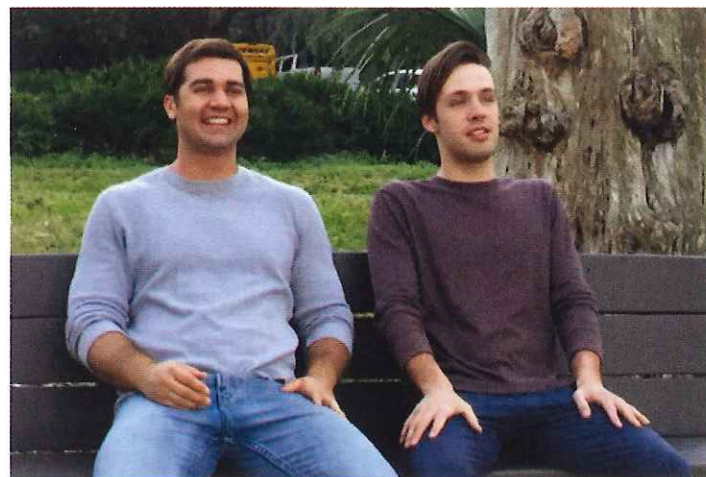


## Finding Favor: Production of *The Favorite* movie becomes community effort in Tampa Bay

*The Favorite* movie was inspired by true events that took place with Luke Bernard, son of Somebody Cares Tampa Bay founders Daniel and Kathy Bernard.

On March 9, 2013, Luke was in a near fatal car accident and given little hope to survive or have a normal functioning life. God answered the prayers of thousands. Luke not only survived, but had a recovery his neurosurgeons themselves termed miraculous. As he was finishing rehab, Luke had a vivid dream about two brothers. He recorded the dream in writing, and it later became the screenplay for the movie. (Go to [www.TheFavoriteMovie.com](http://www.TheFavoriteMovie.com) to watch



**Top:** Luke in March 2013, when he was not expected to survive the injuries he sustained in a car accident.

**Bottom:** Luke in 2017 on the set of *The Favorite* with fellow actor Matt Fahey.

*Luke's interview with the 700 Club*)

The story is about two brothers who depict Luke's physical and spiritual transformations. The perceived favorite son is a soccer player, and the other is trying to win his father's approval by winning fights as a Mixed Martial Arts fighter.

*The Favorite* is a tool to help churches reach their communities with the message of the gospel in a form that is palatable to millennials. Research conducted by marketing group City on a Hill shows that millennials make up over 50% of the world's estimated 7.5 billion population. Sadly, 70% of them will never enter a church—but over 50% of them consider themselves frequent movie-goers.

"If we want to reach over two billion millennials," say the Bernards, "we must be in this space in a way that is relevant."

The cast includes notables such as John Schneider (*The Dukes of Hazard*, *Smallville*), Tyler Perry's *Have and Have Not*), current UFC Welterweight Champion of the World Tyron Woodley, and a cameo appearance by Former WWE Wrestling Champion Jeff Hardy.

In February and March of this year, ministries networked through Somebody Cares Tampa Bay rallied together resources to make the production possible. Gulf Coast Church allowed their buildings to

be occupied for two months during pre-production and production. Neighboring church First Baptist of Indian Rocks was a scene location. Christian businesses provided food, vehicles, and locations free of charge. Many churches brought volunteers as extras and provided food daily to feed the cast and crew of 70. The City of Oldsmar supplied emergency vehicles to add to the production quality for the crash scene filmed there.

Extras were needed throughout the entire shoot. Some days required hundreds. Most of the experienced filmmakers on the set were skeptical about the needs getting filled. First AD Josh Riggs, who started his career with Steven Spielberg but eight years ago committed to focus on faith based films, commented, "Usually people get excited for a week, then it wanes and people don't show up. But *The Favorite* actually got bigger at the end."

Elayne Schmidt, who has been in the industry for 37 years and has worked on \$100 million sets, was initially concerned about the number of meals that were to be donated; she later commented: "In all my years of being on sets, I have never seen this kind of community involvement. It has been amazing. We don't get this amount and quality of food served on big multimillion dollar shoots."

Another first time experience for Elayne occurred on the last day of shooting at Gulf Coast Church. After the last scene was shot with 200 extras from 25 different churches, Pastor Randy Morris asked for the cast and crew to come forward so they could receive prayer.

"It was an awesome experience to witness God's presence and see how He worked through the production of the movie," Daniel observed.

"The mission of *The Favorite* is to bear the light of the Gospel in cities across America and beyond," said Luke. "Bearing the light happened before and during the shoot and will continue as we get this

message in film to theaters. We will also shine Christ's love in the cities where we open in theatres as we support traumatic brain injury centers by bringing awareness and financial support."

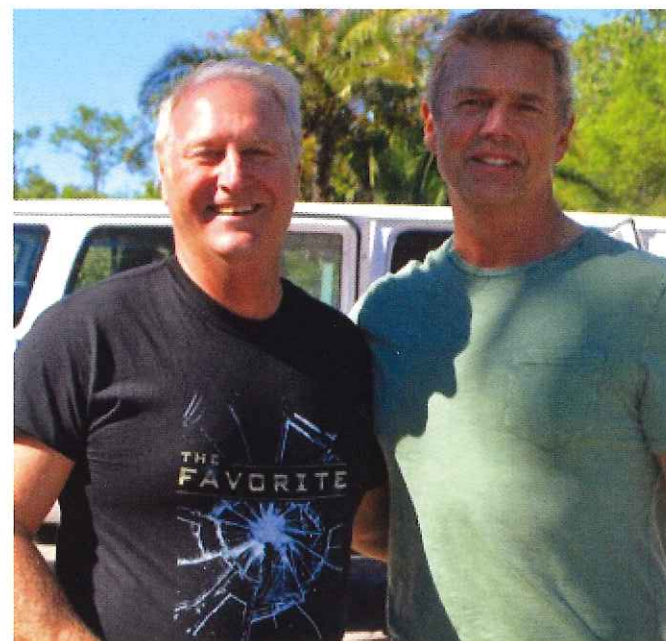
"Favoritism is as old as Jacob and Esau and is not going away," Daniel continues. "In fact, counselors say 60% of issues stem from sibling rivalry or favoritism. It is also a subject we are not seeing addressed in churches."

In response to that, Daniel and Kathy have developed a six-week study guide on favoritism to be used as a tool so those already in the Church can receive healing. It can also be used to reach people outside the Church who see the movie.

*The Favorite* is now in post-production, undergoing edits and the addition of musical scores.

"By summer," Daniel said, "we should be talking with distribution companies about picking up *The Favorite*. At this time we do not know the release date."

**Daniel Bernard is looking for communities who will come together to bring *The Favorite* and its ministry tools to their city. If you are interested in having Daniel come and share with a small group of pastors and business leaders in your area, you can contact him at 727-421-4132 or by email, [daniel@sctb.org](mailto:daniel@sctb.org).**



**Top:** Daniel Bernard with actor John Schneider, who portrays Daniel in the movie.

**Bottom:** Director Curtis Graham oversees filming of one of the movie's outdoor scenes.

