



# ADVENTURE JOURNAL

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*Living the Adventure Ministries seeks to work for the transformation of the world through the awakening of the Church, evangelistic preaching, and Christian people putting their faith into action through mission experiences around the world.*

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## Connect to Living the Adventure Ministries

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### Protection Peace

On our last night in Guyana, we were packing our luggage in preparation for a very early departure from the pastor's home to get us to the airport. Some of the team were longing for their own bed and a normalcy to return to life. As we were preparing, a notification came to our phones announcing an eight and one-half hour delay for our departure. We had gone from an early morning flight to a mid-afternoon flight. This meant we would miss our connection in Miami and delay our return home.

There was a time in my life when the delay would have brought a level of frustration toward the airline and an unrest in my spirit. Yet, there was no unrest for me. There was a determination to rework our flights in hopes of finding a flight that would get us closer to home and maybe even get us home near the time we were scheduled. This peace within gave me a clear mind to work on the details of our flights.

In Philippians 4:7 we read, *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* I experienced the peace of God which guarded my heart and mind from the debilitating frustration that would have focused me more on the problem than on the solution. I was keenly aware of God's presence as I successfully found a flight from Miami that would get us to our destination airport without having to wait another day for a flight.

There are times in life when what we expected starts to unravel and we find ourselves dealing with frustrations and fears. We may become focused on the problem, causing us to struggle even more. Paul's encouragement reminds us of God's faithfulness to provide us peace amid the struggle. God's peace is not limited to a feeling we experience but sets up guards for our hearts and minds to protect us from the evil one at a moment when we might be susceptible to attack. The peace we experience cannot be understood or created; it is a gift of having Jesus at the center of our lives.

Are there places in your life where things seem to be unraveling? Are you experiencing the peace of God? I know this peace is true—we only need to ask and seek the Lord for His peace to be experienced in our lives.

**Prayer: Lord, the expectations and plans I have for my day sometimes unravel in front of me. Give me your peace amid the changes that my heart and mind may be protected from any attack of the evil one. Thank you for your peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

### Celebration Banquet—Join US

The Celebration Banquet is fast-approaching and I am excited to share awesome stories with you. I have traveled to Canada, Ohio, Guyana, and Oklahoma this summer. I am presently in Malawi, Africa where I will speak at a pastors' training event and will share the Christian Ashram experience with a group of leaders. God is doing amazing work in and through LTA and the United Christian Ashrams International Ministry. I am blessed to be given the opportunity to proclaim "Jesus is Lord" in so many places.

Our Celebration Banquet is Saturday, September 23 at 6pm at West Salem Trinity United Methodist Church (4212 Broadway Street, Mount Vernon, Illinois). We will gather for a delicious meal, great worship, and a presentation of God's faithfulness. We want you to join us for this celebration because you are a vital part of what God is doing. Your faithfulness to support our ministry is greatly appreciated. Please RSVP to [matt@livingtheadventure.net](mailto:matt@livingtheadventure.net) or 618-830-6670.

### You are a Blessing

I echo the Apostle Paul's words in Philippians 1:3-5, *"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."* As I travel around the world, it is encouraging to know I have brothers and sisters who are regularly praying for me. When the days seem long or the travel plans take twists and turns, I know I am not alone. Your love and support is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

## Winter/Spring 2024

The old hymn speaks deeply true words for the Church today: "Revive us again. Fill each heart with thy love. May each soul be rekindled with fire from above." There is a need for revival and renewal in our churches as we tend to become stagnate and lose our focus on Jesus. As we approach 2024, we would love to work with local churches to host revival and renewal events to seek the Lord for direction and transformation. If your local congregation would like to partner with Living the Adventure Ministries, contact me ([matt@livingtheadventure.net](mailto:matt@livingtheadventure.net) or 618-830-6670) to discuss possible ministry opportunities.

## The Gospel in Art

When Judah was about ten years old, he and I were traveling in the car together. In his normal way of interacting, he was sketching on a piece of paper. As he drew the pictures, he did not tell me about his drawing, but when we arrived at our destination, he gave me this small piece of paper with a drawing of the Tree of Life that then progressed into the burning bush. The trunk of the tree that was removed to make the bush, became the cross in his picture progression. I am not able to find the scrap of paper where he created these drawings, but I have remembered this progression for nearly eight years.

