



ADVENTURE JOURNAL

NOVEMBER 2023

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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Thankful for the Rock

We recently visited Chaney's Dairy Barn near Bowling Green, Kentucky. On a tour of the farm, there was an old cistern with a fence built around it to keep people from falling into the cistern hole. The cistern had filled up with silt and eroded dirt over time, so the depth was unable to be easily determined. I considered how deep the cistern might have been when it was constructed in the 19th Century. The brick lined cistern would have been nearly impossible to climb out of without help if someone would have fallen into the pit. They would have been waiting for assistance because the lined walls did not have cracks or bricks protruding.

In Psalm 40, the Psalmist begins the Psalm stating, *"I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure"* (vv. 1-2). The Psalmist's predicament is one he is unable to overcome with his own power and ability. He is desolate, alone, and unable to overcome the miry bog. We can name the miry bog as a variety of areas in life where we become bogged down with anxiety, fear, anger, uncertainty, sin, etc. No matter the cause there are miry bogs we fall into in our lives.

The Psalmist, though, is not writing a psalm of despair, he is writing a psalm of thanksgiving whereby the emphasis is placed not on the way life used to be, but on the way life is in the present. This is a psalm of victory because the Psalmist points to the one who lifted him out of the miry bog and **set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.**

God as the One who is acting in this psalm, does not leave the Psalmist's feet near the miry bog or the pit of despair. God places the Psalmist's feet on a rock and makes his steps secure. The Psalmist has previously written, *"The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, my rock in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold"* (Psalm 18:2). When God removes the Psalmist from the miry bog, God assures the

Psalmist's life is not teetering on the precipice of the deep pit any longer. The Psalmist's feet are securely placed on the foundation of God, the rock. This is the rock that cannot be shaken. This is the rock that cannot be broken, split, or overcome. This is the rock that cannot be moved. This is the rock that protects, delivers, shields, and saves.

In this Thanksgiving season, I wonder if we should stop to remember the times in our lives where God lifted us out of the miry bog. Do we recognize the rock on which our feet stand securely in God as the one who provides the firm foundation for our lives? Or, maybe we are in the miry bog and feel as though we cannot find our way out. Are we willing to lift our hands to God, knowing God will lift us out of the miry bog and place our feet on the rock? As we continue in this season of Thanksgiving, let us give God thanks for being our rock where we can stand securely amid the struggles of life, knowing He will make our steps secure.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for lifting me out of the miry bog. I looked for ways to get myself out, but realized I was unable to save myself. Thank you for placing my feet on the rock where I can stand securely without fear of falling back into the miry bog. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Night of Prayer and Praise

The dates, locations, and times are set for the next Night of Prayer and Praise. Joyful Noise and Living the Adventure Ministries are excited to bring three nights of worship and prayer in January 2024. Join us for a Night of Prayer and Praise:

- January 21 at Christ United Church in Xenia, IL
- January 24 at Emmanuel Church in Carmi, IL
- January 28 at 1st United Methodist Church in Albion, IL

Each evening will begin at 6pm and last for about 90-minutes. The evening is filled with times of worship and prayer, inviting everyone to start the new year focused on Jesus. There is no cost for the evening. A free-will offering will be received. Everyone is invited to attend.

More of The Kingdom of God

The opportunity to return to India after being unable to travel for four years brought great excitement and expectation. This would be my first visit since I was named the Executive Director of the United Christian Ashrams International Ministry, a position I hold through a partnership with Living the Adventure Ministries. I was blessed to have a traveling companion with me. Richard Wright and I had only met a couple years ago through his local church's mission team. He had a dream and desire to travel to India, so he jumped on board with me. He offered a lot of great conversation and processing of what we were experiencing.

The trip was a great success. I was able to meet with the administrator of the Nur Manzil Psychiatric Hospital in Lucknow and the administrator of the Warne Baby Fold in Bareilly. It was a true blessing to hear how these ministries continue to meet the needs of people who are struggling in life. I covet your prayers for these ministries as they work in adverse conditions as the government is regularly questioning their use of funds.

