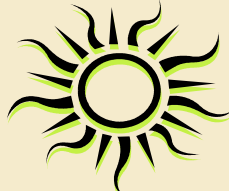




Native Sons



Equipping Native Leaders to Reach Native Americans

MELISSA ANDRADE

POINTS OF INTEREST

- I will be itinerating in the NYC and NJ area from June 19th–July 13th. Thanks to Pastor Dominick Scibetta and the Center Moriches AG for housing me again this summer.
- I will be itinerating in the rest of New York from July 14th–August 17th. Thanks to Pastor Dave Pilch and The Syracuse Teen Challenge for housing me again this summer during this leg of my trip.
- My first itineration stop will be in Robeson Co., NC where I will be visiting old friends as well as ministering.

PRAYER POINTS

- New financial partners.
- AIC as it transitions with Southwestern Assembly of God University.
- Safe travel while I itinerate.

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There was a time when Melissa did not want anything to do with Jesus because of the hypocrisy she saw and the suffering she saw and experienced. Today, she would like to eventually become a pastor and perhaps a counselor who can come alongside others as God's agent of healing.

She grew up in Yuma, AZ, a 3rd generation Mexican-American, unaware of the two Native tribes in her area (the Quechan & the Cocopah). At one time her parents had experienced spiritual manifestations outside of Christ, but her mother came to Christ and then her father. They both served as church leaders for a time, but her father backslid badly hurting his family in the process. On top of the heartbreak in her immediate family Melissa hid within herself the darkness and shame of sexual abuse from an extended family member that went on from 7-17 years of age in her life. She says, "There was too much darkness and too much spiritual attack. I came to believe there is no God."

I asked Melissa, "What changed?" She said, "One day, God just showed up. I had gone to a youth service just to get away from my family for a while. When it was done my mother was at a prayer meeting at

another woman's home. I went and waited for her to be done sitting in a corner, wanting to leave, listening to the women pray, filled with bitterness and wondering why they were praying." One woman crossed the room to her and stated, "You need to let it go. God loves you." As she uttered these words Melissa felt a warm embrace



Melissa Andrade

from the Holy Spirit and a release from her pain. She was baptized in the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other tongues. She says, "I decided to change my life at that moment." Her story is like Cornelius' in

Acts (Acts 10:44-48); she had not yet asked Jesus into her life in a formal way, yet in her heart her breaking before the Lord was just that! She says, "It meant so much to me to hear and sense that I was loved." She continued to worship the Lord in praise, thanksgiving, and confession of sin asking Jesus to come into her life. She says, "It was probably the best thing I've ever done."

Melissa was just getting ready to enter high school at this time. She continued to hang out with her old friends, but she stopped drinking and partying. When she told them about her experience with Jesus they did not understand and decided she was uncool; after a month or two she found herself sitting alone at school. She dug into God's Word and prayer. She became more and more involved in her church youth group and developed new friends there. The next year some of the youth from her church entered her high school and they began doing Bible study together. They invited others to join them and the group grew. They began fasting together and youth from other churches began to join the group. Melissa describes the group and

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

We have less than a month until graduation arrives here at AIC. It has been a busy semester as we continue to work through transitional issues with Southwestern Assembly of God University. My courses are going well and I continue to work with a small mentoring group. I am working on re-learning French in my doctoral studies. I am taking it on-line and am doing well, but do not like dealing with the technical difficulties and impersonal approach that are a part of on-line courses.

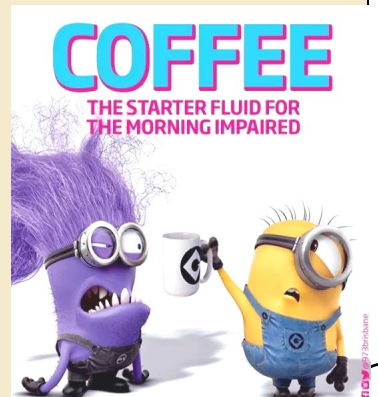
Theresa continues to enjoy teaching her 4-5 year old class. Our elder grandson, Dillon, is one of her students—which she thoroughly enjoys. She remains busy many nights working on lesson planning. She will be teaching both summer sessions this summer while I itinerate in NYC, NJ, and NY state.

Levi enjoys his classes at Fuller Seminary. He has been making "live edge" furniture to supplement their income. He is getting quite good at it. Some pieces he simply makes and sells others are special order. He has a website if you are interested in looking at his work—www.etsy.com/shop/IngrainedLiveEdge. Alicia continues to enjoy serving in the maternity departments. Dillon & Torrin stay overnights with us weekly now. This helps Levi & Alicia while working, in class, and just to allow them time alone together.

Caleb and Natasha are both top in their class as they continue their EMT training. They are actively looking into relocating to Georgia and just returned from a trip looking at job possibilities and housing

outside of Atlanta. We are very proud of all our children, but please keep Caleb and Natasha in prayer for salvation.

Thanks for your prayers and support!



their times together as a lot of fun. The group grew so large eventually they needed a classroom to house it. She says, "In high school I had no boyfriend. It was just me, and God, and my friends from church."

She got involved in the church's drama team and became a youth leader. Her drama team was so good that they competed in the national fine arts convention in Florida one year. Melissa is the first person in her family to go on to college. Her parents are very proud of her, especially since so many from her area do not finish high school.

