

FYI.

FROM ILLINOIS CONFERENCE
PRESIDENT, RON AGUILERA



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

"Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:8

This past Monday was Valentine's Day. When I think of Valentine's Day, I think about the day couples show their love to one another. It also is a reminder of God's unmatched love for us, His children. But how about those who are single? For them, Valentine's Day can be a bitter reminder of their singleness and desire for a relationship. Luckily, God doesn't leave anyone, single or in a relationship, out of His unending love and grace.

In 1 John 4:8, the author says, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." God is the definition of love. We wouldn't have any idea of what "love" is if it weren't for God. God further defines love in the classic 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 passage that reads, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

God describes love in this way, and then tells us that He is love. This further emphasizes that God Himself is all these things. God is patient and kind. He keeps no record of wrongs. He always protects, always trusts, always hopes and always perseveres. God's love is a perfect love that no one on earth could ever emulate. We often read this 1 Corinthians passage near Valentine's Day, or at weddings, to remind us what love should look like, but God is the perfect demonstration of it. John 3:16 puts it this way, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." He gave up His only son for us. He gave us eternal life because of His great and unmatched love for each of us. C.S. Lewis once said, "He died not for men, but for each man. If each man had been the only man made, He would have done no less."

This week, I want to remind you God loves you very much. If you were the only one on earth, He still would have sent His son for you. So, no matter what happens, remember to set your sights not on earthy relationships, but on the God above who loves far more fully and abundantly than we could ever imagine.

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NEWS

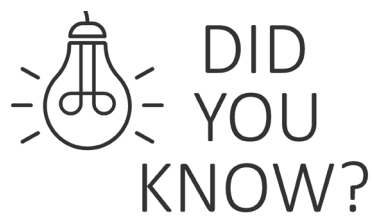
Personnel Update

Rockford church pastor, Leonardo Oliveira, has accepted a call to pastor in the Florida Conference. We wish him, and his family, well as they transition to their new assignment as associate pastor of the East Pasco SDA church, and as he works with senior pastor, Ray Pichette.



The Great Adventure

We are planning now to have Camp Akita open this summer. Plan now to attend Summer Camp 2022, "The Great Adventure". Look for more information on our website soon. In the meantime, the youth department is looking for young people, 18 and older, to join our Summer Camp team. Visit campakita.com/apply to submit your application today or contact our Youth Department via phone (630) 716-3555 or email youthdept@ilcsda.org



Did you know, 145 million Valentine's Day cards are exchanged every February 14?

This is according to Hallmark and that's not even including all those kids' valentines exchanged in classrooms! This makes Valentine's Day the second biggest holiday for exchanging greeting cards, after Christmas.

RESOURCES

Oakwood University to Launch 4-Part Series on Black History

Join Dr. Leslie Pollard, Oakwood University president, for a Black History Month series on Fridays in February at 8:30 PM Eastern. "Windows on the Word" is designed to highlight contributions to the Adventist mission and faith worldwide. This series will follow along with the Social Justice in the Word of God study guide, available in print or PDF formats. This series will be livestreamed and available to watch later on YouTube. Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/c/oakwooduniversity>

Get Ready for Safety Sabbath 2022

This year Safety Sabbath is dedicated to disability awareness and inclusive emergency preparedness. Learn useful tools for better identifying, communicating with, and safeguarding persons with disabilities if and when emergencies unfold. Take this opportunity on Sabbath, March 24 to ensure your church is prepared to assist everyone who participates in your church's ministries. For more, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/52keb256>

RESTORED Virtual Mental Health Summit

Did you know that 1 in 5 adults in the US experiences mental illness? The pandemic has unearthed mental health needs that have been simmering for many years. Mental health professionals and lay members have their roles in meeting this need. Join NAD Health Ministries for RESTORED, a virtual mental health & wellness summit from March 31-April 3. For more, go to: <https://nadhealth.org/restored/>



God has bound our hearts to Him by unnumbered tokens in heaven and in earth. Through the things of nature, and the deepest and tenderest earthly ties that human hearts can know, He has sought to reveal Himself to us. Yet these but imperfectly represent His love.

- Ellen G. White
Steps to Christ, pg. 10



GALLERY

