



FEBRUARY 2016 DEVOTION

Hope and Healing to the Navajo People \$75,000

Reader #1: Living joyfully in today's world is a challenge for all of us, and perhaps even more so for many of our brothers and sisters in the Navajo Nation. Some of us may have experienced unemployment or other times of family turmoil. If so, are you willing to share some thoughts and feelings about that time in your life? (Allow time for sharing and thank each person who shares.)

Reader #2: Among the Navajo, more than 67% live below the poverty level and unemployment on the reservation has reached 42%. It may be difficult for us to understand the effects this has on families. Creative strategies to address individual and community needs are necessary to promote health and healing in Navajo families.

Reader #3: Whereas unemployment on the Navajo Reservation contributes to poverty, substance and sexual abuse, violence, suicide and dysfunctional behaviors in families that leave many hurting with few answers and little hope for the future; and

Reader #1: Whereas high dropout rates among students due to disruptive home lives, poor role models and second-language issues cause many to be discouraged and give up, perpetuating the cycle of dependency on the welfare system; and

Reader #2: Whereas "God, our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" 1 Timothy 2:1-4, and Vicar Tim Norton, is serving at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Navajo, New Mexico, ministering to the Navajo people; and

Reader #3: Whereas Lutheran Indian Ministries desires to implement Gospel oriented programs for Navajo men, women and youth to empower them to be over-comers, offering positive choices for bright futures; therefore the LWML delegates selected Hope and Healing to the Navajo People as a 2015-2017 Mission Grant.

Reader #1: Let us join in prayer

All: Lord we ask that You bless the efforts of all involved in the ministry of bringing Hope and Healing to the Navajo People. Bless Vicar Norton as he works in creative ways to address the social problems facing the Navajo, and as he brings them the Word and Sacrament. Strengthen those devout Navajo who despite personal struggles, are ready to share the love of Jesus and His church with those around them. Help them to maintain pride in their culture, while resting secure in the knowledge of Your love and faithfulness. Banish the darkness of unemployment, abuse, suicide and unbelief with the light of Your Holy Word. May the words of the Psalmist be realized, "Let Your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, Your salvation according to Your promise..." Psalm 119:41. We ask all this in the name of Your precious Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen