

# ENGAGING DISCIPLESHIP

Open My Eyes, My Heart, My Hands MARK 10:46-52

America for Christ Offering 2012

## Native Americans Weaving Love and Justice

By Patty Bordeaux Nelson

Native Threads is a ministry that works with nine Native American tribes in South Dakota to actively weave love and justice by reconciling Native Americans with non-native populations. Native Threads is affiliated with Tapestry International Ministry and American Baptist Churches of the Dakotas.

Native Threads hosted a hospitality tent and provided refreshments at the 2011 national LifeLight Music Festival, Sioux Falls, S.D., where attendance exceeded 100,000. To encourage economic empowerment among native entrepreneurs seeking to improve their families' lives, Native Threads supported native Christians who displayed and sold handmade beadwork, crafts and other art.



Blessings came in the form of interaction between native and non-native individuals. In one instance, a non-native elderly man stopped by the tent, weary from walking and in need of rest.

With gratitude and joy, he received water and a sandwich offered by a native youth. In addition, as natives and non-natives danced together throughout the festival, it was the picture of the unifying power of Jesus Christ.

As Native Threads opens eyes, hearts and hands, it also joins the hands of diverse peoples through the love of Jesus Christ. For making this reconciliation possible, Native Threads says *pilamiya*—or “thank you” in the Lakota language—to American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) for the gift of a Children in Poverty (CIP) grant.

**To learn more about the CIP grant and other initiatives, contact the Rev. Lisa R. Harris, national coordinator, ABHMS Justice for Children Initiative and Christian Center Relations, at [lisa.harris@abhms.org](mailto:lisa.harris@abhms.org), 1-800-222-3872, x2158, or visit [www.abhms.org](http://www.abhms.org) > Ministries & Programs > Children in Poverty.**

**Patty Bordeaux Nelson is Native Threads coordinator and a member of the Sicangu Oyate/Rosebud Sioux Nation.**

# AFC'12

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