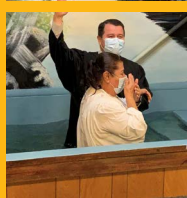




PROCLAIMING **Jesus** PASSIONATELY

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

February 3, 2021



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

“How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” Psalm 133:1

This is a very short song psalm and one of the Psalms of Ascent, songs sung by the ancient pilgrims as they journeyed to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts. Each adult male would make this journey, following what was written in Deuteronomy, *“Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses”* (Dt. 16:16).

Like many others, this psalm was written by King David and exalts and praises unity of heart and purpose. In it, David used two similes to illustrate the joy of unity: First, he compared it to oil running down the beard of Aaron, Israel’s first high priest: *“It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments”* (v. 2). Today that sounds weird, but Jewish pilgrims would have thought of Leviticus 8:12: *“And he [Moses] poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him.”* As high priest, Aaron was the intercessor between God and the Israelites, once a year offering a blood sacrifice to atone for their sins. The oil Moses used to anoint Aaron was precious, scented with myrrh, cinnamon, cane, and cassia (Ex. 30:22–24), a recipe from God, and represented God’s abundant blessing cascading down from heaven. The fact that David described it as going from Aaron’s head to his beard and garments symbolizes God’s blessings overflowing.

David’s second simile involves the dew of Mount Hermon: *“It [unity] is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion”* (Ps. 133:3). Mt. Hermon is the highest peak in Israel, rising 9,000 feet above sea level. It can be seen 120 miles away. Two-thirds of the year, it is



Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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February 3, 2021

covered with snow. But when the snow melts, the water feeds the Jordan River, which then feeds the Sea of Galilee (and runs again into the Jordan River). Because Hermon's dew descended on Zion, *"there the Lord commanded the blessing—life forevermore"* (v. 3).

Zion is the place of God's presence. It is where God wanted to meet with His people. They would come, singing this psalm, united in purpose to worship and fellowship with one another. This joyous song is still sung every Shabbat/Sabbath and is popular anywhere Jewish people are gathered, giving strength at special times. Check out a version of this beautiful psalm, sung in Hebrew, at <https://youtu.be/mKZEY5Q0Zdo>

NEWS

☞ This past Saturday, January 30th, we were blessed to host our annual Area Level Pathfinder Bible Experience. Though it was virtual, our Pathfinders came ready and prepared to demonstrate their knowledge of the Biblical books of Hebrews, James, 1st Peter, and 2nd Peter. With a total of 10 teams, over 65 Pathfinders, 20 Coaches, 7 Club Directors, and our Illinois Pathfinder Leadership Team, this event was a huge blessing. Sunday afternoon, January 31st, we held the awards ceremony and were happy to announce the advancement of 7 Illinois Conference teams to the next level of testing on February 27th. During that ceremony, one of our Pathfinders shared that "this was the proudest she has been in the last year." What a blessing it was to hear that we have young people here in Illinois, proud and excited to have the Word for God stored up in their hearts! We are so proud of all our Illinois Pathfinders!

Area Level Results

1. Brazilian Club Gideon's Army - **1st Place**
2. Elgin Explorers - **1st Place**
3. Elmhurst Sentinels Team A - **2nd Place**
4. Elmhurst Sentinels Team B - **2nd Place**
5. Fox Valley Maranatha Team 1 - **2nd Place**
6. Fox Valley Maranatha Team 2 - **1st Place**
7. Hinsdale Fil-Am Challengers "Living Sacrifices" - **1st Place**
8. Hinsdale Fil-Am Challengers "Race of Faith" - **3rd Place**
9. Maranatha Eben-Ezer - **3rd Place**
10. North Hispanic Omega - **3rd Place**



☞ OSHKOSH NO MORE! The 2024 International Camporee Executive Advisory Committee voted a change of location for the **2024 Believe the Promise Camporee** from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to Gillette, Wyoming. Also, the new date is August 5-11, 2024.

February 3, 2021

RESOURCES

- ☞ **Free Webinar: Financial Empowerment: Exiting Poverty Through Asset Building.** Adventist Community Services presents a FREE Zoom webinar discussing principles of financial empowerment and practical tools for your ministry. Learn the role of assets in household financial stability and why it's so difficult to get onto solid ground. This session is open to pastors, lay members, ACS volunteers, and anyone interested in community outreach.

DATE: Thursday, February 4, 2021 - TIME: 2:00 – 3:00 PM Eastern Time

PRESENTER: Colette Newer, Washington Conference ACS Director

Zoom Meeting ID: 926 3916 1146 - Passcode: 398244

Link: <https://nadadventist.zoom.us/j/92639161146>

Sign up at: <https://www.communityservices.org/events/>

- ☞ **Webinar--Adding Effective Images to Your Website**
Avoid the pitfalls of adding images to your church or school website. Join Adventist Church Connect for this free webinar to learn about copyright issues and image resources that will give your site a professional appearance. This webinar will be offered on Tuesday, February 9 at 4 PM Eastern and Thursday, February 18 at 8 PM Eastern. To register, go to: www.tinyurl.com/z8nk60ux

DID YOU KNOW...

... February is Black History Month? Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of "Negro History Week," the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans.

"One of the most solemn and yet most glorious truths revealed in the Bible is that of Christ's second coming to complete the great work of redemption. To God's pilgrim people, so long left to sojourn in 'the region and shadow of death,' a precious, joy-inspiring hope is given in the promise of His appearing, who is 'the resurrection and the life,' to 'bring home again His banished.' The doctrine of the second advent is the very keynote of the Sacred Scriptures"

—Ellen White, *The Great Controversy* page 299



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Illinois Conference of
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