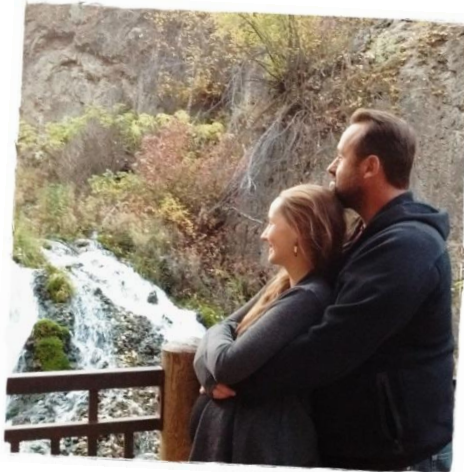


September 2017; a new chapter

You're **MY** work

You're so busy working  
that it's easy to think  
I'm one more thing to do.  
But I don't need your works.  
Instead, you're my work,  
and I love my work.  
Let's labor together for love  
and sacrifice and the good fight.

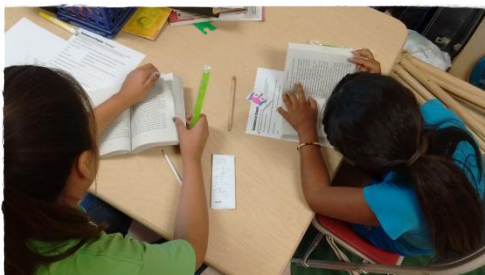
- Inspired by Ephesians 2:10



I found this little poem a while back, and while I don't have room to go into all the details of how this applies to my life right now, I just can't help but think that this is for some of you as well. I love how Jesus invites us to work alongside Him, how He does call us to work, but at the same time keeps reminding us that His yoke is light, and that the work He is calling us to is so different from what the world or our busy minds would have us believe. And then, as if that wasn't enough, we are transformed in the process. Not by mere circumstance, but by His hands. What an amazing mystery, that we are His workmanship just as we are (and continue to be) the work of His hands.

Co-teaching with Mary for the month of September was fun, and transitioning to staying at home in October came just in time as I've had more and more trouble with swelling in both my hands and legs. One of my old students from last year came back to Oyate, and a new student transferred from a different school, bringing the number of students in Mary's class up to 8, and it's been fun to see how this group of kids seems to have been handpicked for her and vice versa.

This last month at the school came with a lot of fun moments, seeing the kids engaged and motivated, also really feeling like there is a connection with the students from last year that will last beyond being a teacher at Oyate. At the same time, there were also things that made me sad, seeing how one of my students from last year seems to have grown up over the summer in the way that kids often do here in Oglala, and lost some of the light-heartedness that she had. Also, a conversation with one of our parents that revealed how deeply dysfunctional even some of the most well intentioned family relationships in our community are.



"How can I help, besides praying?" This is a question we at Oyate and at the Rec are asked on a regular basis. The answer (hold your breath) is, to many, unsatisfyingly simple: "Do pray." I know that restless feeling of wanting to DO something, and of course we need and appreciate your donations, of course we need you to share and advertise our need for staff, but as counterintuitive as it may seem, Oswald Chambers had it right when he said "Prayer does not equip us for the greater works – prayer is the greater work." It is precisely *because* prayer is "invisible" work that it is effective in the invisible world, and that is where the battle is won. Your prayers are invaluable.

So with that, *thank you so much* for all the ways you have supported me during this last year – financially and more so spiritually by praying for me and for the kids. It's been a huge privilege to be able to share that year with the students and staff at Oyate, and I am humbled to see the many ways that God orchestrated it all perfectly. All in all, I'm almost certain I might just have learned even more than my students during that year ☺ and while there is no specific plan or timeline in place, I would love to be back teaching here at some point.

I appreciate if you want to keep supporting me, financially, and more so in prayer. With this new chapter Eric and I are beginning, there are lots of new challenges ahead. It is so good to know that so many care about what is going on in our little world here in Oglala, and are part of the ministry by praying for the people and their hearts.

Please also continue to especially pray for Mary, and the kids in her class – for simple things like restful sleep, as well as all the intricate things that go into teaching and learning, like inspiration and creativity in lesson planning and a spiritual atmosphere free from distractions and unrest for the kids.

If you're curious what else I'm up to, the Rec website <http://oglarwc.org> is a great way to stay updated, and of course you can write me directly using my email. I'd love to hear from you!

Ela Sutton at Oyate Concern

*Putting Wings on Weary Hearts*



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