

Desert Streams Ministries

Taking Streams of Living Water to a Dry and Weary Land.

June 3, 2021

Dear Friends, Family, and Supporters,



How have things been going for you? We have been enjoying this spring with warm weather and now a bit of rain. Actually, here in the mountains, April and May are the warmest months of the year. By August, we'll be using our wood stove again to stay warm.

Anyway, I'd love to share with you a few things that we've been working on.

Online Bible School

Our online Bible School is going strong. We started out our spring semester with about 170 students enrolled in courses. Most of them have stuck to their studies throughout the semester and many have grown both spiritually and in knowledge of God's word and in their ministries. Most of our students are either pastors, leaders, or serve in some capacity within their local churches.

We are working with a group of about 12 others who serve as course facilitators, editors, designers and technical help. We also have six Bible teachers who teach the online courses in audio and video.

History of the Online Bible School

The school started as an idea that John and Bill Brown had about 10 years ago. (Bill is a spiritual father to us, and John is his grandson.) John Brown worked here in Mexico for several years and brought many fresh ideas to the Advanced School of Ministry team. However, he returned to Canada before being able to develop the online school. I took the vision from there. I started by developing the software on which to build the school (I couldn't find any free software that satisfied our needs), and then we launched the school just within our congregation, as a trial. After successfully developing and offering a couple of courses to a small group of our people here locally, we decided in 2015 that we would launch it nationwide through the Advanced School of Ministry. We grew from about 40 students during our first semester to about 170 now.

We are continually developing new courses. Each semester we offer at least one new course, and we have the goal of developing a complete Bible School curriculum.

At the present time, each student who completes a course receives a certificate of completion which counts toward the Advanced School of Ministry bachelor degree program.

Our Local Church

We have been meeting online with our church since March, 2020, when the pandemic started. The change was abrupt, but our congregation has adapted well. We meet in small groups on Wednesday nights for Bible studies, and our Sunday services are transmitted via YouTube and our church's web page. As I have stated before, this has worked very well. However, we do desire to get together with the entire church soon. We no longer rent a building, and it's still not the best idea to meet indoors here, so we're looking at other options.



Anna, leading a few of the girls in worship

Our church owns a piece of property, and we're currently working on plans to build a garden (or yard) in which we'll be able to have some outdoor meetings. In the meantime, we're starting to get together in small groups for outdoor meetings at our home and soon at the homes of others in our congregation.

We're in the process of transitioning into a type of "microchurch" model, in which the teaching will continue to be centralized, but delivered via video simultaneously to the different groups meeting in different locations. In this way, online church will continue, but we'll also be able to get several families together in a safe way. We're excited to see what God will do in these meetings. I truly believe that He is about to pour out His Spirit in new and fresh ways!



Daniel and Elisa, at their graduation.

Our daughter Anna has continued to lead a group of adolescent girls. The hunger that they have for the presence of God has been awesome! They've been meeting online throughout the year, but just recently they also began meeting in person outside on our property. Anna teaches a simple Bible lesson and leads them in worship. At these gatherings we've seen the girls break down in tears as they worship the Lord together. The Holy Spirit is doing some really deep things in the hearts of some of them.

Our Wednesday meetings (online via Zoom) also continue to flourish. I have been developing all of the teaching material in the form of Bible themes based on questions for discussion. Our Connect Group leaders direct the discussions and then pray and minister to the people in their group. It has been so awesome to see how the Spirit of God touches people during these Zoom sessions. The Holy Spirit isn't limited by distance or technology!

Our Family

On May 15, Daniel and Elisa graduated from Portland Bible College. The next Thursday, May 20, we were privileged to attend Daniel and Elisa's wedding. We now have a married son and a new daughter! We are very happy for both of them, and feel blessed to receive Elisa into our family. Elisa spent a good share of her childhood and teen years in Japan as the daughter of a missionary family, and Daniel was born and grew up in Mexico. Even though they are from different places and experiences, both had a very "American" upbringing (including VeggieTales).

For the moment, they plan to continue to live in Vancouver, Washington, and work with Portland Bible College, as well as continue to serve in their local church.



Thanks!

Thanks for being on our team. Your prayers and financial support make our work possible. We are thankful that you have continued to stand with us throughout the COVID storm!

Do you know someone who might be interested in what we do? Please go ahead and share this message with them. You may do this by:

- Forwarding our email communications to your contacts who may be interested in what we are doing.
- Personally telling others about us and asking them to contact us: dsm@desert-streams.org.
- Sharing this letter on your Facebook page or via Twitter. You can use the share buttons directly on our webpage.

Blessings!

David and Sara Lont and family

You can see our newsletters any time online:
www.desert-streams.org

P.S. - Supporting our ministry is easy and gifts are tax deductible:
1) ONLINE: www.WorldOutreach.org/36 and follow the prompts. You can also set-up automatic monthly gifts if you select the "monthly" option. 2) BY MAIL: checks to World Outreach Ministries, PO Box B, Marietta, GA 30061 and indicate for David and Sara Lont WOM #36. 3) BILL PAY: which you can do through your online banking.



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Ministries**

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