

# Normans



Serving with First Nations to Reach All Nations



Fall 2011

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Our ministry is solely funded through, and fully accountable to North America Indigenous Ministries

## POTLATCH to honor JESUS, the Greatest Gift-Giver Ever

Over a year ago this potlatch spoon was gifted to a friend of ours who was in attendance at a Potlatch in Alaska. Acceptance of the spoon meant that they were also accepting responsibility for hosting the next potlatch. We have been given the honor of being invited to be on the planning committee for organizing this great give-away.



Traditionally the Potlatch was a gathering of Northwest Coastal Native people with the purpose of celebrating different occasions – it could be the celebration of a birth, marriage, or death. It could be a way to honor one who had been away to war. Often there were naming ceremonies, games, sports, singing and dancing associated with the potlatch. Food was always a big part of the potlatch with the host providing the food.

At the giveaway, a history of the person being honored was given and an explanation of the importance of their life or a particular deed or situation was shared. An honor dance was then held using special tribal songs.

In 1884 the US federal government banned the potlatch. Participation in a potlatch was punishable with a penalty of up to six months in jail. At that time, many missionaries, Christians and the Hudson's Bay Company traders complained that the potlatch ceremony encouraged non-Christian beliefs and distracted the Native people from productive work. **We believe that the Potlatch demonstrates a great spiritual truth.**

Gift giving by the host was how the power of wealth was demonstrated. The display of wealth was to establish prestige and economic standing among other tribes and groups. Unlike the non-Native man who gathered riches to have power, the potlatch host demonstrated his power by giving his wealth away. Continued on page 2

## Family Update

Let me introduce you to our youngest grandchild. Little Quinten was born last December, but we did not get to put him in the cradleboard until he and his family came for a visit from Nicaragua this summer. He is 7 months old in this picture and he brings us much joy, just like our other 9 grandchildren do. And that is a good segway into announcing that #11 is on the way. Yes, Kirsten and Mike are expecting their 5<sup>th</sup> child, a girl, due on March 4. All of our children were home this summer and we made wonderful memories together. See picture on page 2.



Sharing Jesus in partnership with our Native brothers and sisters because of you

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We are in the process of planning a Potlatch for next summer to honor Creator. It will be in honor of the One who gave everything, who left his heavenly home to live among us. He is the One who gave his very life so that we might have eternal life and live with Him. Creator demonstrated how we are to live our lives. We are to be givers. We want to honor Him. **We want all indigenous people to hear about Creator Jesus, the "Greatest Gift-Giver" ever.**

With God's guidance and support, this event could be one of those "Redemptive Analogies" that the veteran missionary statesman, Don Richardson, describes in his classic book, Peace Child.

Although the major planning of this potlatch is with a small group of men and women, it will take an enormous amount of cooperation and support from both the Native and non-Native community for it to occur. We are seeking a venue that can seat and feed up to 1000 people. We need quality gifts to honor all tribal representatives, speakers, and musical groups or dancers. Everyone who attends, from children to elders, is to be gifted. One friend in MI is making and sending 200 quality all wood pens for gifts. One friend in WI is sending quality carry-all bags with the Potlatch logo on them. Another is sending handmade jewelry for gifting. Are there items or ideas that you would like to contribute to honor Jesus and represent Him to the First Nations people of WA State and those that live all along the west coast from Alaska to New Mexico?

One way you could help is by purchasing a beautiful 2012 Native calendar that highlights Diane's photography with appropriate Bible verses on each page. This could be a reminder to pray for us and for the eternal impact that this Potlatch can have on the Native people in our sphere of influence. They would also make beautiful gifts. (Think Christmas!). We are selling them for \$15.00 which includes a protective mailing envelope and postage. All proceeds will go towards the cost of hosting the Potlatch. You can make checks payable to Dave Norman and mail your order to our home address:

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Or you can call or email us to place your order: 253-536-7428 or norman@naim.ca

### Thank YOU

Speaking of Potlatch, "Thank YOU" for giving and praying for us and for NAIM all these years.

Still resting in Him and enjoying the journey

*Love + Diane*

Your sacrifice to keep this ministry going is greatly appreciated. You keep us inspired.

