



May 2023

Dear Praying Friends,

Some letters are easy to write. Some, not so much. This one definitely falls into the category of not easy to write. But even as I write it, I am confident in God's care for us in the path we are getting ready to take. That being said, having you go to our Father on our behalf and asking Him for His help for us means a lot!

THE "C" WORD

About a week or two after I wrote our last letter, Bethany was at our local doctor to see about some pain she was having. The doctor did some tests, and when the results came back, he said, "I think you have cancer, but we need to take more tests to be sure." It was the last thing either of us were expecting to hear. The results of those tests would take two weeks. People say that the waiting can be one of the most difficult things to deal with. They weren't kidding. Those were the longest two weeks of our lives. When the results came back, the doctor confirmed his suspicions. Bethany does have breast cancer. He recommended that we go to a bigger hospital to get treatment, so we began our search to find a doctor and hospital that would provide the care that Bethany needed. Our church family here has been absolutely amazing at helping us navigate the Japanese medical system which, honestly, even after living here for 20 years, is still pretty overwhelming to us.

The careful and precise guiding that God has already provided, His care for each step we've taken has been SO comforting and encouraging. Already the flood of messages from those who've heard and have reached out has been a great source of strength, for which we are deeply grateful. Thank you!

So here's where we're at currently. There are several key aspects of Bethany's cancer that we don't know yet, which we're still waiting to learn. But through several incredible "perfect timing" moments, God has led us to an amazing doctor about an hour away from us who is just perfect for Bethany. The tests to find out those key aspects are scheduled, and the initial surgery is scheduled for Tuesday, June 6, which will be the evening of Monday, June 5 for those of you who are in the States. The extent of the surgery, and the following treatments will depend on the results of those tests. I don't often ask for prayer for us personally, but this time I'm going to. First, please pray that God will clearly help the doctors to see where the cancer is, and that they will successfully be able to treat it. Pray that the cancer has been contained. Pray for God's grace as we go through this crazy emotional roller-coaster. Pray for Bethany's healing. Pray for strength and grace for me as I care for Bethany, and for the needs of our church family during this time. And lastly, pray for our kids. Two of them are on the other side of the planet wishing desperately to give their mom a hug. One is ten years old, trying to figure out what all this means and struggling with the potential possibilities of what may come.

THAT BEING SAID...

That being said, we are confident that God is fully in control of each step we take. We KNOW that not one moment of our suffering is wasted, and that He IS using this both for OUR good and HIS glory! Our church family has never been more unified and committed to loving others and loving Jesus. Over the past three or four months, we've seen several people find salvation in Jesus! Several that we have been praying for over a year! We will be having a special baptism service at the river scheduled for July 9, which I'm SO EXCITED to tell you about! People are being added to the church family. The fellowship is so sweet, often lasting hours after the service. God's visible working within our church family hasn't stopped. It's still ongoing. And we're SO THANKFUL!! Thank you for praying. Thank you for giving. Thank you for being faithful.

Serving Him,
The Carters to Japan