



ILLINOIS Focus



John Grys, Executive Secretary



REGARDLESS

A recent article in the Chicago Tribune shared an interview with the groundskeeper for the Chicago White Sox. He has served in that capacity for 56 years. Wow! 56 years! That is a long time. Referring to the spring of '22, he is quoted as saying, "Never seen anything like this. It's horrible...The weather pattern is brutal. It's as bad as I've ever seen it."

Three parts of this story jump out at me. First, a 56-year commitment to a task tied to a mission. That is a serious commitment. Rain, snow, sleet, whatever will come, this man has dedicated his life to do his part to make the experience for players and fans exceptional (as a lifelong Cubs fan, I will refrain from any comments at this time).

Second, his commitment level leans into one particular focus—making the field both playable and pleasing to those who watch. This cannot be underscored enough. One small pebble could make the difference between a World Series or bust. Game in, game out every one of the 81 home games (not counting playoffs) depends on a field that people paid millions of dollars can count on when attempting to field a ground ball.

Third, the nastiness of conditions. For those around the state of Illinois, we have experienced a spring unlike any in recent memory. The groundskeeper identifies one in specific: "there is just no sunshine. There are 17 positive ultraviolet rays that come from sunshine that affect plant growth and we haven't been getting any of them." I am sure there are different experiences of sunshine in different parts of the state. But for those in the Chicago area, according to the groundskeeper, this is a sunless spring.

sullen submission: "a sullen submission to the will of the father will develop the character of a rebel." (That I May Know Him, p. 120)

Rather, it can be the joy set before us. A joyful pursuit of mission leads to a faithful endurance. Sunless springs can rain on our commitment levels. The circumstances of ministry and life may distract us from mission. Jesus on this earth encountered many possible

Volume 9, Issue 3 - June/July 2022

ISSUE FOCUS

LEADERSHIP

All of this (writing this while another rainstorm sweeps outside my window) brought to my mind a familiar verse highlighting conditions and mission: "for the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:3) Crucial word right now: "endured." Pursuing mission requires endurance during these days—regardless. Following Jesus faithfully requires endurance—regardless. Mission. Focus. Endurance. Significant to the journey of leading remains this one simple word: "endure;" and it cannot be an enduring that produces a

distractions. What attracts me to Him, on this particular front, stands both the strength of His commitment (even when exhausted) and His willing endurance. Regardless.

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LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM JESUS

Pete Braman
Ministerial Director



In the words of Ken Blanchard: “the key to successful leadership is influence, not authority.” In essence, leadership is the process of influencing another person or group. No one exhibited greater influence as a leader than Jesus Christ. While we can glean insights, principles, and examples from a plethora of books, articles, and videos, the life of Jesus is without question our best leadership example. What are some of Jesus most effective leadership strategies?

Jesus knew that the key to His influence was His connection with His Father. Before His active ministry began, He was willingly led into the wilderness to learn total dependency and trust with His Father. Jesus knew that His leadership impact or “fruit” came through intimacy with His source of wisdom. As Jesus shared the parable of the vine and the branches with His disciples in John 15, the word “abide” or “remain” appears 12 times as a point of great emphasis. As leaders, we are told emphatically to “trust the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5-6). The greatest gift a leader can give another person is his/her time spent with Jesus.

Servant leadership is an over-arching theme of Jesus’ leadership style and practice. Serving others was a demonstrated priority of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus touched lepers, rescued prostitutes, and washed the soiled feet of His disciples. As His disciples argued for positional leadership in their misunderstanding of God’s kingdom, Jesus was quick to respond with “not so with you.” As His disciples and followers, Jesus mandates us not to “lord it over others” (Matthew 20:24-28). Servant leadership is best expressed not by how much we know, but how well we love. Jesus’ life always focused on the best interests of others. Far too many leaders succumb to the paralyzing effects of pride, control, and fear to exert authority over others. Servant leadership builds trust, collaboration, and empowerment. The most common question Jesus asked in the gospels is “What do you want me to do for you?” This question captures the eagerness of Jesus to serve.

Jesus asked over 300 questions recorded in scriptures. He was asked over 180 questions and only directly answered 3 of them. He would commonly respond to a question with a question, parable, or silence for questions that needed to be ignored. Jesus’ use of questions gives some key insights into His leadership strategy. Asking good questions challenges the leader to listen to the heart of the individual, does not overwhelm people with answers, and invites people to discover and explore for themselves important truths about God or the issues at hand. Listening well actually gains greater influence and strengthens relationships.

