

# The O'Learys

## Serving Indigenous Peoples in North America

Romans 12:12... "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."



This quarter started out with Ryan attending a National Association of Evangelicals board meeting in Washington DC. This two day trip began with Ryan being a part of a two hour NAE sponsored prayer meeting at a church not too far from the United States Capital. Various Christian leaders shared devotionals at this prayer time and then led us in a time of prayer. It was a powerful time of coming together to pray for each other and for our nation.

Also, every other Tuesday night, Buck Brodin, the FPI prayer coordinator leads an online prayer time. We're thankful for Buck's leadership in this very important ministry. We pray for a variety of needs during this prayer time and for various leaders. We pray for God's will to be done in a variety of circumstances and for First Peoples groups in North America. We would love to have more people join us in these prayer sessions. If you're interested, please let us know, and we can make sure that you receive a zoom link to join these prayer meetings that take place every other Tuesday at 8 PM central time.

### Sharing at a Church Planters Gathering

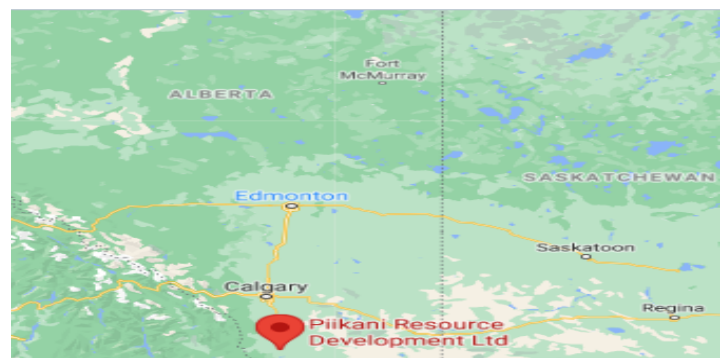
Right after Ryan attended the NAE board meeting in DC, he flew to Boca Raton, Florida to attend a church planters gathering at a church in this area. This church invests significant resources into church planting, and Ryan was asked to be a part of a panel discussion on the main stage at this gathering. Ryan shared about discipleship in a First Peoples in North America ministry context. A number of leaders approached him afterward to thank Ryan for sharing what he did at this gathering of church planters from various parts of the world. The FPI is focused on raising up church planters as it is, arguably, the best way to see people reached for Christ.

### From a Missions Field to a Missions Force

A part of our vision related to First Peoples ministry involves raising up tribal people to be a global missions force rather than only being active in ministry to other tribal people. While our focus is on ministering to tribal people in North America, we also don't want to completely overlook ministry to other people groups as God leads. One way to accomplish our mission of raising up tribal people to be a missions force is by being an example of a couple who are also taking some time to minister to all people as God leads. This past quarter, Ryan, in particular, had a number of opportunities to be present with people in their time of need/loss. For example, Ryan was informed of a man who had choked and suffered a heart attack. This man and his wife have been friends of ours for years. As a result, Ryan drove from Bemidji to Abbott Northwestern in Minneapolis to visit this man and his family. After visiting him and the family and praying for them, Ryan left the hospital and this man died later in the afternoon after Ryan visited him. The next week, Ryan led the funeral for this man. It was an emotional time for both of us as we care deeply for this couple. Much of ministry involves being with people and caring about them in their time of need.

### Showing Love and Care for Tribal People in Their Time of Need

Ryan is a part of a small committee that is planning a Christian hockey camp in August of this summer at the Piikani Reserve in Alberta. The pastor of the church on this reserve had a step son who passed away recently as well. The family of this pastor on this reserve are huge Calgary Flames fans, the professional hockey team Ryan was drafted by. As a result, Ryan was asked if he could put together a short video and to share some words of encouragement, comfort, and hope that could be shown during the funeral. Ryan put together about a five minute video and shared from Rev. 21 in this video. The family was very thankful to Ryan for sharing what he did in the video and the pastor asked if Ryan would be willing to come up and preach God's word before this Christian hockey camp this summer. Ryan said he would be willing to come as this pastor stressed that the people on this reserve need to be taught God's word. **(the picture below is a map of where this tribe is located in southern Alberta).**



## Equipping Missionaries to Living Courageously for the Lord

In November, Ryan and our oldest son, Joshua, travelled to Florianopolis, Brazil to attend a gathering of missionaries and for Ryan to share/speak God's word at this gathering. Joshua wanted to go with, attend the missions gathering himself, and to go surfing during some of our free time as he had never surfed before and he has wanted to learn how for quite some time.

