

2-2016

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Michelle (Cummings) Solomon
Cedarville University, msolomon@cedarville.edu

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Recommended Citation

Solomon, Michelle (Cummings), "Inspiring and Amazing: Cedarville Stories Shine the Light of Christ" (2016). *Staff Publications*. 59.
http://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/staff_publications/59

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INSPIRING AND AMAZING

Cedarville Stories Shine the Light of Christ

by Michele (Cummings) Solomon '91

An unimaginable tragedy. An unexpected crisis. An undeniable limitation. Three Cedarville stories that found their way in the public eye. Three stories of faith that touched others with the message of hope found only in the Gospel and reminded everyone that Cedarville is a place where students and faculty find their strength in that hope.

IT'S NOT US — IT'S GOD

Emily Weindorf '17 spent the summer of 2013 preparing for freshman year at Cedarville in the fall. Her sister, Gretta Weindorf '15, was looking forward to beginning her junior year



at a college in Wisconsin. Then, tragedy struck their family, changing everything.

The girls' mother, Tonya, was one of four people killed when a church bus returning to Indiana from a camp in Michigan overturned. "Our mother was an incredible woman," Emily shared. "There's not a day that goes by that I don't think of her or miss her very deeply," Gretta added.

Despite the tragedy, Emily chose to start her freshman year at Cedarville as planned, and Gretta decided to transfer to Cedarville. "After the accident I just really felt it was important for me to be close to home," Gretta said at the time. "We've always been close, but now I think we really need each other."

"Our mother valued education, especially Christian education," Emily said. "I know this is where Mom would want us."

The girls' faith carried them through painful times that followed. "It's not us," Gretta said then. "It's God. He's given us so much strength and just the ability to move on."

For Emily, love made the difference. "I prayed for strength," she explained, and God showed her 1 Corinthians 13:13: "... but the greatest of these is love." "Love is what carried me through," she said. "Strength is what I prayed for, but love is what I was shown and what gave me hope."

"Knowing that my mom loved me and was excited for my future gave me hope. Being surrounded by the most loving family, neighbors, and new friends at Cedarville enabled me to continue on," Emily added.

Gretta saw God work through other Christians in amazing ways. "Our family experienced the love and support of fellow believers like we never had before," she said. "We thank God for those who supported and encouraged us during that time."

The accident made national news, and the sisters were interviewed by local media on several occasions. They saw it as a way to encourage others and spread God's Word. "It was something we were asked to do, but it was never about us," Emily explained. "We hoped Mom's story would touch lives around the world."

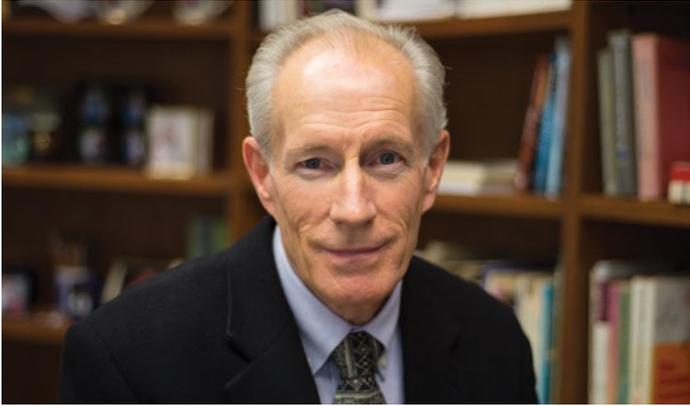
"We did the interviews because they were an opportunity to tell others about God," Gretta echoed. "I remember praying before one interview that every sentence I said would directly point to God." Both are quick to point out that any glory coming from their story belongs to the Lord.

Gretta graduated from Cedarville last May with a degree in nursing. She is now a registered nurse working in a hospital neuro unit and enjoys sharing God's love with her patients. Emily is a premed student at Cedarville, majoring in molecular and cellular biology. She looks forward to attending medical school and doing what she loves. "Even through it all, God has been really good to us," Gretta shared. "This is God's plan for us, and we're going to trust Him through it," Emily added.

FOR MY GOOD AND HIS GLORY

George Huff's life was forever changed on July 21, 2014. His testimony since that day may change countless others' lives for eternity. On that day, Huff, Professor of Social Work at Cedarville, was riding his bicycle home from a meeting on campus when he was struck from behind by a flatbed truck, catapulting him into a ditch.