Melissa's salvation and deliverance from pain was important. She had blamed her mother for her abuse thinking that her mother knew and should have done something to stop it. Melissa's sisters was also being abused by the same extended family member. Melissa always tried to be a protector caring for her sister and family and trying to keep them together. The family never spoke of the father's fall. Neither Melissa or her sister told of their abuse. Melissa's sister was the first to tell another. One night in a youth service the youth pastor spoke on hidden things that need healing. The pastor's wife came and prayed with Melissa. She told her that she knew of the abuse and that they had been praying for her and her sister. Melissa broke, the tears flowed for a long while, and she knew she was free. She says, "The hardest part was telling my parents. Oh, what a day that was! The police got involved, my father found it hard to accept (the abuse had come from his side of the family), and our extended family rejected us. Back home, our family is close by and we were always used to being together. It is hard not seeing them now. They disowned us and consider us a shame." The abuser went to jail, but as is often the case, those who

experience abuse are further ostracized and revictimized.

Melissa's father had worked with the disabled. She has felt drawn to this kind of ministry and with his encouragement enrolled in Arizona Western College's (AWC) psychology program. It was not a good fit and she intentionally failed her classes and eventually dropped out. She says, "The teachers were not nice and they did not care about us. It was not like it is here at AIC." She returned home feeling like a failure. She began receiving mail and calls from AIC. She had heard about the school often from youth camps, but was fearful of leaving home and coming here. Gary (a young man in AIC's recruiting office) walked her through the application process. She told everyone about enrolling, except her father, because she feared his response. When she finally told him he was very supportive and happy for her.

Melissa is now in her third semester in our Christian Ministry program. She says she is hungry to learn about the Lord and to dig into the Bible. She has one class with me this semester and her work shows the truth of her statement—she is an excellent student. She says, "I was shy before coming here and had a hard time looking others in the eye. When I arrived on campus I decided I would change, come out of my shell, and begin being who I really am showing my fun side and sense of humor, etc. I was received so openly here. It is hard to explain how wonderful it feels to be free to be myself and allow God to do His thing. I was scared before, but I am not scared now. Everyone back home has stayed there. I was the first to leave our area, although there is one guy that has also gone to college in Texas now. I met the other students, then the teachers and everyone else here. When you are here you just know that it is God who

dwells on this campus and protects us. I know I am at the right place at the right time. It feels like I have known everyone here forever—I belong here. Here, I know God is in control and that He has a plan for me.

Melissa has been involved in outreach ministry to on the White Mountain Rez, the reservations in Yuma, the Navajo Rez, and in Mexicali, Mexico since coming to AIC. She plays bass, guitar, the keyboard and sings. She has had the opportunity to be on the worship team at Phoenix First Assembly (Luke Barnett is the pastor and this is a church of multiple thousands). She has learned the need to be completely honest with others when reaching out and to find areas where you can relate to others. "When we ministered in Gallup, NM I discovered that telling my story helped others to open up and tell their stories as well. Then the Holy Spirit can do His work when we allow Him to lead, guide, and bring hidden things into the open" She has also learned the importance of working with others. "I like to take control and tend to think my way is the best. But listening to others has taught me to see other options and the importance of the point of view of others."

When I asked if she would recommend AIC to others she said, "If you come here, you will never be the same. It is not easy to be here because of classes, needing to learn, and learning to deal with other personalities. But coming together with others of the same mission as you and wanting to reach others for Jesus... its hard to explain, but it helps encourage you to keep the faith."



You may know of Yuma, AZ because of the old

Glen Ford movie "3:10 to Yuma" or its recent remake by the same name with Russell Crowe. The fictional character, Ben Wade, was to be taken to the very real Yuma Territorial Prison. The prison was built in 1876 and considered a fairly enlightened institution. It remained in operation until 1909 and housed Yuma's high school from 1910-1914.

Today it is a tourist attraction in the state park in which it is located.



Yuma Territorial Prison

Yuma sits on the Colorado River in the SW corner of AZ bordering CA and Mexico. It boasts many "firsts": The Laguna Dam, completed in

Yuma, AZ

1909 was the first dam on the Colorado River, its construction marked the end of the steam boat era and the beginning of irrigated agriculture. The Yuma Siphon, completed in 1912, is a 965 ft. long & 14 ft. in diameter concrete tube that is an early piece of engineering wizardry running under the Colorado River that still brings irrigation water to the Yuma Valley to this day. The first highway crossing the Colorado River was the Ocean to Ocean Bridge completed in 1915. The first plane to land in AZ touched down in Yuma in 1911. In 1929, Amelia Earhart used the same airfield to change her propeller while competing in the first Women's Air Derby from Santa Monica, CA to Cleveland, OH .

Although Yuma is home to the Cocopah and Quechan tribes, Yuma's population is primarily comprised of Hispanics and whites. Yuma is home to app 93,000 people, but there are app. 817 Cocopah living on the Cocopah Reservation and app. 2475 Quechan on the Quechan Rez. Spaniards Hernanda de Alcron and Melchior Diaz arrived in Yuma in 1540, 80 years before the

Pilgrims. They found thriving Native communities up and



down the Colorado River including the ancestors of the Cocopah and Wuechan. The Spaniards called the tribes of the area "Yuma" (means "smoke") because of the smoke of their cooking fires. Initially, the Yuma were left undisturbed. In 1680 Fr. Eusebio Kino came to Sonora, established a mission and sought to convert the people to Catholicism. In 1774 Yuma became a point of interest for the Europeans because of its strategic location as a crossing place on the Colorado River. Juan Bautista de Anaz established friendly relations with the tribes and eventually established the Anza Trail which crossed through Yuma providing a route for Spanish settlement in Alta, CA. Over time the Spanish became more controlling and oppressive and in 1781 the Quechan rebelled and drove out the Spaniards who never again sought to dominate the Quechan or control of the Yuma crossing.