

WELCOME TO OUR HOPE PROJECT'S

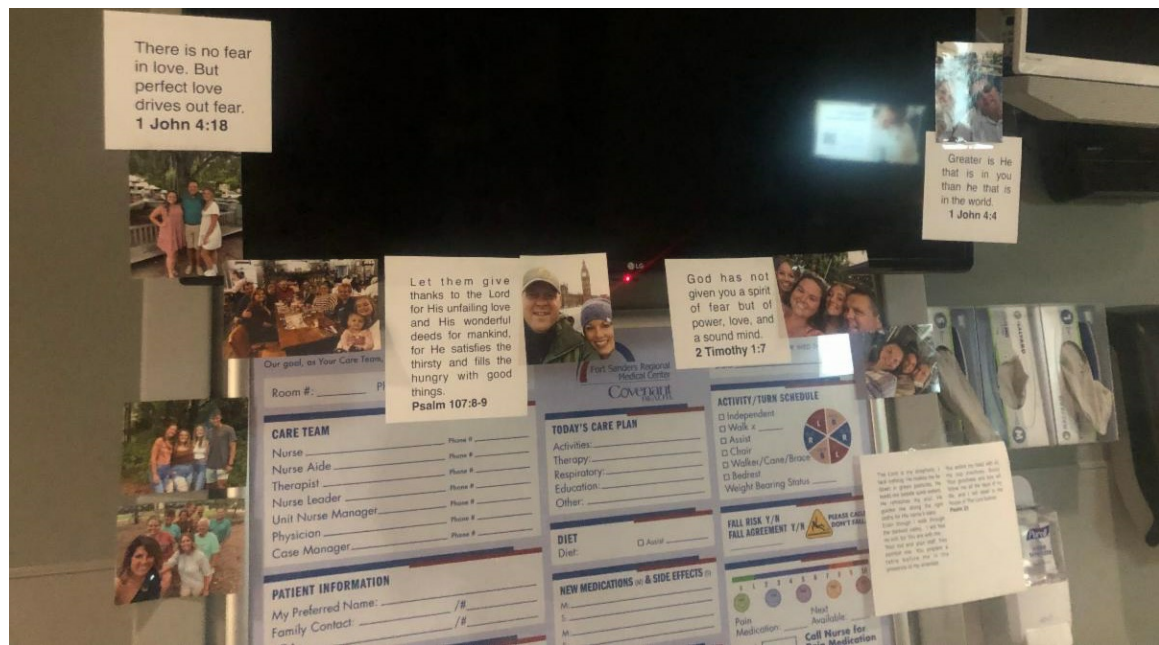
Tuesday Newsletter

We're so glad you're here!

What we are about.....

HOPE!

This newsletter aims to bring hope and joy to your daily life by sharing my family’s journey through unexpected challenges. We firmly believe that a positive outlook, faith, and the right circle of friends will help you tackle any obstacle with resilience and a smile. In the upcoming editions, we will candidly share our recent experiences dealing with Parkinson's Disease and Esophageal Cancer.



Cardiac I.C.U. room at Covenant Health. MOTIVATION!!!



Meet the Parker Family

From left to right- my wife, hero, and best friend, Trina. My oldest daughter, Grace. My youngest daughter, Anna. I (Nick), the content creator, and editor.

Trusting God’s Process / Trusting His Plan (continued...)

The Esophagectomy

This surgery was proposed as an option but it was “the option” that produced the greatest opportunity for a cancer-free future when coupled with chemotherapy, proton radiation therapy, and immunotherapy. My team at Covenant Health, lead by Dr. Chism included Surgeon’s Michael Antiporda and David Graham who would perform the procedure scheduled to take nearly 7.5 hours. For more information please click [HERE](#) for a link to the American Cancer Society page.

