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# Don't Discount the Power of Prayer

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# Don't Discount the Power of Prayer

BY KERI SUAREZ

It was an incredibly hot July day in Michigan, but we hardly noticed from the cool water of my sister's swimming pool where I took my daughters to spend the afternoon swimming with their cousins. We left early enough to squeeze in a nap for three-year-old Keira before heading out for Fourth of July festivities.

Despite my efforts, Keira fell asleep in the car on the way home. When we got home, I roused her enough to walk into the house. As I led my sleepy girl upstairs to her bed, her hand slipped out of mine, and she slumped into a seizure on the stairs. A surge of adrenaline rushed through my body as I gathered her into my arms while shouting to my older daughter, Josie, to bring me my phone.

For what seemed like minutes — but was really only seconds, Keira's little body convulsed. I tried in vain to communicate with her: "Keira! Look at Mommy! Keira, I need you to look at me." Then she went terrifyingly limp. Her eyes were closed and she was still, but her breathing was steady.

My mind shifted into panicked-mommy overdrive. *I had epilepsy as a child; had that been passed onto Keira? My niece suffered a series of strokes and seizures as an infant, leaving her with lifelong physical limitations; was that happening to my Keira, too? Had Keira eaten something poisonous? Contracted an illness?* Though I was outwardly calm in an effort to keep Josie from being scared, inwardly, my mind was screaming out for Keira to wake up and talk to me, to let me know she was okay.

"Lord," I prayed, "please let my baby be okay. Please wake her up."



Keira Suarez and her mommy, Keri Suarez, are thankful for answered prayers.

I called 911 and then my husband, Michael. The paramedics arrived, and soon we were in the back of an ambulance headed to the Emergency Room. During that 20-minute drive, I was alone, except for the paramedic who was quietly tending to Keira. I desperately needed some support, so I pulled out my phone and posted a Facebook status: "Need prayer!! Headed to ER with my baby..." Within seconds,

I had family and friends around the world sending up prayers on our behalf. Texts and Facebook messages started pouring in, offering me a small measure of distraction as we sped along the highway toward the hospital.

At the ER, the doctors quickly determined Keira had suffered a relatively harmless febrile seizure. Essentially, she spiked a temperature faster than her body could process, causing her to seize. It was likely an isolated incident, the doctor said, with no lasting side effects.

When Keira finally woke up, relief washed over Michael and me as we looked into her eyes. She was okay! All those awful scenarios that raced through my mind evaporated away — my baby girl was moving and talking to me. To this day, it remains one of the most precious and beautiful sights I've ever witnessed.

We quickly let our family and friends know that all was well and explained what happened. “It was nothing more than a febrile seizure,” I told them somewhat dismissively. In fact, I was slightly embarrassed that perhaps I had overreacted.

My big brother, Rodney, held me in check. “Wait a minute, Sis. Didn’t you pray for God to watch over Keira? To heal her? God just answered your prayer! Don’t discount the

power of prayer, especially when He just answered yours.” He was right! How often do we encounter a situation where we ask for God’s intervention but, after the situation seemingly resolves itself, we forget that it was God who was in control? God had swiftly and decisively answered my prayer.

Keri Suarez and her family are from Niles, Michigan. Today, Keira is in kindergarten at Village Adventist Elementary School.

# Commitments at Camp Meeting

BY JUANITA EDGE

**O**n June 23, several hundred people gathered along the sandy shore, at Wisconsin Camp Meeting in Oxford, as 36 people sealed their commitment to Jesus in baptism.

“I’ve never attended a camp meeting that focused on people being baptized,” said Eugene Kitney, newly-appointed pastor of the Milwaukee Central District. “People wanted to wait and share their special commitment day with the whole conference. It’s an incredible spiritual highlight of the year.”

As each candidate entered the water for baptism, James Fox, Wisconsin Conference ministerial director, read a short testimony each candidate had prepared. Below are a few of these testimonies.

Wayde Minett, of Hylandale, said, “I was born and raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I have thought long and hard for several years about making this decision. I’m grateful to my family and church for their support in my faith and growing up.”

“One day, on the television, I stopped at a channel called 3ABN,” said Gary Raabel, of the La Crosse Church. “That is when the journey of truth began, and I haven’t looked back.”

Spirit Martinez, of the Sparta Church said, “I always believed in God, but hearing Pastor Richie [Silie] in the Teen Tent at camp meeting helped me make a stand. I want to get baptized because God helped me, and I want to help Him back. I want to do more things for Him. I love God.”

John and Sheri Maggioncalda, who are joining the Portage Church, said, “When we came to Wisconsin, we moved



Thirty-six individuals sealed their commitment to Jesus in baptism at Wisconsin Camp Meeting this past summer.

next door to Greg and Lesa Budd, and felt God brought us here to connect with them. They were praying that their new neighbors would be open to God’s message. Our baptism today is the next step in our spiritual growth.”

“I am so thankful for my parents who raised me in a Christian home and taught me every day how important it is to love and

follow Jesus,” said Kaity Brock, who is joining the Wisconsin Academy Church. “My whole family has loved and supported me as I grew to love Jesus.”

“I originally was baptized into the Delavan Seventh-day Adventist Church, in 1988, following a Revelation seminar,” said Robert Moyer, new member of the Tomah Church. “After an unexpected divorce, discouragement got the best of me, and I left the church. This past February, I got tired of fighting the Holy Spirit. I’m so thankful that Jesus, our great Shepherd, does not give up searching for the “sheep” that go astray! It is good to be back in His arms.”

More than 200 people were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Wisconsin during 2011. Learn more about baptism at the Fundamental Beliefs page on the Wisconsin website (see <http://wi.adventist.org/article/86/about-us/beliefs>).

Juanita Edge is the communication director of the Wisconsin Conference.