

Things to Know



Musings from the Word

John Gryns, President

Picking up from my last issue, I want to consider for this musing the two individuals we find prominent in John chapters 3 & 4. In chapter 3, we hear those words, “Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council.” In chapter 4, we hear the other familiar words, “It was about noon. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water.” We experience on both sides of John 3:16’s “whoever,” a male figure with a name and a female figure without a name. We experience someone from the religio-politico ruling council and someone who is not just an outcast to that counsel but abhorrent. An apostate. A trader. And yet, and this is truly the beauty of this aspect of that last book (scholars believe John’s gospel is the latest book in our New Testament), both spectrums of the societal landscape of Jesus’ day were worth the time and words of investment. The dignity of both the named man and the unnamed woman were central to Jesus’ mission. The dignity of a ruling leader and an abhorrent apostate were central to Jesus’ mission. The “whoever” does not negate the culture from which both were formed and operated. Yet, not denying their historical narrative, He approached both as equals. And what is even more, with the woman He might’ve gone multiple steps further—a man alone with a woman not his wife and asking and talking and sharing. In those early years of the emerging church, this would’ve been an anathema. Yet, there is Jesus. Sitting with her. Engaged in heartfelt ministry. I find this to be such a special picture of what John means when he uses that word, “whoever.” The kingdom of heaven is big enough for the ruler and the oppressed to enter, or as John’s language tilts toward, “everlasting life.” My prayer for us as a conference continues to be that we will see the value and dignity of every person as Jesus did in John 3 & 4.

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Musings from the Field



An update regarding our new Conference **Youth Director**, Josant Barrientos: He will begin his ministry here on May 1, 2023.

Continue to keep **Andrews University** in your prayers as next week a new president will be selected.

Stay tuned in the coming weeks for information regarding our 2023 Family **Campmeeting** at Camp Akita.

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The first school in the state to grant a four-year degree was Illinois College in Jacksonville. Established by a group of Yale men in 1829 (*more about this college next time*).

God calls upon His servants to reveal a spirit of unvarying kindness and love. Nothing is gained by harsh denunciation and bitterness of spirit.

(General Conference Bulletin, April 1, 1903. More to come from this section in two weeks)