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by Shanice Saunders

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Sick and suffering, millions and thousands in despair! In a dying world is there anyone who cares? Many, young and old alike, are searching for their place in this world. What is my purpose? How and where can I help? God has a work in which everyone is entitled to share. A work in which it reaches for humanity's hand and touches their heart.

In the book *Call to Medical Evangelism*, by E. G. White, it reads, "Medical missionary work brings to humanity the gospel of release from suffering. It is the pioneer work of the gospel. It is the gospel practiced, the compassion of Christ revealed. Of this work there is great need, and the world is open for it. God grant that the importance of medical missionary work shall be under-

stood, and that new fields may be immediately entered."

When you hear the phrase, "Medical Missionary Work", what comes to mind? Maybe you would think of ophthalmoscopes, blood pressure cuffs, sick and dying people; words like adventure, jungle life, and late nights, may excite the imagination; but, what about words like heart work, salvation, and eternal life? We are told, "The world must have an antidote for sin. As the medical missionary works intelligently to relieve suffering and save life, hearts are softened. Those who are helped are filled with gratitude. As the medical missionary works upon the body, God works upon the heart." (Ibid, p. 12) As we work in this field our

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Dr. Mark Sandoval

President's Message for the Month

The Importance of Medical Missionary Work

BY MARK SANDOVAL, M.D.

Uchee Pines has been at the forefront of medical missionary training for the last 45 years. Our commitment to training capable medical missionaries continues as we seek for new ways to educate individuals for service.

Currently, we have 6-month Lifestyle Educator, and 12-month Lifestyle Counselor courses on campus. In cooperation with Wildwood's College of Health Evangelism, we have an online Lifestyle Educator Extension program as well. And just recently, our Executive Committee has approved an advanced program, the Lifestyle Practitioner Preceptorship, which will be available to healthcare providers and Lifestyle Counselors who exhibit exceptional leadership and patient care skills. The details of the program will be announced soon.

In the future, we will offer a Health Evangelist course, which will train lay evangelists who have a very strong background in medical missionary work. If the Lord is calling you to study and/or teach at Uchee Pines or to support these needed programs by prayer or funding, please contact us at: www.uchee-pines.org or call 1-877-UCHEEP-INES or 1-334-855-4764.

What are you going to do with the rest of your life? Do you have a passion? A direction? A goal? Or is the future vague and mysterious? Do you know what the Lord's will is for you for the rest of your life? While there are many questions that cannot be answered concretely, there are some that are set in stone.

While you may not know where the Lord wants you to live, study, or work next, you can be sure that the Lord has a special work for you. In a small book entitled, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, this special work for you is outlined. It is a work that the Lord wants everyone to be involved in.

"...the medical missionary work is to be a great entering wedge, whereby the diseased soul may be reached." "True medical missionary work is of heavenly origin." "Medical missionary work is the right hand of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work." "We have come to a time when every member of the church should take hold of medical missionary work." "As religious aggression subverts the liberties of our nation, those who would stand for freedom of conscience will be placed in unfavorable positions. For their own sake, they should, while they have the opportunity, become intelligent in regard to disease, its causes, prevention, and cure. All those who do this will find a field of labor anywhere." (CME p. 7-11)

I ran into a dilemma a few years ago. Having trained as an emergency physician, and having worked in ER, urgent care, family practice, ICU, etc., I read the above statements and had to seriously ask myself a few questions: What is medical missionary work? Is what I am doing an entering wedge of heavenly origin? What am I doing to enter every city? And in a time when we can no longer buy and sell, what would I, as a Christian physician, do? Would I go from house to house, take a history, do a physical exam, diagnose what the condition is and then write a prescription for medication? Would I do a minor surgery on the dining room table? I came to realize that I had almost no useful medical missionary skills.