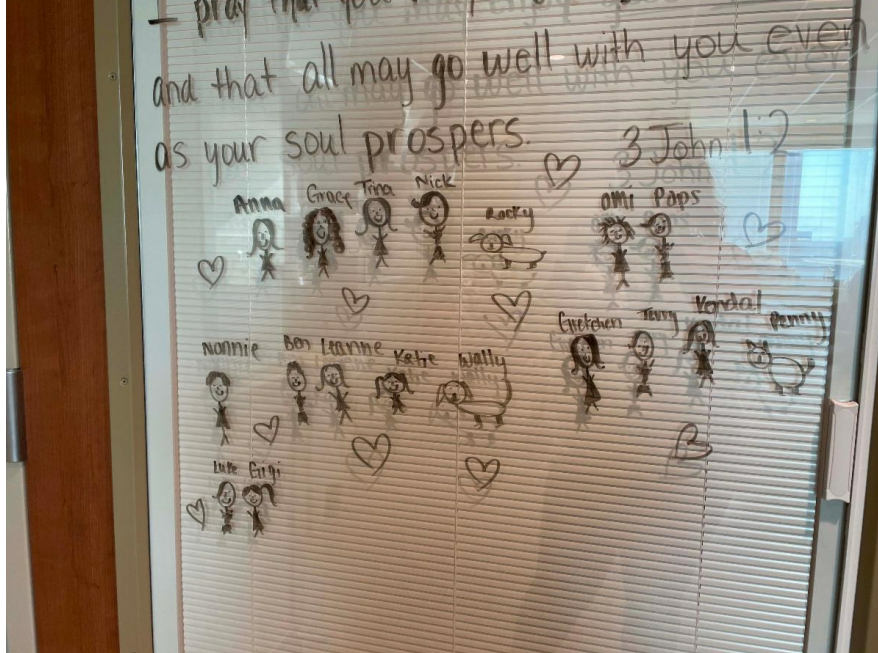


Trina, Dr. Antiporda and Dr. Graham on the elevator post-surgery

I am truly humbled at the number of folks who prayed for our family and me. Friends, family, other churches, friends of friends, etc. A special moment that I'll never forget-because the length of the procedure I was "awarded" the first surgical slot that day which meant my wife and I left our home in Seymour, TN at four-ish in the morning to travel to the hospital in Knoxville. Just as we left the driveway and started down the road, our neighbor, Joann Burchell, was standing, in the pitch-dark, streetside in front of their home. As we stopped, Joann came to the car window and said, "I had to get up and let you know, we are praying for you". To this day I am stirred by things like these "faith shots" that I believe God grants as reminders of His love for us.



Some of the kids at church praying for me



The door to my room in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

The procedure went long (9.5 hours) because the tumor had attached itself to the thoracic aorta. Dr. Antiporda informed us later that they wouldn't have done the surgery had they known this due to the increased risk of rupturing the tumor or aorta while separating the tumor from the aorta. I believe this was another mysterious example of God's provision, protection, and another faith-boosting exercise because none of my pre-operation scans showed this anomaly. Perhaps the most difficult part of the surgical phase in this journey was the ten days in recovery at the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. For the first five days,



I wasn't allowed to swallow food or liquids at all! Not even, ice or water on the lollipop-shaped sponge things, due to the fragile sutures at the junction of the stomach and the remaining few centimeters of the upper esophagus that would forever serve as my stomach and esophagus. Because the surgeons had informed me of this before-hand I was mentally prepared for this forced fast. I was not prepared for the discomfort of the four drain tubes coming from my neck and torso and the additional feeding tube in the nose. To access the tumor via robotic arms my right lung was deflated and was extremely uncomfortable for weeks after surgery. This accounted for the drain tubes on my right side and the one in my neck drained the reattached stomach that now serves dual roles as esophagus and stomach.



My first walk "round the C.I.C.U" tubes and all.

Understanding the process and that the mission-critical stage of surgery was over and successful, it was now up to me to cooperate with the plan



My hero, chief nurse and wife, Trina.

It would be impossible for me to mention, by name, everyone whom God used in my miracle but the Gold Medal goes to my wife. Trina stayed with me every night and day with

of “rehabilitation”. I had to be able to demonstrate basic efficiency in “daily living activities” before I could be discharged. Hey, at least it isn’t chemo! The staff in the C.I.C.U. at Ft. Sanders / Covenant Health was so special in every way, professional, relationally, and spiritually.

breaks only to run home, shower and get some “me time”. Not to be gross but I never thought I’d need help going to the bathroom at fifty-three years old. It is the honor of my life to call her my wife for the last thirty-one years. She is a living testament of Proverbs 17:22 “A merry heart does good, like medicine.”

Thought of the week

No matter the situation, try to find the positive and focus on that. I believe the things in life, good or bad, we focus on tend to grow. Let's cultivate the good together...

Coming Next Week

Lessons learned

Click "Visit our Website" to see archives of Tuesday Newsletters.

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