Beyond intimacy with His Father, Jesus’ greatest pursuit was demonstrating the character of God through loving relationships. Jesus largely avoided political or theological debates and spent the majority of his 3 plus years of ministry investing in His disciples. Despite their trail of blunders, prideful ways, and misguided values, Jesus believed in their potential. Jesus accepted them, encouraged them, mentored them, lovingly corrected them, and empowered them. As a result, the disciples slowly learned to trust in their Savior. Trust is the cornerstone for positive influence in the home, church, or workplace. Relational leadership is essential to building trust.

Finally, everything Jesus did flowed from His core values. Jesus lived His life with vision and purpose. Jesus’ ultimate purpose was to be our sacrifice and salvation. To elaborate His core values, Jesus shared several “I have come” statements such as: “For the Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10), “For I have come that they may have life...and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10), “Do not think I came to destroy the lawbut to fulfill” (Matthew 5:17). As Christ followers, leaders, and disciple-makers we should inspire these same core values in others by our own example.

LIDER, PERO FELIZ

Pastor Miguel Ramos



Algunos consideran que ser un líder es sinónimo de sufrimiento, dolor, y tristeza, pero considero que hay una manera de ser líder y ser feliz.

El liderazgo dentro y fuera de la iglesia, debería ser una experiencia feliz, aunque no siempre ha sido así. Las dificultades en el liderazgo, pueden robarnos la alegría de ser líderes y lo que es peor, nos puede robar la alegría de la salvación.

El rey David, cometió errores que le arrebataron esa alegría y el gozo de ser un líder. En medio de su tristeza clamó: “vuélveme el gozo de la salvación” Salmo 51:12 RVR1960. Diferentes versiones de la Biblia lo traducen: “restitúyeme el gozo”, “hazme sentir de nuevo el gozo” y “restaura la alegría”. Es un deseo profundo de ser un líder feliz.

He visto a muchos líderes amargados, tristes, desilusionados, y apunto de rendirse, o que se han rendido. Gracias a Dios, muchos de estos han recuperado el gozo del liderazgo y la alegría de la salvación, aunque algunos a un costo muy elevado.

Sé que se puede ser líder y también ser feliz. Jesús dijo (Mateo. 5) que un líder feliz será aquel que reconoce su pobreza espiritual y siente la necesidad de ser redimido de sus pecados.

Es el que está convencido de su propia debilidad y se entrega al dominio de Dios. No es orgulloso ni pretende ser rico o no necesitar nada espiritualmente.

Un líder feliz, es quien al humillarse ante Dios reconociendo que sus errores lastiman a Jesús, recibe consuelo, perdón y poder para vencer sus defectos, por la gracia de Cristo.

Un líder feliz es aquel que cuando lo desprecian, rechazan, hacen algo que le molesta, o cometen una crueldad contra el, conserva un espíritu confiado, sereno, no ataca y se mantiene manso.

Un líder feliz es aquel que sediento y hambriento de la justicia de Jesús busca saciarse de el. El líder tal será saciado.

Un líder feliz es aquel que reconoce la misericordia que Dios ha tenido de él y es misericordioso con todos los demás.

Salmo 119:9 sugiere que el camino del hombre puede ser limpiado con guardar la palabra de Dios. Un líder feliz es aquel que, por guardar la palabra de Dios, tiene un corazón limpio y Dios le da la fuerza para renunciar al espíritu de complacencia propia y ser abnegado, humilde y confiado.

Salmo 119:165 dice que los que aman la ley de Dios poseen esa paz. Un líder feliz es aquel que ama y obedece a la ley de Dios. Este líder, con la ayuda de Dios, eliminará de su corazón las malas pasiones que causan luchas y disensiones. Parte de su felicidad está en promover la paz.

Por experiencia se, que un líder no podrá tener a todos felices; lo hemos comprobado en la vida de Cristo. Sin embargo, [El “líder” cristiano es... “la persona” más feliz del mundo...porque confía en Jesús y se regocija en su presencia.] – EGW Exaltad a Jesús p. 370.5

ES MI DESEO QUE USTED SEA ESE LÍDER FELIZ.

ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP

Pastor Andres Flores



We all have heard about the famous heroes of the Bible: Moses, Paul, David, and Daniel. Daniel has an entire Bible book dedicated to his story and ministry. David wrote most the Psalms and was a king in Israel. Moses led God's people out of Egypt, and Paul is responsible for writing most of the epistles in the New Testament.