That is when I decided to leave my medical practice and move to Uchee Pines to learn how to be a medical missionary. Now, I have skills that I can use in anyone's home—without a scalpel or a prescription pad—to help someone's pain, illness, or heart ache. I have learned (and am still learning) how to use the health work to reach hearts for eternity, digging to the very depths of people's issues to help them come to freedom from the things that bind them. My prior career, while financially rewarding, was unfulfilling. My career now is my passion—medical missionary work—reaching hearts for now and for eternity.



What about you? Are you a child of God? Then you are called to medical missionary work. Are you trained in an unrelated field? Then you are called to medical missionary work. You can be a mechanic, teacher, farmer, etc. and also be a medical missionary, but a time is coming when you will only be able to be a medical missionary. Are you a student, looking for the Lord's direction in your life? Then you are called to medical missionary work. Whatever else you decide to do, learn, or become, you are called to be a medical missionary.

Uchee Pines is dedicated to training medical missionaries. It is our great blessing to take students, young or old, newly seeking a field of labor or transitioning from a long career, and give them an opportunity to learn how to be a medical missionary for Christ. The challenges are great, but the rewards are greater. The Lord is calling you. How will you respond?

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goal should not only be to relieve physical suffering but at the same time, with God's help, to relieve real suffering—a life of sin.

One day I had a conversation with someone about the work I was doing as a medical missionary. I explained that in my daily tasks I wanted to just get the work done! We are supposed to be as efficient as possible, right? But during my work I realized that the Lifestyle Center guests have moments in which they like to talk and share their concerns. However, this interrupts your well planned schedule! My friend then brought to my attention that the work we are called to do as medical missionaries is more than just the treatments. Fomentations can help relieve back pain and a hot foot bath can help reduce or take away headaches. But what can reduce the pain of sin-broken, wounded human hearts? It may take two things, an ear that can listen and knees that can bend to beckon the throne of God with and in behalf of the person. You may even have to put down the needle, glucometer, gloves, and truly listen to the heart.

I read in a book on evangelism, "I can see in the Lord's providence that the medical missionary work is to be a great entering wedge, whereby the diseased soul may be reached." (E. G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 513) According to the *Oxford Dictionary*, a wedge is: "a piece of wood, metal, or some other material having one thick end and tapering to a thin edge, that is driven between two objects or parts of an object to secure or separate them."

If the medical missionary work is the entering wedge, what things are being secured or even separated? I believe the object of medical missionary work is to restore, to correct wrongs, to show human beings how to avoid the self-indulgence that brings disease and death. It's the "wedge" that separates from things that destroy our physical and spiritual health, and then secures to the Rock of Ages.

Shanice Saunders completed her training as a Lifestyle Counselor in 2014 and continues to serve at the Uchee Pines Lifestyle Center.

As a people having advanced light, we should devise means by which to develop an army of educated missionaries to enter the various departments of the work of God. We need well-disciplined, cultivated young men and women in our schools, in our sanitariums, in the medical missionary work, in the offices of publication, in the conferences of different states, and in the field at large.

—E. G. White



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The Bottom Line

Is God Calling You? – by Daphne Christina

If ever there is a time when we most need to know what Gods purpose is for our lives today, it is now. I believe He has a purpose for each one of us and it is a noble purpose. God's calling to me personally was to do medical missionary work. Coming from Holland I wasn't planning to go overseas to get trained, but God had other plans (Isaiah 55:8). I prayed that He would show me where I needed to go and that He would work it out for me to go, and God did. Going through the Lifestyle Educator course at Uchee Pines, I received a deeper understanding of the work—how it is so highly spiritual, and also balanced; how Jesus' method of working is the medical missionary work and this is the way to be collaborators with Him to reach souls that need to be saved. It deepened my experience with God, challenged my thoughts, and helped to form me so I can be ready to do His work. The laws of life, health in the Bible, hydrotherapy, nutrition, true education, mental health classes and more were given in a spiritual but also practical way. I received knowledge but also I saw how God was molding my character. Yes, like He did with His disciples to prepare them for the work they were about to do. In a lot of ways I saw and still see God's hand in bringing me to Uchee Pines. The calling is clear. Yes, He is calling us. The real question is, are we willing?