

Dear Praying Friends, Jan. 25, 2025

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season! Since our last letter, much has been accomplished for the Lord in and through both churches. Fellowship events have drawn us closer together, and we've seen some who had been attending Desert Streams for a while begin to get more involved. When I first became pastor, one person told me, "I'm just here for the service." This reflected a lack of commitment to engage fully with the church. However, I've seen this person grow in their desire to connect and now they want to join as a member! Our door-to-door efforts in Adelanto have borne much fruit, while in Phelan and Pinon Hills, response has been slower. Still, Shepherd's Call Baptist Church continues to serve as a place of sweet fellowship for the faithful few who attend.

In October, we participated in the annual *Phelan Family Phun Days*. We set up a booth with Hot Wheels tracks to promote our Hot Wheels-themed kids' event and handed out several thousand invitations and Gospel tracts. On Halloween, we joined the *Trunk or Treat* event at the local grocery store, distributing another couple thousand invitations and tracts. These events provide some of our best outreach opportunities in Phelan.

Our kids' event took place on November 16, strategically planned after these big outreach days. Unfortunately, it ended up being one of our lowest turnouts. Many had registered, but I believe illness circulating at the time played a significant role. Nevertheless, we were blessed with a few visitors, and the kids who attended responded well to the messages. In our last letter, I mentioned a couple who had gone through a difficult situation. Though they are still battling some challenges, God worked it all together for good as they surrendered their lives to Christ! They are now preparing for baptism. Just before Christmas, we had another family visit, one I had met during our door-to-door efforts. The mother, her son, and her niece have also expressed a desire to be baptized. Additionally, several months ago, our son Noah made a profession of faith while listening to *Adventures in Odyssey* and now wants to be baptized alongside his brothers. We're looking forward to a big baptism day soon!

This season, we've seen God work through both successes and failures. While Josue has not returned, another teenager began attending our church as part of her community service requirement. She's even brought her cousins with her, giving these kids the opportunity to hear the Gospel and experience a loving church family. We also praise the Lord that the much-needed roofing job was completed after months of back and forth with the insurance company. Desert Streams Baptist Church is blessed to own property debt-free, but owning property in California (even as a tax-exempt organization) is challenging. There are many financial burdens that make it difficult to stay ahead and complete necessary projects, especially in our more economically disadvantaged area. Please pray for financial stability as we work to cut costs and recover funds from the sale of some assets. At Shepherd's Call Baptist Church, many of the visitors we see are homeless or transient. Please pray that we have a positive and lasting impact on those who cross our path. Recently, we experienced our highest attendance in a very long time, which was such an encouragement!

Your love and prayers continue to be an essential part of our ministry.

## In His Service,

Stephen, Charity, Judson (10), Samuel (8), Noah (7), and Valiana (5) Jenney