



ADVENTURE JOURNAL

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Living the Adventure Ministries guides the way to a growing relationship with Jesus through mission experiences.

Connect to Living the Adventure Ministries

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Mission Expansion: Jamaica

Last year, I started conversations with the Methodist Church of the Caribbean and Americas about partnering in ministry. I was able to meet with the Bishop/President of the denomination and his assistant. We were working on my traveling to their office in early 2026 to put together a plan for shared ministry.

When Hurricane Melissa struck Jamaica in October, the partnership and plan were expedited as we started making plans for a Living the Adventure Ministries mission team to come to Jamaica. Our first team will depart on January 29 and work on the roof of the Circuit Manse so the pastor can return home to do an assessment of the needs in the circuit. We will work with the Circuit Pastor and conference leaders in doing assessments and planning for future trips.

We are not only sending teams to work but will be providing funds to pay for materials to make repairs and begin the rebuilding process. We will have more information about this partnership once we return. We are committed to future trips. We are planning more opportunities to serve in April and June. If you or someone you know is called to serve in mission and would like to travel with us to Jamaica, contact me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

India Trip

I am scheduled to return to India on May 16-June 2. We will begin the trip with tourist stops in Delhi, Jaipur, Agra, and Lucknow, before heading to the Sat Tal Christian Ashram to spend a week with the English-speaking Christian Ashram gathered together at the estate. After the ashram, we will travel to Jim Corbett National Park for a two night stay for relaxation and preparation for departure. While at Corbett National Park, we will have an opportunity to see tigers in the wild during a Jeep-safari.

The cost for the trip is based on the number of people traveling. We estimate the cost with flight will be around \$4,500 per person. If you would like more information about traveling to India, please contact me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670). We will also be traveling to India in October 2027.

Book Recommendation

A common practice in the new year is to expand our knowledge through reading, including devotions, inspirational books, and thought-provoking books. This year as part of my morning devotion discipline, I am studying E. Stanley Jones' devotion *The Word Became Flesh*. In this devotion, Jones "explains the difference between Christianity (in which God reaches toward humanity through Jesus Christ) and other faiths (in which humanity reaches toward God in various ways)." This volume invites the reader to live in a way that is the Word becoming flesh in our lives. Namely, that we are not only hearers and speakers of the Word, but that we are also hearers and doers of the Word. A copy of this book can be purchased on Amazon and is a great tool for growing in relationship with Jesus.

Mission Investment

Five years ago, Living the Adventure Ministries was blessed with an estate gift. We decided we wanted this gift to become a legacy gift that would support the ministries we started in Haiti and other places around the world. We took this initial investment and with the help of three other contributors, we started an investment account whose return on investment would support our growing mission ministry. In 2025, we were able to send \$1,500 to Haiti and \$1,000 to Malawi from this fund. With these funds, we were able to help with recovery from Hurricane Melissa's effects on Haiti. This included building supplies and food in the villages where we partner. In Malawi, we expanded our microcredit ministry and provided food in the rural villages where we partnered.

We are grateful for the blessing of this fund and look forward to making distributions from this account in 2026. If you would like to know more about this mission investment account, feel free to contact me (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Word for the Year: Intentional

It is estimated that 80% of people who made resolutions two weeks ago have already failed. By the end of the year, only 10% will succeed in reaching their resolution goal. When we look at resolutions, it seems a futile practice with little life-change and many unreached goals. The rate of failure may be tied to unrealistic goals or a lack of commitment to the process to get to the goal. We have a belief in how we would like our life to be (health, good habits, fitness, relationships, etc.), but we struggle to get there because we do not have the clear plan, determination, and intentionality.

Several years ago, I made the decision to end the practice of making a New Year's Resolution. I decided picking a word for the New Year that I could apply to my life became an annual practice. I have in the past, chosen two or three words, but after reading the book, *One Word that will change your life*, I discovered the importance of keeping the process simple. The authors write, "Instead of trying to develop more willpower, we found a simple way to live more powerfully. Instead of creating goals and resolutions, we found a single word that would be our driving force for the year" (4). So, I decided in 2026, my word would be "Intentional."

