



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*

March 31, 2021



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

“O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!” Psalm 39:4

If I had to summarize Psalm 39, it would be, “Life is short; make the best of it.” The older I get, the more I am confronted by the reality this is true. Although the average life expectancy continues to climb, life goes by quickly. I thought you would be interested to know what the life expectancy was in the years below:

- 1860 - 39 years
- 1900 - 48 years
- 1950 - 67 years
- 2000 - 76 years
- 2021 - 78 years

Yes, life expectancy is getting longer, but life is still relatively short compared to eternity. The psalmist, David, writes this Psalm asking God to make him aware of life’s fleeting nature, be focused on what is most important, and make the most out of every day. David wants to be reminded what the measure of his days really is. He does not want to live in the fantasy that this physical life will go on forever, unchanging. He does not want to live in denial. Rather, he wants to know every moment matters and is precious.

It is not easy to think about the end of our lives and what is next. I believe this is partly because this life is all we know. But David reflects and realizes there is something beyond. He realizes living life in the same way the wicked do is not the answer to life’s brevity. Living life in devotion to God is the answer. He realizes the only way to experience this life’s fullness is to acknowledge that it is short and live entirely sold out to Christ. Jesus said that He came to give us life, life abundant. So,



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what is the answer? As David says in verse 7, “*O Lord for what do I wait?*” The answer is immediately supplied, “*My hope is in You.*” This psalm reminds us to trust Christ, to put our faith in Him as we live this life, and no matter how long or short it may be, to pray it may be a life of abundance, remembering it is the precursor to life eternal.

So, yes, life is short, but God is good, and He is faithful. Keep your eyes on Jesus and put your trust in Him. He will see us through!

I KNOW SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT. . .

. . . Stacey DePluzer, Illinois Conference assistant youth director. Stacey has again been chosen to be the Lake Union’s Summer Camp Representative. To read more, go to: <https://www.lakeunionherald.org/archive/articles/meet-the-lake-unions-summer-camp-representative>.



COVID UPDATE

As you’ve probably heard, the State of Illinois issued a new set of COVID guidelines. They are called “A Bridge to Phase 5.” They have updated Phase 4 guidelines and provided parameters for moving into the “Bridge” column.

There are three primary metrics for moving into the Bridge:

- 70% of those aged 65 and older with both vaccines.
- 50% of the population above the age of 16 is fully vaccinated.
- No reversals of hospitalizations or deaths over a 28-day monitoring period.

When 1 or 2 is combined with 3, then we will begin to move into “The Bridge to Phase 5” guidelines.

Also, venues with a greater than 200-person capacity can now hold gatherings of 250 or 25%, whichever is less. Venues with less than 200 can hold gatherings of 50 or 50%, whichever is less. And Chicago and Suburban Cook operate under a different set of metrics and guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact John Grys, Illinois Conference Executive Secretary, for more information.

NEWS

☞ Last week, I mentioned some changes on our education team, and this week, I want to mention some upcoming changes on our office and pastoral team. At the office, Shona Cross, administrative assistant to administration, will be leaving and moving to Tennessee after 14 years of service in the office. We will miss Shona (and her husband, Gevin) and wish them well as they transition.

Pastor Villamor Meriales, the pastor of our Morton Grove and Chicago Fil-Am churches, will be leaving Illinois to pastor a church in the Arizona Conference. Pastor Amor, as he is lovingly called, has been a great asset to the Illinois Conference and will be missed.

☞ This from the youth department. . . “This past weekend, Pathfinder teams from all across Lake Union gathered to participate in the Union Level Pathfinder Bible Experience. Illinois rose to the challenge with one team, the

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Hinsdale Fil-Am Challengers, “Living Sacrifices.” After enduring an afternoon of testing over the books of Hebrews, James, 1st Peter, and 2nd Peter. The “Living Sacrifices” were rewarded for their hard work with 1st Place! We are so proud of the Challengers, and we are excited for them as they advance to the final level of testing, the Division Level PBE, on April 17th! Well done, Pathfinders!”



We are excited about our upcoming Illinois Conference Proclamation Series from April 11-17. The theme is “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 and last for one hour. We will have a Sabbath program on April 17th with a repeat of the church service at 7:00 PM. 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 - A Forever Story – Elder Ivan Williams (9:30 AM - 12:00 PM and 7:00 PM)

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

RESOURCES

Adventist Community Services Presents *Ministry Development Webinar*.
Join Adventist Community Services (ACS) for a free webinar on Thursday, April 1 at 2 PM Eastern. Participants will learn how churches and communities can partner to provide services in the community. This webinar will be presented by Marshall Gonzales, ACS Director for the Texas Conference and Southwestern Union Conference.
Sign up at: <https://www.communityservices.org/events/ministry-development-webinar/>

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DID YOU KNOW. . .

. . . on this day in history, the Eiffel Tower, or the Tour d'Eiffel, was opened on March 31, 1889, and was the work of Gustave Eiffel, who was a bridge engineer. It was made for the centenary of the French Revolution and was chosen instead of over one hundred other given plans.

“Let the mind dwell upon the great work of redemption, the soon coming of Christ, and the commandments of God; and it will be found that there is enough food for thought in these subjects to take up the entire attention.”

—Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* page 183



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