

Hallelujah Moment from the USA

"What's in a Shoebox?"

By Jodi Cataldo with Mike and Libby Flowers

February 6, 2009



Photo supplied by Mike and Libby Flowers, Dakotas Conference Missionaries.

Kinew's little fingers worked ambitiously to unravel the knot securing the brightly wrapped shoebox. At last, the knot was free and Kinew, filled with anticipation, opened up the box. Just then a huge smile spread across her face as she lifted out a colorful, cuddly pair of slipper socks.

Ron carefully picked out each gift in his box. He peered in at the last package on the bottom of the box. Ron reached in and took out a toothbrush, showed it to his buddy and exclaimed: "Now I don't have to share with my brother"!

Kinew and Ron are two of over 3,000 children living on the Spirit Lake Reservation in North Dakota. For many years, children and elders of the Spirit Lake Nation went without food and serviceable clothing. Today, United Methodists through the Spirit Lake Ministry Center are working in

relationship with the tribal council to engage in outreach ministry, and more and more needs are being met.

One ministry is "Shoebox Christmas." Each year, churches all over the Dakotas put together gifts of new hats, mittens, scarves, educational items, age-appropriate toys and personal items in a small shoebox to be delivered to the children of the reservation at Christmas. For some, the shoebox is the only gift they would receive.

In addition to the 4,539 Shoebox Christmas gifts delivered to Spirit Lake and other reservations in the Dakotas this year, 500 blankets and quilts were donated to the elders, many of whom would pick a quilt or blanket and then immediately give it to a grandchild that had a need. One elder shared, "I just want to thank you for the gift of warmth you have provided me and my grandchildren. This is the best Christmas I can remember in a very long time."

Ways to Support this Ministry

You can support the work of the Spirit Lake Ministry Center by sharing your gifts through The Advance or by designated giving through your local church:

[3020453](#) — **Spirit Lake Ministry Center**, Assisting the children and elders through material help, building projects and vocational training.

To learn more about the Spirit Lake Ministry Center, go to: <http://www.spiritlekeministrycenter.org/>



Hallelujah Moments

Celebrations of United Methodist mission from the Mission Education program area of the General Board of Global Ministries.
<http://gbgm-umc.org/me/>

connecting the church
in mission