Intention is defined: "a determination to act in a certain way: Resolve." Intend is defined: "to have in mind as a purpose or goal: Plan; to design for a specified use or future; to direct the mind on." These words have a lot of similarities to a resolution, but they put the emphasis on the motivation and commitment behind the resolve. To be intentional is a measurement of the discipline to commit to certain actions and ways of living that will have a positive effect on the way my whole life is lived.

Ephesians 5:15-17 speaks to how we live our lives with intentionality when Paul writes, "*Be very careful then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.*" We also read in Colossians 3:23, "*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.*"

I have discovered over the years a tendency in me to live in the flow of life without any real intentional effort. I fall into the trap of fatalism where I become complacent and live in a "whatever happens, happens" mentality. I see the goals I want to reach but tend to miss the intentional acts necessary to move from the stream of complacency to the adventure of intentionality. Intentionality requires discipline and perseverance to see oneself through the excuses to not continue a certain practice when the practice is tough.

So, in 2026, I plan to be more intentional in the way I live my life. I no longer want to live in complacency or riding the winds and currents of the day. I want to *carpe diem*

Upcoming Events

- Jan. 23-24 Participate in Spiritual Mentee's Ordination Service (Phoenix, AZ)
- Jan. 29-Feb 6 Jamaica Mission Trip
- Feb. 13-16 California Winter Christian Ashram
- Mar. 12-14 FAS Evangelist Gathering
- Mar. 20-21 Xenia Christ United Revival
- Mar. 22-25 Carrier Mills Methodist Church Revival

("seize the day"), surrendering my life each day to live intentionally following Jesus. I will follow an intentional schedule. Intentionally study, pray and journal each day. Intentionally be present with family and friends. Intentionally write to encourage, challenge, and educate others. I will make the most of every opportunity of every day.

How will you live intentionally in the new year? Do you find yourself at times falling into the stream of complacency that easily leads to apathetic and undisciplined living? Over the next couple weeks, I will share more specifically about how the Lord is calling me to live intentionally in the new year.

Prayer: Lord, it is easy in the craziness of the world to fall into complacency. I want to live intentionally following you. Keep my eyes fixed on your leadership and give me strength when I am tempted to fall back into that complacency. I love you, Lord. Amen.

Giving Statements

We are grateful for each person who financially supported the ministry in 2025. We can continue to follow the Lord's leadership to be in ministry in the United States and around the world. As a non-profit ministry, we are required each year to send Giving Statements noting your financial contributions. These letters will be sent at the end of January. If you contributed in 2025 and do not receive a letter, please contact me

(matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Family Update

Judah has been part of the University of Southern Indiana Chancel Choir since his Freshman year at USI. Each year he has participated in the Madrigal Feaste in December. This year he was honored to be selected as one of the Jesters for the Royal Court and he was the lead percussionist for several songs. He also had the opportunity for a solo. During the semester, he was the percussionist for the Jazz Band and for the Irish Band.

Judah also had a pottery piece selected for the Fall Art Show at USI. It was an honor to be with him as people viewed the piece and made positive comments.

We are grateful for the artistic gifts God has given to Judah and his use of those gifts to entertain and to inspire.

ACH

Living the Adventure Ministries has a new way for people to come on board as regular financial contributors to our ministry. We can work with your local bank for your regular contribution to be drawn straight from your account to Living the Adventure Ministries. If you would like to know more about ACH and how to become a regular financial investor in LTA, contact Matt (matt@livingtheadventure.net or 618-830-6670).

Haitian Art

We have new Haitian Art for sale including pottery and metal bowls. These items can be purchased at our office (652 Illinois Route 15, Albion, IL) during normal business hours. Or, you can contact Matt to set up a time to shop (618-830-6670).

Each purchase supports our ongoing mission work in Haiti and around the world.