.

The Advisors have been instrumental in promoting the program, meeting with youth and families and assisting with the youth application process. The Medford Transcript wrote a feature article about the program in September, 2016. We received eight host family applications in November with Deb DiSciullo and Joy completing the home visits in December. The families are very excited about hosting!

Youth Applications are due in January and will be reviewed in February. Applicant/host matches will be made and finalized in March. Other events planned are a host orientation get-together in the spring and a trip out to Pine Ridge to meet the YouthStay kids coming to Medford in July.

Several fundraisers were held for the program including the annual Cookie Walk, a paint night and a Lakota Quilt raffle. The program has received many individual and recurring monthly/quarterly donations throughout the year.

In August, volunteers from Sanctuary, friends and family of Sanctuary members, Boston University students and their friends/family, and members of the West Medford community traveled to the Pine Ridge Reservation for our fifth annual volunteer trip to ReMember. Volunteers worked on building outhouses and bunk

beds, skirting trailers and building steps and porches to provide safe egress in/out of trailers. Sanctuary is well received and much appreciated for their ongoing dedication and commitment to ReMember and the people of Pine Ridge.

Donations were made in 2016 to Re-Member for the winter heating program and to the Lakota Girl's Math Camp.

Going forward, Sanctuary members have been invited to speak on several area churches and community groups in 2017. Joy and Wendy are working on several grants to help fund our Pine Ridge Ministry for future years and a YouthStay Donation campaign is in the works.

Our church community remains ever committed to the people of Pine Ridge and always grateful for the grace and kindness that they show to us. The YouthStay program has generated excitement and interest in the Medford community. Through these ministries, we are provided with opportunities to both express our faith and to learn from the Lakota people.

Submitted by the Pine Ridge Ministry Team

Joy Harris, Kathy Williams and Deb DiSciullo