Lying in that ditch, unable to move or cry out and going in and out of consciousness, five thoughts came to Huff's mind that he still clearly recalls to this day: *This is my appointed time; You chose me before the foundations of the earth; You have loved me with an everlasting love; You even died in my place; You have prepared a place for me.* He never expected to make it out of that ditch alive.



Later, in the trauma center at Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton, Huff — even through incredible pain — made sure every doctor, nurse, hospital employee, and visitor knew, “This was for my good and His glory.” Huff would spend two weeks in the hospital suffering from a broken wrist, a gouge on the back of his left arm, broken ribs, a broken fibula in his left leg, and swelling to his left foot. He also suffered serious internal injuries, including a bruised colon, and lost his spleen. Through all of it, he kept an eternal perspective. “God does all things well and good,” he explained. “Why? Because He loves me and knows what is best.”

Months following the accident, Huff recorded a message for students that was played during the Thanksgiving chapel service. Paraphrasing 1 Thessalonians 5:18, he said, “I give thanks in all things. I give thanks for being hit by a truck.” His message resonated with students and has provided many opportunities to speak with them as they wrestle with their growing faith.

Most want to know how he can give thanks after what he endured. “I want them to understand that no matter what happens, whether I’m hit by a truck or not hit by a truck, I rest in Christ,” he said. “I give thanks in all things. God is still good, no matter what.”

Huff’s story found its way to local papers and even on the national K-LOVE radio network. “Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that my accident would get the coverage it did,” Huff shared. “I always asked myself, ‘How do I take this accident and point people to Christ?’ because that’s who I am. I am a child of His. It’s not about me; it’s about Christ.”

Today, although he is back to work full time, he is still recovering from his injuries. He suffers posttraumatic stress symptoms, including a fear of falling and a fear of being hit from behind, especially when he walks around campus and bikes and skateboards approach him from behind. “This has been an unbelievable trial in my life, but God has a plan,” he shared. “I count it all joy.”

THROUGH HIS STRENGTH

Rachel Zeiter ’15 was born with a significant visual impairment called Peters Anomaly, a rare cornea disease. She hasn’t been able to see out of her right eye since kindergarten, and she lost a significant amount of vision in her left eye as a sophomore in college. Despite this obvious limitation, Zeiter survived — and thrived — as a Cedarville student, graduating with honors last May with a degree in special education.

With courage and determination — along with the support of her Cedarville family — Zeiter was able to navigate, both literally

and figuratively, the complexities of college life. “It was certainly a challenge,” she explained, “but God surrounded me with people who really cared about me and helped me.”

With assistance from Cedarville’s Academic Enrichment Center, The Cove, and an Orientation Mobility Specialist, she learned how to successfully maneuver the campus. The only thing that made her stand out from her classmates was the cane she used to get around.

Zeiter’s story attracted the attention of local and national media leading up to graduation last spring. She saw it as a way to encourage others. “I was happy to tell my story,” she said. “It gave me a chance to share what God was doing in my life. God really worked with me as a college student, and the articles served as a way for me to summarize that and share it with everyone.”

She even found herself featured online and on-air through the K-LOVE radio network, a chance to tell her story to a national audience. “God might allow you to experience something that’s difficult, because we all have difficult situations,” Zeiter said in her



interview with K-LOVE, “but we can, through His strength, get through them.”

Now, as a special education history and English teacher at Hamilton Freshman School near Cincinnati, Ohio, Zeiter uses the lessons she’s learned throughout her life to encourage her students. She wants them to know that no matter what their impairment may be, they can accomplish great things. “Some of them want to believe that they can’t do things,” she explained, “but I can use what I’ve gone through to connect with them and say, ‘Hey, I had to switch from reading print to reading braille at age 20; you can work through something if you set goals for yourself.’”

Zeiter sees her limitations as part of God’s plan for her life and a way He has chosen to use her. “God’s given me this disability, but also this experience, so that I can reach out to others, whether it’s other people who have similar vision loss or my students,” she explained.

“I’ve had challenges in life, but these challenges will help me in the classroom,” said Zeiter. “God has given me some very supportive people in my personal and professional life, and I know that His promise to take care of me is true, even when it is difficult.”

Michele (Cummings) Solomon ’91 is the Copy Editor for Cedarville University Marketing.