When God Calls

Sometimes life is stranger than fiction. Early in life Joshua Cunningham didn’t feel much need for God. And he never dreamed that one day he would leave his successful rock band and begin a journey that would eventually lead him to play music for God. Neither did he believe he would eventually leave Australia and land in Central California to attend the ARISE Institute. But this is his story, and this is his song.

Watch video

Women’s Spiritual Koinonia

Over 20 years ago a small group of African-American Seventh-day Adventist women from around the Pacific Union decided to offer a retreat for their fellow sisters—many who were hurting, longing for friendship or just wanting a deeper spiritual experience. Little did they realize how long it would last and how well it would be received.

Watch video
My Amazing Report

by Emily Sunken

When I was 14 I was diagnosed with scoliosis, an abnormal curvature of the spine. Typically doctors find this condition in children around 8 or 9, however since I found out later than usual, my condition was fairly advanced. After talking to a specialist, I was instructed to wear a Boston back brace designed specifically for me. The purpose of the brace was to prevent my spine from getting worse. I started wearing the brace at the start of my 8th grade year and continued to wear the brace until the start of my junior year in high school.

Read Emily's story

Lifting Up Jesus

Mid America Outlook

Karen Lewis, of the Rocky Mountain Conference, has mentored almost 300 people in giving Bible studies and has developed a highly effective full-message series of lesson guides, "Lifting Up Jesus." The first nine lessons introduce seekers to the gospel of Christ. Of the 91 people Lewis has studied with using these lessons, 89 have been baptized.

Read about Karen  |  View lessons

Resources You Can Use

NOTICE - Church Support Services publishes a monthly and quarterly newsletter called ChurchApplied for members and church workers within the Pacific Union Conference and beyond. Each issue features information and news about ministry resources, training and more.

Beginning in 2011, the quarterly hardcopy edition will appear as an insert in the Pacific Union Recorder. If you don't get the Recorder, you will find it on our website as a downloadable PDF document. In addition, we send out a free monthly e-letter to anyone who wishes to receive it. Click here to sign up.

Zoom Q3HD Video Recorder - The Zoom Q3HD video cam features a new imaging sensor that captures at either 1080p at 30 frames per second, or 720p video at 60 or 30 frames per second, in MPEG-4 H.264 (MOV) video format. There are three lighting settings: Auto, Concert, and Night. For playback you turn the camcorder on its side to watch in 16x9 format on its 2.4 inch LCD. There is a Left/Right audio meter display for monitoring audio recording levels while recording. You can also plug in an external mic. This is a great buy for $299.http

Journeys is a duet of sorts. The author, Pastor Marvin Wray, takes readers on a 11,393 mile motorcycle trip around the U.S.--while providing an inside look at his own personal spiritual journey through six-plus decades of experiencing God.

Download ChurchApplied Videos - A growing collection of videos is available to individuals and churches to use in various ministry applications. Produced by the Pacific Union Conference, the videos depict members and churches involved in unique ministries. Plans are for 12-17 new videos to be added in 2011.

If You Have An iPhone - Or if you have an iPad or DROID, download our FREE SpiritRenew devotional app. Join 9,000 plus others who are enjoying the spiritual and family content that refreshes each week.

Google Books - Search and preview millions of books from libraries and publishers worldwide using Google Book Search. Discover a new favorite or unearth an old classic.
Bridge Builders - Bridges are designed to move people from one point to another without great difficulty. As followers of Jesus and Adventist leaders, our mission is to help people move from darkness to light. Therefore if we are fulfilling our mission, we are bridge builders. Built any bridges lately?

Golden Gate Bridge - Photo by Rich DuBose
Spam
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My Amazing Report

By Emily Sunken

When I was 14 I was diagnosed with scoliosis, an abnormal curvature of the spine. Typically doctors find this condition in children around 8 or 9, however since I found out later than usual, my condition was fairly advanced.

After talking to a specialist I was instructed to wear a Boston back brace designed specifically for me. The purpose of the brace was to prevent my spine from getting worse. I started wearing the brace at the start of my 8th grade year and continued to wear the brace until the start of my junior year in high school.

Technically speaking, my scoliosis is moderately severe which typically causes substantial physical pain. Luckily I have experienced little back pain over the years. However, I have experienced quite a bit of emotional pain since being diagnosed with scoliosis. Wearing a back brace changed who I was. Wearing the brace made me feel insecure about how I looked. The timing didn't help much either. Most 14-year-olds already deal with enough changes that involve self-esteem issues.

Before I was diagnosed with scoliosis I felt confident about how I looked and who I was as a person. I had little to worry about since I was healthy and enjoyed being with my friends and family. I have always been a small, short and skinny person. Once I began wearing the brace I had to ditch my old clothes and exchange them for larger baggy clothes. I had to buy clothes two sizes larger. I felt uncomfortable around people because I was afraid someone might bump into me and realize I had hard plastic going around my body. The brace also limited my movement. I could no longer participate in sports or any other activities that required flexibility. I felt like an alien in my own body.

At the end of the summer before my junior year I found out that I no longer had to wear the brace. That day I cried, rejoiced and praised God!

Since shedding the brace I have had to have yearly check-ups to monitor my growth. The summer before my freshman year in college my scoliosis doctor, who had been with me from the beginning, retired. At my first appointment with the new doctor he said something that scared me very much. The doctor didn’t think I was doing as well as I should. I had to wait until the following summer, right before my sophomore year to meet with the new doctor again. My parents and I were really scared to hear an update on my condition from the doctor. A couple weeks prior to my appointment my mom asked our home church to add my check-up to the prayer chain hoping to get good news from the doctor this time. I was kind of surprised that my mom had asked our church to pray for me. It’s not that I didn’t need prayer, but I didn’t really think it was serious enough to bother our church members for prayer. I know that prayer is powerful, but I had never really had a large amount of people praying for me specifically.

The day of the appointment came. I went in as usual and got my x-ray and then went to a room to wait for my doctor. I experienced how powerful prayer is on the receiving end. All those prayers from my church family must have helped because we received fabulous news from the doctor. He explained that my curve had not increased since the summer before and that my hips were finally close to ending their growth. Also, the best part of the doctor’s analysis was that I no longer needed yearly check-ups. He still wants me to get checked, but there are no exact dates. He said he really didn’t need to see me again until I graduate college and then after that every five to ten years.

I’ve always known prayer is powerful, but now I have experienced how powerful it is in a more personal and physical way. God loves us so much and it was nice to be reminded how much He loves me.
Karen Lewis is director for the lay Bible worker training program. This program is designed to train laypeople in the principles of outreach and bible studies. It involves the use of the Lifting up Jesus Bible lessons that Karen has authored as well as the 16-week training program which over 100 laypeople have graduated from.

Jesus said in Matthew 28:18, 19, "Go and make disciples of all men, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them all things that I have taught you".

Making disciples is what it is all about and the LUJ lessons are a set of discipleship lessons which grounds them into Christ first before getting into any doctrine. Each lesson is designed to lift up Jesus in such a way that hearts might be won to Him!

For more information on this program please contact Karen at 303-282-3620 or by email by clicking on: Karen Lewis.

To view the training videos, please click this link: Lifting Up Jesus Training

I am also pleased to announce the launching of our new Bible worker website called www.bibleworkerconnect.com

This website is designed to connect Bible workers with projects through churches and organizations for more effective ministry and evangelism for God's glory. If you are in need of a Bible worker, log in and register your project needs. If you are a Bible worker, add your experience, history and contact information.

Additional links on this topic:

Bible Worker Conference