

THE JOURNEY 2026 VISION AND MISSION RENEWED

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I hope and pray you all have had a wonderful Christmas season. As 2026 rolls in, there is constant political and social unrest here on the Navajo Nation and in the rest of America. I wanted to take a moment to remind everyone of the purpose and mission of Bridging the Gap Ministries and the ministries of Creator's Fellowship and Journey Church Gallup.

I spent the day yesterday replacing the door on the home of a church family member who had their home broken into. Three months ago, a pastor

friend of mine needed to enter a home because the NPD does not do wellness checks anymore. Upon his entering, he found that a man had passed away alone several days earlier. Violent crime is on the rise. Abuse and neglect appear to go unchecked. The list of atrocities can go on and on, and unbiblical worldviews and sin tend to break my heart on a daily basis. I spend a lot of time learning about the current issues and practices here on the Navajo Nation so as to understand the lay of the land, so that we can endure and not burn out trying to fix and change things that 1. we cannot change and 2. we are not called to change.

Here are 5 basic principles that drive us here on the Navajo Nation with the ministry that we do.

1. ***People who do not follow Jesus, have the Holy Spirit, and read God's Word will live that way.*** There may be all kinds of legislation to address many issues, but legislation does not change the hearts of lost people. It is not until people hide God's Word in their hearts that we can truly see life change. I am not saying I am ok with what is going on, because I am not, but it is important that the Gospel continues to be the focal point.
2. ***We must remember why Jesus came. Jesus came to seek and save sinners, not to correct social issues, make our lives easy or make us wealthy.*** Now some may struggle and disagree with me. Consider that Jesus had the power to change all the issues of his day, but he did not. He told us that the poor would be with us always; he did not interfere with the Roman oppression of the people of Israel. Though he could have brought sweeping political and social change, he brought Spiritual change.
3. ***I will stay the course to which God has called me.*** God has put people in place to address the big picture issues, and I have prayed that he would open doors for me to do the same. But certain doors I have tried to step through have remained shut. I will help and support where and when I can. To put it simply, if missionaries in closed countries become too politically or socially motivated, they lose the ability to share the Gospel where they are. I will stay the course of the Gospel.
4. ***I will care for the sheep that God has given me.*** A study of Psalm 23 shows how the good shepherd cares for the sheep by teaching, disciplining, and caring for the physical and spiritual welfare and protection of his sheep. We can see how Jesus did all those things and He still does.
5. ***I will make the best use of the gifts God has given me.*** One of the biggest tragedies we see in the church today is that good, well-meaning brothers and sisters in Christ do things

they are not gifted and shaped to do. Unfortunately, they struggle and can become discouraged very quickly. I can do a lot of things, and I can address many issues. I will continue to do the things I can do well and address the issues that God has gifted me to address. I do not want to let even good and important things get in the way of God's purpose and mission for Bridging the Gap ministries.

I know much of this is very broad strokes, and there are many exceptions to all of these principles. This has been on my heart for some time. I pray that you saw what I was feeling about these issues last month, and that you all felt challenged. While Michele and I were talking recently, she made a statement "we don't do evangelism." This statement shook me to the core. Had I lost focus of who we are and what we are here to do? Did our desire to not look like "white man's religion" cause confusion? Is our desire to build bridges for the gospel and reach into the hearts of the people taking us away from the great commission? I want to give some clarity to what Michele meant with this statement. We do not use many of the conventional evangelistic practices (door to door, tracts, street evangelism, etc.) We want to help people fully understand Salvation and help them follow Jesus in their culture. It is our desire to do less evangelism but reflect Christ more. We want to let our lives shine before men, so that when people see us they see Christ in us. Let me simplify it with this one statement: Ten years ago, God brought us here to bring the Good News of the Gospel to the Navajo people. Today we are trying to equip others both in our church and outside of our church to share the Gospel to the Navajo People.



As we move into 2026, I have a couple of important prayer requests and goals for this year.

Provision:

1. A newer, more reliable van that can be taken on longer trips yet still works in the off- road situations we face daily
2. Some major improvements and repairs at Journey and East
3. New prayer and financial partners for Bridging the Gap, the churches, and our personal support
4. The next couple to begin the FNMBC

Spiritual matters:

1. Continued spiritual growth of those in church
2. More Indigenous leaders in the church
3. Spiritual warfare with the families of our church
4. Greater passion for reaching those who do not know Jesus

Community matters:

1. Openness to the gospel
2. Life challenges in the communities where we live and do ministry
3. Compassion for those in the communities where we live and do ministry
4. Victory for those struggling with all forms of addiction