There is, however, another kind of leader in the Bible. This servant-leader did not have a position, did not have a book in the Scriptures with his name, and did not lead victorious armies. What type of leader is this? I'm referring to the spiritual influencer. The best example of this leader is Barnabas in the book of Acts. Barnabas did not have a prominent position in the New Testament church, and yet, he used his influence to transform the world. To put it simply, without a Barnabas, we wouldn't have an Apostle Paul.

Barnaba's actual name was Joseph. Barnabas was a nickname that means "son of encouragement" (Acts 4:36). The first record of Barnabas in the New Testament tells us about his generosity and kind spirit as he sold a field and donated the funds to the apostles. However, Barnabas' influence is recorded in Acts 11 as he sought the newly converted Paul and mentored him for an entire year in Antioch. What was so influential about Barnabas' leadership? Here are a few things we can learn from his example:

- 1. The necessity of transformation**
Barnabas' influence was born of his communion with the Holy Spirit
- 2. The power of presence**
Barnabas sought and stayed with Paul for an entire year.
- 3. The importance of mentorship**
Barnabas mentored Paul in Antioch.

The people that impacted me in the most profound ways in my journey have been the ones who were willing to walk alongside me in my moments of need. Like Paul, there's someone around you who feels confused, isolated, and in need of mentorship and guidance. Your influence is essential. Your influence can save a life and bring someone to the feet of Jesus. Your influence can shape someone's destiny. Embrace daily transformation, practice the power of presence, and walk alongside the one person that God is inviting you to influence. Remember, your influence is essential.

**“WITHOUT A BARNABAS,
WE WOULDN'T HAVE AN
APOSTLE PAUL.”**

CAMP AKITA SUMMER ADMINISTRATION

Youth Department

Each summer, we have the privilege of partnering with young adults from across the country to plan and provide a powerful camp experience for young people and families here in Illinois and beyond. What we've come to learn is that throughout the summer, the moments in the cabins, at the barn, as we walk back from worship, all come together to impact our staff in ways many of them never expect. Gaining a new perspective on leadership is one of them, and while we could tell you about those stories, we thought it would be better to hear it straight from our staff themselves:

Renae Cross,
previous Girl's Director

"When I became girl's director at Camp Akita, I knew some things about leadership. What I learned, however, was that the best leaders are listeners. In one unforgettable week at camp, every single girl's counselor came to me and said, "Renae, there's an issue with these girls. Something's happening, can you come talk to them?" So, after listening to more of what they had to say, I prayed about it and decided to bring the female campers together for a chat. The issue lay in the fact that they didn't listen to each other and instead insulted each other. We learned that night to build each other up with our words, and to listen to others. Later that summer, I asked a counselor what her favorite week of camp was. I was almost certain that it wasn't that week in particular, but for her, it was, all because we learned to listen."

Devaney Ross,
current Programming Director

"Being a leader at an Adventist summer camp is truly a unique experience. We have the amazing opportunity to impact kids from various backgrounds and foster a God-experience that is unforgettable. I still remember my experience at summer camp and how being in an environment with like-minded kids my age impacted me as a child. When kids can come together and are encouraged to love God loudly and unapologetically, it creates an atmosphere that is unlike any other not only for the camper, but for the staff members as well. This is what being a leader at a summer camp means to me and why I also take it so seriously. Working at a summer camp, in any position, allows us to not only let God work through us, but it allows us to see just how powerful and amazing the love of God is through the eyes of kids and teenagers."

Gerald Bedney,
previous Boy's Director

"Of the many things camp helped me to learn, three things stand out: adaptability, patience, and trust. At camp, we never know what we'll encounter on a daily basis - things change constantly. Whether it's filling the void of a sick staff member, adjusting activity schedules for rain, stepping in to resolve an issue between campers, being there to encourage a tired counselor... every day brings a new challenge. Our ability to trust that God will give us the strength to be flexible, maintain our composure, and somehow minister in spite of those challenges is the best way through what's often a very tiring (yet fulfilling) nine weeks. But that's also a skill we can take with us anywhere. Obstacles and challenges are a staple of this life but knowing that the God of the universe is on our side through it all gives us the confidence to move forward, whatever may come. Camp grows that confidence - and the leadership skills that come with it - in a way you don't get anywhere else."



Welcome to the Illinois Conference!

