

I'M ALIVE! *By Dyrie Francis*

Joshua Gordan was a healthy, energetic 11-year-old boy when his mother, Carla Thomas, a member of our church, dropped him and his younger sister off at day camp Friday morning, December 28, 2007. Then Carla received a call at approximately 12:45 p.m. saying Joshua was vomiting and unable to stand. Staff had called the paramedics.

Joshua was transported to Joe D'Maggio Hospital in Hollywood, Florida. Judith McLeod, a nurse from our church, met Carla at the hospital. By 2:00 p.m. the ER doctor said, "Keep Mom out; he has no pulse!"

The two women retreated to the waiting room where a social worker told Carla to expect the worse. Carla blocked the words and shouted, "Jesus, Jesus!" Our church's 24-hour prayer network was activated. Praying adults and children filled the waiting room.

By 6:00 p.m. Joshua was in a coma. He had two more episodes of cardiac arrest. A CAT scan revealed large tumors on his adrenal glands, and he was diagnosed with pheochromocytoma. The doctors were confounded on treatment modality and consulted other pediatric centers in the United States and overseas.

By Saturday Joshua showed some improvement. His coma was now medically induced for care management. Carla decided to go to church on Sunday and direct the final rehearsal for our New Year's Eve play. Strengthened by Scriptures, she felt joy and peace as she prostrated herself before the Lord.

When she returned to the hospital that afternoon, she discovered Joshua had been trying to wake up. His physician ordered staff to remove the mechanical ventilator and discontinue some of his 14 intravenous lines. As the breathing tube was removed, the young man exclaimed, "Thank you, Lord, I'm alive, I'm alive!" His mom, his grandmother, Rev. Ileen Thomas, an anxious medical team, and the many church friends were elated. Some cried for joy. Some laughed. Others were too excited to speak. Doctors and nurses credited Joshua's "miracle" (their words) to prayer. He showed no ill effects although his blood pressure remained unstable. Some of the medical team requested prayer for other children in the ICU.



Joshua Gordon in a coma and on mechanical ventilator

Although the medical team agreed they needed to correct Joshua's unstable blood pressure, they disagreed on management and his readiness for removal of the tumors. Each time Joshua attempted to get out of bed, he experienced a sudden drop in blood pressure, causing severe dizziness. We intensified our prayer efforts. Nurses from our assembly volunteered to watch over Joshua to give the family breaks. Other members provided meals.

Finally, surgery was scheduled for Friday, January 14. A team

from our church surrounded Joshua's bed, anointed him with oil, and prayed. As he was wheeled towards the operating room, I felt boldness in my spirit and declared, "Joshua, the favor of the Lord surrounds you like a shield (Psalm 5:12). Remember, Jesus is in you and with you." Secondly, I addressed the physician, "Doctor, you are going to do well because I am fasting and praying." He sneered and told me not to be hypoglycemic (from fasting), but to go and have a burger.

The enemy told me, "You have just made a fool of yourself." But immediately the Holy Spirit said, "No, you did not. If you prayed and did not declare it, the doctors would take the credit." As the doctor entered the operating room, he unexpectedly turned toward me, and smiled and waved, as if to say, "I didn't mean it that way, please pray!"

At approximately 4:20 p.m. Joshua's grandma called me from the hospital. The chief surgeon had informed her that everything went so smoothly, they knew it was a miracle.

The doctor who had advised me to go have a burger sent me a message through Carla, "Tell my little friend that fasting and prayer work." He had drawn up every possible medication, expecting some catastrophe during the operation; however, there was no need for even one of those medications.

Within a week Joshua was discharged from the hospital. He is back at church and school, active, happy, and energetic. His healing has impacted the medical team, our church, and his mother's co-workers. Our church family is strongly encouraged to continue our prayer intercessions and to stand with families in need.



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