

## **Elias Williams received a standing ovation after he gave the sermon at the recent youth service.**

By Elias Williams

Delivered during Youth Sunday, June, 2007

When Father Brain asked us if any of us wanted to do the sermon, I immediately jumped at the opportunity. It was time for me to share with others, specifically about the powerful presence of God in our lives. We each see God from different perspectives and in different places. I am grateful to be able to share with you how I experience the immense existence of His Holy Power.

When I think about where God is in my life, I think about all of you. God is here with us right now. I see his spirit in each of you – in the way you greet each other, in your smiles, in your eyes and in your hearts. God is very present in these tangible things. However, he is also manifested behind the scenes and within the shadows. I am a testimony to this truth.



Eighteen years ago, I was born in Honduras. As an infant, I was involved in a house fire. Although my life was saved by people close to me, I spent many months hospitalized. My biological family was unable to care for me and chose to make an adoption plan so that I might be able to obtain better health care.

An international adoption agency matched me up with a young couple who had recently adopted a Korean boy. After several months of arduous paperwork, I was able to come home to a loving family in Vermont. These people nurtured me in all the aspects that good parents would do for their child. In essence, this family brought me back to life.

My family showed me God's love in many tangible ways; they fed me, clothed me, taught me right from wrong, they supported me, they showed joy when I was happy and cried with me when I hurt. Certainly this all shows the presence of God in the intangibles, in the master plan that God has made for each of us.

There have been many events in my life that can be perceived as "bad." However, it is clear to me that these were not bad or negative at all, but were, in fact, the necessary catalyst for so much good to happen. To me, these events show God working in the shadows. Without the physical flaw that you all see in my body and the trials of my infancy, I would not have been put on the road that I walk on today. This is the road that God wants me on. This is the road that God has made for me. This is a good road... my road.

I believe that God has chosen a path for each of us. Sometimes it doesn't feel clear that we're on the right one. But I am convinced that God works behind the scenes, making everything come together for the greater good. When we offer each other peace during our worship service, it is very clear that God is in each of us. When coming to the altar and accidentally falling down (which you see me do a lot because of my darn leg), it might not feel like the presence of God. However, I propose that even in this, God exists, perhaps even more powerfully than in the obvious. It is up to us to find him there.