



Unconventional Discipleship Through Social Media at Living Stones Church



"God uses ordinary people...little becomes much as you place it in the Master's hand." - Danniebelle Hall, "Ordinary People"

In July 2020, a few months into the COVID-19 pandemic, the Living Stones and Sunland-Tujunga churches started



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holding outdoor and drive-in radio services. Utilizing new technology, the church enlisted the help of its young people to run the livestream.

One of those young people was the pastor's 14-year-old son, James Aitken. One Sabbath, James told his dad, John Aitken II, pastor of Living Stones and Sunland-Tujunga churches, "Why don't we open an Instagram account so we could reach more people?" John Aitken II responded that he didn't know how to use Instagram, but James assured him it was easy, offering to set it up and begin posting.

Who would've thought that a 14-year-old's idea of posting on Instagram would reach people who could never be reached using conventional means?

In January 2021, local high school student Emin Matevosyan joined the church's Friday night Sabbath School class on Zoom for the first time. "I came across the church after researching about the denomination's beliefs and seeing the accuracy in the doctrine," he shared. "I did a quick search for an SDA church on Instagram, and there came up Living Stones church. I was surprised there was an Adventist church somewhat walking distance from me."

The next week, Ryan Lacson, cross trainer for the Living Stones and Sunland-Tujunga churches, taught the class and met Matevosyan for the first time. Lacson soon invited Matevosyan for a one-on-one Bible study, and Matevosyan agreed. "It's a blessing being a cross trainer, because you see God working in ways you don't expect," Lacson shared. "I get to witness how God brings the right people, at the right place, at the right time."

After one month attending Sabbath School, Matevosyan began attending the outdoor church service every Sabbath and immediately began helping set up before the service and putting things away after the service.

Matevosyan was baptized by John Aitken II in June. "Before giving my life to Christ, I still was a Christian but a lukewarm one for my whole life," he shared. "My salvation process was over a seven-month period. I was only a senior in high school at 17. I was just getting into philosophy, but I also had studied physiotherapy, astronomy, and some theoretical physics, which all got me to acknowledge that God is evidently real. The more I learned, the more my faith grew."

Matevosyan is now an active church member, deacon, and multimedia specialist for the livestream ministry. He has also extended his discipleship in the community as the founder, teacher, and leader of the Glendale Community College Christianity Club, hosting weekly Bible studies/discussion sessions through God's help.



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“Being like Christ is always the way to do it right,” Matevosyan said. “With God’s help, guide your friends, your families, and yourselves in truth.”

May this story inspire us to open our eyes and ears to see and hear what God has given our churches to spread His good news! Let us use our local church resources, young and old, for discipleship, conventional and unconventional.

By Anna Godoy Aitken