

Buzz

SPOTLIGHT

‘Jesus Hasn’t Changed’

Sonicflood frontman testifies to miraculous healing

Sonicflood lead singer Rick Heil grew up in a church that taught that miracles had ceased. So when at age 11 he was diagnosed with Crohn’s disease, he thought he’d never be free of the debilitating chronic illness. Then in 2005, with the pain unbearable, Heil opted to try yet another surgery. Dr. James Church, who is a Christian, removed two inches of scar tissue from previous surgeries then looked around for traces of the disease. He found nothing. “I grew up going to a church where they taught ... that miracles have ceased,” Heil says. “Having experienced miracle after miracle in my life, I would have to firmly disagree. My Lord Jesus has not changed. He is still doing mighty miracles.”

Leilani Haywood

Prayer Point

Religious freedom is virtually nonexistent in North Korea, where Christians are either in prison for practicing their faith or forced to worship in secret. This month we encourage you to:

1. Pray that dictator Kim Jong-il will allow the practice of religions other than Kimilsungism

2. Pray that the underground church would be courageous in the face of persecution
3. Pray that Christians in North and South Korea would reconcile and be healed of wounds created generations ago.

Marching for Jesus

An estimated 3 million people participated in Brazil's annual March for Jesus in São Paulo June 15—double the attendance of last year's event, the Associated Press (AP) reported. Observers say churches such as the Universal Kingdom of God and Reborn in Christ, home of Brazilian soccer champ Kaká, have helped fuel the spread of Protestantism in the world's largest Roman Catholic nation. Between 1991 and 2000, evangelicals grew by 8 percent, while the number of Catholics increased by only 0.3 percent, the AP said. The South American nation was nearly all Catholic 100 years ago. That percentage dropped to 84 percent in 1995 and is at 74 percent today.

Changed Lives

Glad to be alive

Jason Black is just happy to be alive. A professionally trained opera singer, Black faced death twice before reaching the age of 25.

In 1999 the California-based tenor was left with the mental capacity of a 2-year-old after driving his compact car into the back of a stalled truck. "I pretty much ate the engine," Black says. "Everyone said they were amazed that I was alive." He not only survived; he recovered in a fraction of the time doctors had estimated.

After his release from a rehabilitation facility, Black finished college, married and began his singing career. Then in 2001, while moving into a new home, he was nearly decapitated when a glass table fell, causing a piece of glass to crash into his neck. Doctors considered it a miracle that he survived, but they said Black would never talk again, much less sing.

Six months later, Black spoke. Today he is again singing professionally and sharing his testimony in unlikely places, such on the TV program Untold Stories of the E.R.

“If I trusted in what the world said, I would have committed suicide,” he says. “But I knew I was in God’s hands, and I knew that if I didn’t speak again that it would be God’s will. I am beyond blessed, and my gift is completely restored.”

Michelle Lovato

MARKETPLACE MINISTRY

Disaster Relief Kits Aimed at Churches

Businessman seeks to prepare ministries for emergencies

When businessman Al Hollingsworth toured New Orleans days after Hurricane Katrina swept through, he saw both danger and opportunity.

His California-based company, Aldelano Packaging Corp., packages products such as Pringles and Sunny Delight, as well as in-flight meals for airlines. One of his plants can package 60,000 meals in a single shift. “So when we’re seeing people

hungry, we just couldn't understand why people weren't being fed," Hollingsworth says.

The ministry arm of his company partnered with local churches to help with relief efforts, and the corporate side sent workers to help an area plant get back up and running. But to help prepare for future disasters, Hollingsworth developed "survival kits" tailored to men, women and children that he says churches can distribute.

In addition to the kits, which include enough food and hygiene products to sustain an adult for three days, Hollingsworth created an all-in-one flashlight, AM/FM radio, siren and cell phone charger. The "emergency manager" requires no batteries and sells for roughly \$30.

Hollingsworth hopes the products empower Christians to do the work of the ministry. "Whenever there is a disaster, we expect to see the church there," he says. "We believe the church, understanding its role, will be better prepared this time."

Adrienne S. Gaines