



# The Desert Foundation

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*Advent 2024*

**Dear Friends,**

On behalf of the Board of Directors, **thank you** for your engagement and your support of the Desert Foundation. Since Tessa and Fr. Dave founded this circle of friends in the summer of 2005, we watched with wonder as they made the transition from a monastic community to an even simpler hermit life, first in the wilderness of Crestone, Colorado, and now as “urban hermits” in Tucson.

## *A Strong Finish*

In the last two decades, they have explored and shared the wisdom of the desert with all of us—the physical desert, the inner desert of loss, grief and injustice, and offered stories of hope through the interspiritual “Tent of Meeting” they created. In October, Tessa, now 80 years-old, was honored by Naropa University as its World Wisdom Teacher-in-Residence. She mentored young students, dialogued with Dr. Judith Simmer-Brown about the historic Buddhist-Christian dialogues of the 1980s, and taught on the seasons of our souls and an “earthy mysticism.”

Two years ago, Tessa and Fr. Dave told us that they wanted to “finish strong” in their elder years. They launched two new web sites, created monthly “Seasons” and “Desert Tracks” newsletters, and produced the *Fire and Light* podcast. And they continue to unfold the stories of their lives in the memoirs they are writing.

## *A Shortfall*

The Board has never had to write a letter like this before. But for the first time in our history, the Desert Foundation began to run out of money. Over the summer, Fr. Dave and Tessa took a twenty percent cut in their already modest monthly stipend in order to pay current Desert Foundation bills. Just in time, a generous benefactor came to our rescue for the final months of this year.

**But we still need your help** to keep going into our 20th anniversary year!

If you have donated in the past, **thank you**. Please consider renewing your gift or even increasing it. If you have never donated, we humbly ask you to do so now.

## *A Joyful Vision*

As members of the Desert Foundation's Board of Directors, we want Tessa and Fr. Dave to continue to serve as our executive directors, to continue living the monastic life, and be spared financial hardships in their final years after so many years of generous service to the world. Every member of the Board has donated in support of this effort.

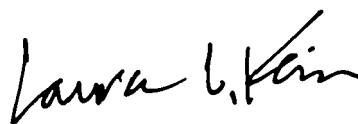
Tessa's and Fr. Dave's voices are important because contemplative life is a perennial value. It embodies and transmits the fullness of life and love that bring us hope amid bitterness and violence, prejudice and competing "supremacies."

Would you please send a donation to the Desert Foundation as an investment in a small but contagiously joyful vision of harmony between this good earth, human wisdom, and divine love?

Wishing you a season of joy,



Dennis W. Brown, President



Laura L. Keim



David Levin



Netanel Miles-Yépez



Paul Baynham



Pegge Erkeneff