



ADVENTURE JOURNAL

JANUARY 2024

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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Words for the Year

(This devotion first appeared in the Riggings Email on January 2. If you do not receive the Riggings in your inbox each week, send your email address to Matt [matt@livingtheadventure.net] and he will add you.)

In the village of Sobier in Haiti, a person can stand at the edge of the village and look down on the greenish-blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. The beauty of the refreshing waters invites us to make the trek from the village down to the water. It is about a 1,000-foot elevation change.

This reminds me of the New Year. We stand at a precipice where we can see the past year, while looking forward to the path ahead of us, inviting us to new experiences. We do not know the experiences we will have in the New Year. Just like the path to the beautiful waters of the Caribbean, we cannot see the twists and turns, the green grass and rocky terrain, and the places where we will need a trusted companion to help us through. In the New Year, we are invited to step in faith into the unknown of a New Year with a hope and a plan.

For several years, I have left aside the forming of New Year's Resolutions. I still make plans and goals for the New Year, but I come at the planning in a different way. I choose to focus on three words for the New Year. These words often overlap and intertwine with one another where they form a foundation for my planning. In the past some of those words have been: Intentional, Fitness, Adventure, Discipline, Less, Contentment, Connect, etc. I then spend a week or so writing how I will use these words to focus my life in the New Year. Like standing at the precipice of the mountain, I look at how these words will serve to guide me through the twists and turns of the New Year when times are celebratory, and times are difficult. I also look at how these words will guide me through the level (might I say "normal") times of the year when life is traveling smoothly along.

As we approach 2024, I wonder what word or words you might use to bring intention, focus, clarity, and purpose to what you want to create in your life in 2024. How is the

Lord leading you to a word or words that will be a guide you into the New Year?

Over the next four weeks, I will share my "Words for the Year" as part of the Riggings email. I would enjoy having you share your Word(s) for the Year if this is a regimen you would undertake. You can send it to me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or text to 618-830-6670).

It is our prayer that God will bless you in the New Year.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord for 2023 and the blessings we received. There were difficult times, and we are grateful for your comfort, strength, and provisions. As we stand at the precipice of a New Year, focus our attention on you. We pray in this New Year we will grow in our relationship with you and with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Night of Prayer and Praise

Join us for a Night of Prayer and Praise at three different locations this month. The Night of Prayer and Praise is a 90-minute set apart time for praying, singing, and focusing on Jesus. As we enter an election year in the United States, there is a lot of uncertainty, misinformation, and division. We have an opportunity to leave all of this behind to join with brothers and sisters in Christ to focus on the one who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Joyful Noise and Living the Adventure Ministries look forward to seeing you at 6pm at:

Xenia Christ United Church

(102 3rd Street, Xenia, IL) on Sunday, January 21

Carmi Emmanuel Church

(203 Edgewood Ln., Carmi, IL) on Wednesday, January 24

Albion First United Methodist Church

(127 E Main Street, Albion, IL) on Sunday, January 28

There is no cost for the Night of Prayer and Praise. A free-will offering will be received. If you have any questions about the Night of Prayer and Praise, contact Matt (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Faith in Action

The Mission Ministry of Living the Adventure Ministries continues to grow and expand as God opens doors around the world. We are working on finalizing our mission trip schedule for 2024. We are in conversation and discernment about mission teams traveling to: Malawi, Kenya, India, Cuba, Guyana, and Argentina. We continue to pray for the day when we can return to Haiti to share in the ministry we started in local villages where we were working prior to the unrest and gang activity. We continue to financially support several ministry opportunities in the villages.

The very essence of God's call on this ministry was to provide opportunities for people to put their faith into action through mission experiences around the world. We believe God has opened doors in Africa, where we are invited to teach at leadership events and proclaim the Kingdom of God. When we travel to Africa in 2024, we will continue teaching, leading Christian Ashrams, administrating the Microcredit ministry we recently started, and continue conversations about clean water, education, church buildings, and ministry to all generations.

Our ministry in South America will include Christian Ashrams, leadership development, suicide prevention and mental health, and ministry to all generations. We will also be seeking to expand our ministry reach in South America as we meet with local church leaders about the needs of their communities.

Finally, the possibility of traveling to Cuba has recently been laid on my heart. We have a new contact in Cuba with whom we are in conversation. We are seeking more information about her ministry and the church where she works. We hope to decide in the next few weeks about the possibility of leading a small exploratory trip to Cuba to see how God may be calling us to a new place of ministry. We are prayerfully praying for a strong translator who is a disciple of Jesus who would travel with us.

Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to join us on one of these mission experiences or possibly serve as a financial contributor to a person who feels called to travel. If you have questions about these trips or would like more information, contact Matt (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Devotion Book

Each year, I give my dad an E. Stanley Jones devotion for Christmas. I also purchase a copy for myself. It is interesting for us to discuss what we are reading as we progress through the year. This year we are reading *How To Be a Transformed Person*. I have copies of this devotion at my office. If you would like to read this devotion in 2024, they are \$12.00 + Shipping. You can contact me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

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. 2-4 West Va. Wesleyan College Christian Ashram
Feb. 16-19 California Winter Christian Ashram

Giving Letters

We are grateful for each person, local church, and ministry who made a financial contribution to Living the Adventure Ministries in 2023. We nearly met our financial goal for the year and look forward to your support in 2024. We will be sending IRS required giving letters to each person who contributed. These letters will be mailed before the last week of January. If you made a contribution in 2023 and do not receive your letter by early February, please contact Matt (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

India Trip

When E. Stanley Jones asked Mahatma Gandhi how to bring Christianity to India, Gandhi gave him four points. One of those points challenged my thinking when I read, "Learn about other religions and study them more sympathetically to find out the good that is within them." Each year when I travel to India, I learn more about the Indian culture, Hindu religion, and ways brothers and sisters in Christ share Jesus with their family and friends.

I will be traveling again to India this year. We are finalizing the dates, but it will likely be September 24-October 12, 2024. We will visit tourism sites in Agra, Jaipur, and Delhi. We will also have opportunities to visit some of the ministry sites E. Stanley Jones started that are continuing to share Jesus with their community. Finally, we will spend one week at the Sat Tal Christian Ashram. These variety of experiences make this a discipleship and spiritual growth trip. We are working to finalize the cost for the trip. If you are interested in traveling to India, please contact Matt (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Perspective

A couple days prior to Christmas, Judah drove to Olney, a town about 25-minutes north of where we live. I happened to be outside when he returned, and I noticed smoke coming from under the hood of his car. We took a quick look and noted oil pooling on three sides of the motor. I called our mechanic, a good friend, and he told me to bring it to him. He took a quick look and thought it would require a repair costing \$500. It was news we did not want to hear prior to Christmas—but then God brought a new perspective to my attention.

- The issue did not arise while Judah was at college (about one-hour away).
- The motor did not catch fire.
- The issue was repairable.

There are times in our lives when we need to look at our present situation in a new light. When we step away from the experience and take note of God's presence with us, our eyes are turned away from the issue and they are placed back on Jesus. I give God thanks that Judah did not have to deal with the issue alone and that we were able to get it fixed prior to his return to school. God was present and I am grateful!

Haitian Art Store Open

We continue to have our Haitian Art Store 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.