



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



May 15, 2019



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Ezekiel 36:24, *“For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land.”*

We live in a fragmented culture, a culture with different definitions of reality. So did the prophet Jeremiah, which helps me understand why he writes what he writes about the exile. I don't think you can understand the human condition without understanding the concept of alienation, that we're not of this place, of this world.

Literal homelessness is a tragedy, but we also experience homelessness in other ways. We are refugees, exiles, living in a home that is not our own, that is foreign to us. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel talk about the Babylonian exile, of how the people of Israel were taken to a foreign land, and how they longed to go home.

Ezekiel says, “I will gather you from your countries and bring you back to your own lands. I will give you a new heart and a new spirit.” The Bible talks a lot about returning from exile, there are a lot of prophecies about returning from exile. Israel being able to return from exile was great, but it was only an image, a look, at the promise that all people who are willing, that have been exiled, would come home. Every human being has made been made for a home that has been lost. We are all in exile, and it costs us to be exiled from home, initially from the garden of Eden. But in another garden, Jesus pleaded with his father and ultimately took the step that would allow us to leave alienation had to come home. I am thankful for what Jesus did for us on the cross. It is that loving act that allows us to leave exile and go home one day.



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE

*Making healthy
disciple-making
churches*

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VIDEO MESSAGE

I invite you to go to our Conference YouTube and watch a video message that answers the question, “Where does the title go?” <https://youtu.be/0xAewYvtSrs>

Also, once at this YouTube video, I invite you to subscribe to this channel. This is the Illinois Conference YouTube channel and we will be posting messages here that I believe you will find helpful and informative!

NEWS

☞ Pastor Tom Ferguson has accepted a call to pastor a district in Vermont, in the Northern New England Conference. We wish he and Cindy well as they transition. Their last official Sabbath will be June 1. Blessings and many thanks to both Tom and Cindy for their years of service to the Illinois Conference.

☞ **SPECIAL TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY (3rd Notice)**

I want to announce that the Illinois Conference is planning a Seven Churches of Revelation trip to visit Greece and Turkey. This trip is open to members of the Illinois Conference and their families. The highlights include: Istanbul, Turkey, the seven churches mentioned in the book of Revelation, Athens, Greece, and a three-day cruise with stops on the Greek isles of Patmos, Crete, and Santorini. (We will be on Patmos on Sabbath.)

What is included? The price includes:

Flights departing from Chicago with Turkish Airlines
Cruise for 2 nights on category IA, inside Cabin (upgrades available upon request)
Shore Excursions: Patmos, Santorini, & Crete
Double occupancy at the hotels: Hotels quoted--Conrad Istanbul, Korumar in Kusadasi, Doga Thermal Resort in Pamukkale, all about 5-Stars in Turkey
Greece: Hotel Titania-4 Stars
Breakfast and dinner daily (and Sabbath lunch is included)
All sightseeing tours on air-conditioned motor coaches
All entrance fees
Gratuities
(see Terms and Conditions for more details*)

It only excludes:

Turkey visa can be done individually online USD 20 for US citizens
Drinks, except water during meals
Travel insurance
Personal expenses
** Tourism Taxes in Greece to be paid directly at the hotel check in by guest EUR 4 per person per day.

When: March 22-April 1, 2020

Cost: \$3200 per person, double occupancy (two people to a room).

How to reserve your spot. We are working through an Adventist travel agency, Gospel Travel, so all arrangements are

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made through them. The first step is to submit the application and \$350 deposit by the date shown on the application (May 29). **We have 45 spots available.** It is first come, first serve. If you are interested, please act quickly and submit your application* and deposit to Gospel Travel.

*You can find the application form and other documentation on the home page of the Illinois Conference website, www.ilcsda.org.

RESOURCES

Vacation Bible School Safety Toolkit. Volunteers become Bible characters. Your church transforms into a live-action theatre. And, best of all, children from around the community may have their first introduction to Jesus and Christians when they come to your Vacation Bible School (VBS). It's VBS planning time! When choosing your crafts and activities, here are a few safety tools to use so you, your volunteers, and parents can have peace of mind knowing you have procedures in place to keep children safe at your VBS. Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2va2rje>

DID YOU KNOW . . .

...the church membership of the 124 churches, companies, and mission groups, of Illinois Conference at the beginning of 2019 was 13,790?

“The discourses given upon present truth are full of important matter, and if these discourses are carefully considered before being presented to the people, if they are condensed and do not cover too much ground, if the spirit of the Master goes with the utterances, no one will be left in darkness, no one will have cause to complain of being unfed. The preparation, both in preacher and hearer, has very much to do with the result.”

– Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, 175.3



Check out our Facebook page at Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter from the president's desk directly into your email please subscribe by following the link on the president's web page: www.ilcsda.org/president