When we felt called to lead an Art Camp in Guyana after last year's trip, we started talking about what we would teach. In normal fashion, we neglected the conversation until about six weeks prior to our departure to Guyana. I shared my memory of the pictures Judah had drawn so many years ago, hoping he would remember what he did...he did not remember. As I told him about my memory of the drawings, we decided to make our lessons like those drawings. He would create a picture of the Tree of Life, the Burning Bush, and the Cross. He would be responsible to teach the Art concepts, I would oversee the Biblical teaching, and Micah and Isaiah would lead the music and games. We had a plan!

As we prepared for the first day of Art Camp, I will admit we were a little anxious as to how it would go. We prayed. We trusted. God showed up. As I taught the lessons on the first two days, I discovered four key statements that summarized the teaching and the art:

- God Created You (Genesis 1 and 2)—Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden
- God Knows Your Name (Exodus 3:4)—God speaks to Moses in the Burning Bush
- Jesus died for You (Luke 23:40-43)—The Cross
- Jesus wants to spend eternity with You (Revelation 22:2)—Tree of Life

The students and adults in attendance were presented the Truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. They were able to respond to the message and to consider the Truth of God's love for them. The feedback from the students

and the adults was wonderful. As a team we learned a lot and look forward to presenting something similar in the future.

The basic premise of the Art Camp has already been shared with leaders of a church in Canada as they plan a children's ministry event this fall. We are excited to see what God shared with us to proclaim, will be proclaimed in other places around the world. Praise the Lord!

## Family Update

Life in the Henson house has not been boring over the past couple months. On July 6, Micah celebrated his 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday. Then on July 9, we celebrated Sarafina's 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

At the end of July, Micah, Judah, and Isaiah traveled with me to Guyana, where we had a fantastic experience. Once we arrived back home, Micah and Judah only had about ten days before they were making their move to university.

On August 15, we moved Micah into his dorm at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, and Isaiah, Sarafina, and Nancy returned to school. On August 16, we moved Judah into his apartment at the University of Southern Indiana, and Nancy and I celebrated our 26<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

It is going to be an interesting first semester as Nancy and I try to remember how to cook for four people and Micah and Judah discover the new responsibilities of living away from home.

## Another Open Door

I continue to be amazed at the doors God opens for the partnership in ministry with Living the Adventure Ministries and the United Christian Ashrams International Ministry. Prior to Covid, leaders in the Argentinian Church reached out to leaders in the Christian Ashram, requesting our assistance in starting a Christian Ashram in Argentina. E. Stanley Jones had led Ashrams in Argentina in the 1960s and there was a desire to see the rhythm of the ashram in Argentina again. A former missionary to Argentina, Doug Ruffle, helped start the ashram again in Argentina. Through his work on the ashram in Argentina, he was reintroduced to leaders in the Uruguayan Church as well, and an ashram ministry began to be formed in Uruguay.

On November 8-13, I will travel with Brother Doug to Uruguay to work with Brother Adriano Frattini, the Vice-President of the Methodist Church in Uruguay. We will then travel across the river to Buenos Aires, where I will be introduced to church leaders who are forming a Board of 12 for the Christian Ashram in Argentina.

Please join me in prayer for Doug and myself as we prepare to travel in November. I believe God will use this trip to expand our ministry partnerships for LTA andUCAI.

## Upcoming Events

We are working on scheduling events for 2024. Contact us to plan an event.

August 22-Sept. 3 Malawi, Africa  
Sept. 17 West Salem Trinity UMC 150th Anniversary  
September 23 Celebration Banquet at WSTUMC  
September 24-October 12 India Trip  
October 19-22 Troy Methodist Church Mission Trip to E. Kentucky

## Prayer Team

Thank you for your ongoing support of Living the Adventure Ministries. Your prayers are much appreciated as I prepare for speaking engagements and plan for mission trips. I am grateful for each person who is part of our Prayer Team. The Prayer Team receives a weekly email with different prayer requests and information about where I am traveling. If you would like to be part of the Prayer Team, email your information to [matt@livingtheadventure.net](mailto:matt@livingtheadventure.net).