

Hey everyone, I hope you are all doing well! Here is a bit of a meatier update explaining what I have been doing since the beginning of 2025. Enjoy!

# **DTS**

The 2025 Discipleship Training School (DTS) has begun!! We are two months into the school, and so much has happened already. I have been so excited to serve with another school and walk alongside a new set of students. This year, we have seven students from all over the world. Each one represents their own culture and brings so much to the table. I am really excited to grow with these students and see what God has in store for us as the school unfolds. We have been including the students in many of the local outreaches that we normally do, such as prayer stations, city reach, and neighborhood clean up. We are also running two DTSs at the same time this year: the Snowboard and Ski School (SDTS) and the Kingdom Justice School (KJDTS). The snowboard and ski school goes up to the mountain every week on Wednesday and Thursday nights. We aim to be lights up on the hill as the mountain culture is very dark with prevalent drug use, promiscuity, and thrill-seeking. This party culture leads to many people being incredibly lost and lonely, resulting in a high rate of suicide among young people who identify with the mountain lifestyle. So we go up intending to break these cultural barriers and bring the joy and love of Christ to the people who need it the most. The Kingdom Justice School teaches the students about major world injustices and what the Christian response should be. They spend a lot of time working with Mercy Ministries throughout the city of Vancouver and get hands-on experience, exposing them to many ways of contributing to the betterment of their environment. Both schools sit in on lectures together throughout the week, learning from a new speaker about a different topic each week. The topics of each week are: Bible Overview, Hearing God's Voice, Character and Nature of God, Missions, The Life of Jesus, Discipleship, Spiritual Warfare, Fear of the Lord, Worship, Relationships, and the Fatherheart of God.

# SFC/Salem Adventure

We had the privilege of attending a Snowboarders For Christ (SFC) conference in Oregon earlier this month. It was an incredible opportunity to see how other enthusiastic riders spread the love of Christ

in the mountains. We got to ride and do ministry on Mt. Hood, the mountain I learned how to shred on! So, it was an incredible time for me to show my people my old stomping ground, give them a tour of all the best runs, and hand out PB&Js to the locals. During the weekend, several sessions were led by a Seattle pastor, Jeff Vandersteldt. He spoke on the importance of recognizing our emotions and equipped us with a lot of vocabulary to be able to articulate our feelings well. It was unexpectedly helpful, and since then, we have often found ourselves practicing what he taught us. While the SDTS was at the conference, the KJDTS joined forces with the YWAM team in Portland and participated in some local outreaches throughout the city. At the end of the weekend, both the SDTS and KJDTS joined back together for a week of lectures at the YWAM base in Salem. Joining another base's DTS was a unique and fun experience. As far as I know, it is not common for two bases to share a week of teaching. But it worked so well! The students were able to see the diversity of YWAM and witness the way other bases run their schools. And us staff could spend time with old friends and get to know new ones, exchanging stories about what God is doing on our bases.

# Outreach

We will be going back to Japan for this year's outreach! We are still working to finalize the locations we will be partnering with and the ministries we will be participating in. However, our focus this year is on the North Island of Hokkaido and the cities of Japan. We are all incredibly excited, as you can probably imagine, to have the opportunity to serve the people of Japan once again. I look forward to telling you more about it!



SDTS Staff (Me, Josh, & Emily)

in Salem



The whole school during missions week with Don & Char





SDTS Team



Cleaning up the streets with the students



Prayer Stations!

Family night



#### **Fundraising Update**

I am aiming to raise \$2000 USD for this upcoming outreach. That money will go towards plane tickets, food, housing, and other transportation costs during my time in Japan.

In 2024, you helped me to raise over 10000 USD! That money has gone towards rent, ministry expenses, travel costs, and the general price of life. I am so grateful to every one of you who has decided to partner with me on this mission. If you are not currently financially supporting me but would like to join the team, send me an email, and I can show you some ways to give, or click the link <u>here</u> to be taken to the support page on my website.

# **Prayer Points**

- Please pray for provision and a growing support team to keep me in missions as I plan to stay long-term with YWAM Vancouver.
- Please pray for each of the students that they would encounter the Lord in transformative ways. Their names are Benjamin, Noel, Caroline, Marrin, Tabea, Lydia, and Jelena.
- Please be praying for this upcoming outreach to Japan; that we will be going with the Lord and attentive to His leading.

# Thank You!

Thank you so much for reading my newsletter. I am blessed to have you on my team. Thank you for the prayers, and if you would like to know more about what I am doing or just chat, please reach out!

God bless you,

Ezekiel Smith.

Email: <u>Ezekielbairdsmith@gmail.com</u> Website: <u>WWW.smithezekiel.com</u>