ADELE MARSH-INGLISH

Hinsdale Adventist Academy



Adele (left) with her husband, Josh (right)



I am so excited to be teaching at Hinsdale Adventist Academy next school year! I graduated from Southern Adventist University in 2015 and then I taught grades 3-6 at Green Bay Adventist Junior Academy in Wisconsin. Currently I am teaching 3rd grade at Collegedale Academy in Tennessee. I live with my husband Josh, who is a graphic designer, and our cat Dido.

I am working on my masters' degree in Instructional Leadership. In my spare time I love to read historical fiction, go camping, play my guitar, and go swimming. My favorite thing to teach is Bible because I love introducing kids to Jesus!



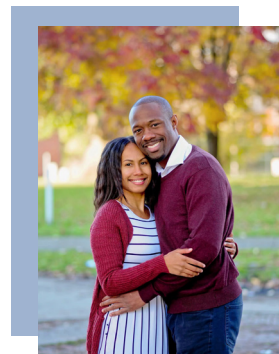
PASTOR EUGENE PREVAL

Champaign Church, Danville Church, Paris Church



I was born in Brooklyn NY but raised in Queens, New York. I have served in many capacities under various churches and institutions within the North American division. I also had the privilege of ministering in Papua New Guinea, which was my first overseas mission trip in 2019 with my lovely wife, Laverne.

I am passionate about introducing people to Jesus Christ and training others to be soul winners. My wife and I work together to educate, encourage, and empower souls for eternity.



Eugene (right) with his wife, Laverne (left)

ELIZABETH ATENCIO

Thompsonville Adventist Academy



I have accepted the teaching position in Thompsonville Adventist Academy for the lower grades. I am a recent graduate of Andrews University with a BSELED in elementary education and Spanish k-12 education, with a minor in mathematics education. I am the the oldest child in a family with 6 children ranging from 3rd grade to college. I grew up in Berrien Springs Michigan in a loving Adventist home. In my free time, I enjoy singing, walking through God's nature, and occasionally doodling pictures. I would appreciate your prayers as she transitions to life on her own.





North Shore Adventist Academy

TERESA BENNETT



I originally came from Oklahoma. While I was a teacher's aide in one of His schools, the Lord called me to pursue the profession of teaching. I went back to school, and only by His grace, obtained my teaching degree. I now know teaching is a mission field all its own. I have taught in three different states, got to know so many of His children (young and old), and made heavenly family for life. I never knew teachers moved so much! Oh, and the education! I have been in school ever since I became an educator! I obtained a master's degree and still take classes in the summers. Yet, I would choose no other path than the one my Lord has chosen for me.

I have taught in small schools and bigger schools. I even substituted in public school. I have worked with God's children that are Montessori age, all the way through high school age. I am excited about what God has planned for me and my husband this coming year. Besides getting to know more of His little lambs, I have a wonderful family living in Illinois that I look forward to seeing more often. I praise and thank Him for this privilege.



BRENDA NIEVES

Hinsdale Adventist Academy




I was born and raised in the island of Puerto Rico. In 1995, I graduated from Antillean University with a Bachelors of Arts degree in Elementary Education with an emphasis in Bilingual Education. Within my 27 years of experience, I have taught in Puerto Rico, Texas and Illinois. I am a wife to Pastor Miguel Ramos and mother of 3 young adults - Brenda Karolina, Migdalice and Miguel Jose.


I am also a singer, worship leader, and Pathfinder club Master-guide and Adventurers leader. I collaborate in leading the childrens ministry for the Illinois Conference. Among some recent recognitions, I was a recipient of the "Recognize a Star" award for outstanding use of technology in the classroom. I enjoy outdoor activities, music, traveling and sharing the gospel.




Camp Meeting



 July 27-30, 2022

 Camp Akita
1684 Knox Rd 1200 N, Gilson, IL 61436

 www.ilcsda.org/campmeeting

Illinois Conference Family Camp Meeting is scheduled for July 27–30, 2022. The theme will be “Following Jesus Faithfully.” Following Jesus Faithfully means we obey the words of Jesus and accept His invitation when He says, “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Wednesday through Friday presentations will be by Pastor David Oceguela and Elder Michael Campos. Our speaker Friday night and Sabbath morning and evening will be Elder Ken Denslow, Lake Union Conference President and Sabbath School will be led by Pastor Glenn Hill. There will be seminars, classes, activities, and fun for all ages.

Register now by visiting our website.

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As groundskeepers for the service of mission, we leaders must do what we can to provide a playing field that reduces as much as possible the distraction from mission. Christ (not the crisis) can inhabit our outer and inner worlds, strengthening our commitment and endurance in the joyful pursuit of mission. **Regardless.**

- John Gryns

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