The highlight of the trip was our time spent at the Sat Tal Christian Ashram. I was blessed to see brothers and sisters I have gotten to know during my previous trips. I was also given the opportunity to speak on five occasions, including a three-session discussion on the Kingdom of God vs. the Kingdom of Me. Each of the sessions were very well received. One of the other presenters, a college principal, stated: "The presentations on the Kingdom of God expanded my horizon and yearning for more Kingdom of God learning." We were witness to God's healing power in the life of people and testimonies of new life were shared.

Thank you for your prayers during this trip. It was a very difficult trip for my family, as Nancy and the children experienced the following in my absence: four different car issues (alternator, sudden stop, car/deer experience, and a nail in the tire); a broken finger (Sarafina); emergency appendectomy (Judah).

I will return to India in 2024 and would enjoy having you travel with me and experience the Sat Tal Christian Ashram. If you are interested in learning more, contact me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670). The dates are tentatively September 24-October 11.

Family News

Judah recently had his first choir concert at the University of Southern Indiana. We are proud of his accomplishments as he was a featured soloist and percussionist for the choir. He has two more concerts this year and they are already making plans for the Spring.

Sarafina dressed as Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* this year for Halloween. She made an adorable Dorothy and

won her age group in the costume competition at the Albion community Trunk or Treat.

Micah continues to make strides in his broadcasting career. He has been the on-air meteorologist several times for the Western Kentucky University Channel 12 news on Friday afternoon. He has also put together several story packages. We are proud of his accomplishments. If you want to check out some of his work, go to Facebook and search "WKU Newschannel12" to watch their news report at 1pm Central Time each Friday.

Thank You!

Thank you! You are such a blessing to Living the Adventure Ministries and my family. Your willingness to support our growing ministry through your prayers, encouraging notes, engagement with our publications, sharing our message, and financial contributions brings me great confidence and joy.

In the past year, we have witnessed the expansion of our ministry as we proclaimed the Kingdom of God and the adventure of following Jesus on four continents. We witnessed lives being changed through new followers of Jesus, healing, revival, and growing discipleship. We are witnessing new invitations and opportunities to partner in ministry in new countries and regions around the world. Our domestic mission ministry is seeing growth as we work with churches on growing their mission ministry, while providing mission experience opportunities.

Thank you to each person who has made this possible through your support. As we look to end 2023, we want to encourage your support for Living the Adventure Ministries. Here are three ways you can support our growing ministry.

- Your Financial Investments—I use the term investment because your contribution will have a spiritual return on your investment. Though it is not a financial return, the return is eternal.
- Your Willingness to Share the Story—Share the LTA ministry with your Sunday School, local church, family/friends, and small groups. Ask them to invest in a mission ministry that is reaching around the world.
- Your Prayers—Our most powerful resource and tool is prayer. Your prayers will make a difference.

How can you make a contribution/investment?

- Use the reply envelope provided with this letter to send a check made payable to: LTA.
- Make an online one-time or recurring gift on our website: www.livingtheadventure.net and click on "Donate Now."
- Contact our Treasurer, Brad Henson, to discuss an estate gift or a tax-free distribution from your retirement account (call or text 618-214-5510 or email: brad@livingtheadventure.net).

Upcoming Events

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

January 21 Night of Prayer and Praise—Xenia, IL
January 24 Night of Prayer and Praise—Carmi, IL
January 28 Night of Prayer and Praise—Albion, IL
Feb. 2-3 Teach Course of Study Evangelism Class
Feb. 16-19 California Winter Christian Ashram

Christmas Store Open

We are excited to share our Christmas Store is open at Herschel Johnson Implement (652 IL Route 15, Albion). The store features unique artisan gifts made in Haiti. We have a wide variety of metal art hand made from 55-gallon drums. There are hand made bracelets, earrings, and necklaces. The sale of these gifts support Haitian artisans and Living the Adventure's mission ministry. Check out some of the items on our Facebook page.