



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



January 2, 2020



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Happy New Year! 2020 is here! As we enter into a new year, I want to suggest we have three things, three T's, we can offer God—our Treasure, our Talent, and our Time. God gives each of these to us, and we should give each of them back in generous portions.

First, there is our treasure. I urge you to commit yourself to give faithfully and generously to the Lord in 2020. Jesus said, *“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also”* (Matthew 6:21 NKJV). Whenever we put our money into something, we develop a vested interest in it. It makes sense to us that we would place our treasures where our hearts are. If we love reading books, or being entertained, or the latest technology, we spend our treasure on those things. And if our heart's desires change, that changes where we put our treasure. But it works the other way too: Where we put our treasures, our heart will follow. Do you want your heart to be in the things of God? Then put your treasures in the things of God! Develop a vested interest in God's kingdom.

The second thing we can give to God is our talent. God has given each believer different talents, spiritual gifts. That way, everyone has something to offer for the work of the kingdom. Romans 12 says, *“Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of his one body, and each of us different work to do”* (NLT). I invite you to consider what gifts God has given you and how you can best invest those in God's work.

The third thing is our time. Let's say that one day your phone rings, and it was the president of the bank that you use. He told you that an anonymous donor who loved you very much had decided to deposit 86,400 pennies into your bank account every morning. At first, maybe that didn't seem like a



Seventh-day
Adventist Church

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*Making healthy
disciple-making
churches*

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lot. But then you figured out that it was \$864 a day. At seven days a week and 52 weeks a year, those pennies add up to almost \$315,000 each year! But the bank president added one thing: “The anonymous giver said you must spend all of the money on the day you receive it! No balance will be carried over to the next day. Each evening the bank must cancel whatever sum you failed to use! Remember, what you don’t spend is lost.”

That may sound like fantasy, but here is the reality: Every morning, someone who loves you very much deposits into your “bank of time” 86,400 seconds, which represents 1,440 minutes, which of course, equals 24 hours every day. God gives you that much to use each day. Nothing is ever carried over on credit to the next day. There is no such thing as a 27-hour day. It’s called time, and you can’t escape it. Time is ticking away right now. The Bible tells us to “redeem the time”—to make sacred and wise use of every opportunity.

I have a challenge for you in 2020. Use your treasure, your talent, and your time for God and His work. Live this next year as if it were your last because it could be.

ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be no FYI for the next two weeks. The next FYI will come out on January 22nd. I will be out of the country from January 8-19 traveling with the Lake Union leaders to Israel and Jordan.

ADVENTIST GIVING

This on-line system allows you to return your tithe and give your offerings online while you do your online banking, are on an extended business trip, on vacation, or even if you are unable to attend church due to illness. But most important of all, if you desire to give back to the Lord of all your firstfruits as soon as you have them, you can do it immediately through AdventistGiving. (You can get more information from your pastor or the Illinois Conference treasury department.)

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE THEME

This year, 2020, the theme for the Illinois Conference is **Knowing Jesus Intimately**. I want to invite you and your church to focus on ways you can get to know Jesus more intimately. Below are some ways your church can lead the way:

1. Days of Prayer and Fasting for 2020 – January 4, April 4, July 4, and October 3. You can download program materials and other resources at: www.revivalandreformation.org
2. Faithfulness in giving is another way to connect with God more intimately. You and your church can watch weekly videos, new stories that inspire us to put God first in our lives. See more at: <https://stewardship.adventist.org/videos>
3. Decide to read God’s Word a minimum of 15 minutes a day. If you are not sure where to start, I would suggest starting with the Gospels in the order they were written: Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John.

My prayer is God will help each one of us grow in our relationship with Jesus in 2020.

NEWS

- ☞ Illinois Conference Pastors meetings are being held at Camp Akita next week from Sunday to Wednesday. The theme? *Culture Focused Discipleship*. The presentations will include: “The Culture of Local Church Leadership,” “Jesus’ Response to Culture,” “Navigating Secular Culture,” “The Diversity of Adventist Cultures,” “Embracing the Media Culture,” and “The Culture of Your Community.” I want to invite you to pray for your pastor and his family each day in 2020.
- ☞ Keith A. Parrott has been named President and CEO of AMITA Health. He will begin his duties on January 13, 2020.

RESOURCES

- ☞ Countless churches are about to embark on an exciting evangelistic event. How about you? Check out Revelation 2020 at <https://rev2020.com/journey/>
- ☞ Discipleship is our mission here in the Illinois Conference. I invite you to revive Sabbath School as a discipleship center, to incorporate three vital components of thriving Sabbath Schools: Bible Study and Prayer, Fellowship, and Mission. Check out <http://alive.adventist.org> for more.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

. . . the North American Division is starting the year with 10 Days of Prayer? I invite you to participate, individually, or as a church. For more information, go to: www.tendaysofprayer.org

“The reality is, my prayer does not change God. But I am convinced prayer changes me. Praying boldly boots me out of that stale place of religious habit into authentic connection with God Himself.”



Check out our Facebook page at Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter from the president’s desk directly into your email please subscribe by following the link on the president’s web page: www.ilcsda.org/president