



PROCLAIMING **Jesus** PASSIONATELY

LUKE 4:18



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT RON AGUILERA

FYI (For Your Information...)

*A weekly e-newsletter for employees and friends of the
Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists*

April 7, 2021



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the
mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and
foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.” Psalm 46:1-3*



Seventh-day Adventist[®] Church

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE

*Making healthy
disciple-making
churches*

Have you ever been caught in an unexpected downpour of rain? It has happened to me several times, but the worst is still drenched in my mind. Years ago, I was living in Orlando, Florida, and I was playing golf. I was on the hole farthest away from the clubhouse when all of a sudden, dark clouds rolled in, and then, suddenly, Florida-style, it started to rain and rain hard. It was pouring...it literally felt like someone was pouring water out of a bucket on top of me. And then, came the thunder and lightning! I remember my friend and I started running for cover towards the clubhouse, toward shelter. When I finally got to the clubhouse, I was so wet my bag and shoes were ruined (I had just gotten a new pair of waterproof shoes), but I did not care. I was just happy to be in from the storm. I had this sense of relief. I/we had found refuge, a place of protection and security. And even though every inch of our bodies was thoroughly soaked, we were safe.

Right now, the world might feel like we are caught in an unexpected thunderstorm. Maybe you feel exposed, vulnerable, unsure if you are truly safe. Most of us have never faced the reality of the last year of COVID, this invisible virus that could be lurking around any corner. Everyday life activities that once seemed mundane, like running errands or going out to eat, now might make us feel anxious and insecure.

Today, I want to remind you that Psalm 46:1-3 tells us we have hope in Jesus as our refuge, a place we can RUN TO for protection from life's unexpected and stormy moments. Later in the psalm, the psalmist

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describes Jesus as a fortress, indicating that Jesus is strong enough to protect us from the strongest of our enemies. And, His presence is not only strong but safe and comforting. Jesus is a refuge that can never be moved.

As we live in these uncertain times, let us fix our eyes on where our truest safety is found; our refuge, Jesus Christ. Psalm 46 reminds us that when we feel unsafe, scared, or unprotected, we can RUN TO Jesus and rest in the presence of His perfect protection. We can take refuge in His Word. We can ask Him to be our shelter in prayer, and we can remind ourselves, as well as our family, that God is the best place to find our sense of peace and security.

Psalm 46 ends with a charge, “Be still, and know that I am God.” What a comfort! Taking refuge in God, our fortress means we can rest, be still, and know that He is God.

I KNOW SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT. . .

. . . Mindy Salyers. In the Fall of 2020, the Illinois Conference initiated a Conference-wide school counselor project to help our students with mental health issues. I am very thankful for the service Mindy is providing for the children in our Illinois Conference schools.

NEWS

☞ As you may have heard or read, Shona Cross, administrative assistant for the President and Executive Secretary of the Illinois Conference, will be moving, and the Conference is accepting resumes to fill that position as early as the beginning of May. If interested, please contact the Conference HR Director, Deb Perez, at dperez@ilcsda.org.

☞ We are less than a week away from the Illinois Conference Proclamation Series. It will take place from April 11-17. The theme? “The Greatest Story.” We will be looking at stories of Jesus in the gospel narrative to address common questions and struggles while offering the gospel hope Jesus provides. Each presentation will begin at 7:00 each evening. We will have a Sabbath program on April 17th. Here are the general themes and speakers below:

April 11 (7:00 PM) - Hope and Healing, Pastor David Oceguela, Bolingbrook Church
April 12 (7:00 PM) - Love and Relationships, Pastor Gordon Fraser, Goshen Church district
April 13 (7:00 PM) – Forgiveness and Reconciliation, Pastor Jonathan Burnett, North Shore Church
April 14 (7:00 PM) - Life and Purpose, Pastor Matthew Lucio, Peoria Church
April 15 (7:00 PM) - A Different Kingdom, Pastor Jason Salyers, Hinsdale Church
April 16 (7:00 PM) - Celebration and Joy, Elder Ivan Williams, North American Division
April 17 - Ron Aguilera, President of the Illinois Conference.

Save the date and make plans to use this resource as an evangelism/proclamation event for your church.

RESOURCES

☞ “Reliving Mark” Documentary Series Free to Watch Online. “Reliving Mark” is a documentary drama filmed in Israel that examines the earliest written account of Jesus’ life, the Gospel of Mark. It is written and hosted by Dr. Carl Cosaert, professor of Biblical Studies at Walla Walla University. This six-part series carefully examines the Gospel of Mark in light of its historical context, recent archaeological discoveries, and Jewish customs and practices. For more: <https://relivingmark.com>

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☞ Quick Start Guide for Prayer Ministries. Does your church have a prayer ministry? Should your church have a prayer ministry? What is the difference between encouraging people to pray and having a prayer ministry? The answers to these questions, along with many others, are found in this book. This is an easy-to-use, complete guidebook for prayer ministry leaders to establish and grow a prayer ministry. Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/9rwbkuw>

DID YOU KNOW. . .

. . . North American Division Prayer Ministry 2021 World Prayer Convention is just around the corner? In just three days (April 9-10), plan to join at www.Facebook.com/nadadventist

“True love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. It is, on the contrary, an element calm and deep. It looks beyond mere externals and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding.”

—Ellen G. White, Adventist Home page 51



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