While we had some challenging flight dynamics both on our flight down to Brazil and on our return trip, we made it safely to Brazil and got back home safely as well. Ryan was asked to speak on the topic of living courageously for the Lord, and he shared about courage from the life of King David. More specifically, Ryan shared about 1) living courageously based upon God's past faithfulness. David had courage to face Goliath because God had already delivered David from a lion and a bear. 2) living courageously based upon God's truth in the present. David focused on God's truth in the present to be able to face Goliath. For example, he had full confidence in the Lord and what God could do when he faced Goliath. 3) Ryan talked about living courageously based upon receiving a future reward. The Lord will one day give us eternal rewards for our faithfulness here on earth, including how we took courageous steps of obedience to do what the Lord has called us to do. Ryan's message was well-received.

Joshua also loved learning how to surf during some of our downtime, and Ryan and Josh had a great father/son time together on this trip to Brazil. It's important to remember that ministry starts with our family, and while no family is perfect as there is only one perfect person (Jesus) God does call us as Christ followers to make family a high priority and to work at having our families in order. Part of that includes spending quality time with our kids.

(Below is a picture of Joshua getting ready for his first surfing training session. He did great!)



### How to give:

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Orlando, FL 32885-9930

## Bringing Native American followers of Jesus and Native Ministry Leaders to the Minnesota Prayer Breakfast

Ryan was honored to be given a table at the Minnesota Prayer Breakfast to bring various Native American Christians and Native ministry leaders from around the state of Minnesota to this event. While most of the people who came to this event were from Minnesota, we even had a Native business leader come from out of state. It was a great morning of fellowship time and prayer.

The keynote speaker at this year's Minnesota Prayer Breakfast was Glen Taylor, owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves professional basketball team. He spoke about God's involvement in his life and calling to provide people with employment through his various businesses over the years.

After the Minnesota Prayer Breakfast, this group of Native American ministry leaders visited a Christian community development corporation in south Minneapolis to learn more about their work and mission. We ended the time together having lunch in south Minneapolis and discussing a variety of Native ministry topics. It was a very enriching and encouraging morning. (below is a picture of the Minnesota Prayer Breakfast gathering).



## Equipping Congregations to Engage in Native American Ministries

Ryan was asked by a lead pastor of one church in the Twin Cities if he would be willing to share on a Sunday morning about how to engage in Native ministry as this church has a particular interest in engaging in this ministry. Ryan shared during the sermon time during both of the church's two services on Sunday morning. Some people asked Ryan questions after and a few expressed an interest in getting involved in Native ministry. The pastor followed up with Ryan to share that various people from his congregation committed to going on a Native ministry outreach coming up this summer. We were blessed to be a part of this service.

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The above picture is from Ryan and Joshua's trip to Brazil. During one their afternoon free times, they went to the beach so that Josh could learn how to surf. There was a big cross next to the beach of which Ryan took a picture. We're thankful for the cross and what Jesus did on it, and we're told in Scripture to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus who endured the cross!



The above is one picture of the Piikani Reserve in southern Alberta. Ryan will be going there this summer to help lead a Christian hockey camp for young people on this reserve. Please pray for this camp and for young people and families on this reserve and that they would come to know Jesus and grow in Him through this outreach. Ryan is a part of regular planning meetings for this outreach.



The picture above is an advertisement for the National Association of Evangelicals student leadership conference. This is held the last week of January every year. Ryan will be leading a first ever group of young, emerging Native Christian leaders to this event held in Washington DC. Pray for Ryan and the students who will be attending this week long gathering and these young people to grow as Christian leaders. Along with attending this event, Ryan will lead the group on a tour to the American Indian Museum and the Bible Museum. Each participant will be given a journal to record what they are learning about Christian leadership through this experience in Washington D.C.



The above picture is of Wooddale Church in the Twin Cities. The reason we have this picture here is that this will be the site where we host our first Native church planters gathering coming up on January 14th of 2025. We're bringing young Native Christian leaders and aspiring leaders to this gathering to form a cohort of church planters, so that they can learn from and encourage each other. We're thankful to our faithful partners who are a part of this significant gathering of Native church planters/potential Native church planters. Please pray for this gathering, and that God would give wisdom and unity during our time together.