

Betsy Christiansen's Update

May 2, 2008

Claire & Betsy Updates

Friday evening 5-2-08

Dear family and friends,

Thanks for your continued prayers for me, my 23-year-old niece Claire, my sister Wendy and 2-year-old Madalyn. I arrived home late this afternoon, driving from the Birmingham airport after extending my 8-day stay in OH by 2 more days.

Claire was abruptly discharged Tuesday evening, earlier than her MD had told us to plan on. She still has generalized body pain – likely both the inflammatory processes of her 4 resolving infections, plus weaning from 3 opiates needed to control the horrible pain of a fully ulcerated mouth and throat since early March. We're still awaiting interpretation of Claire's Lyme testing from Wendy's own MDs in NJ and NYC.

She is discouraged, fearful and depressed, not to mention angry and feeling betrayed by the gastroenterologist who didn't listen to her screams to stop a colonoscopy w/ biopsy until she could be further, properly sedated. Channels for reporting that abuse were initiated before we left the hospital. The biopsy ruled out Crohn's, praise God, but she has ulcerative colitis from her original bowel infection. GI symptoms have minimized; she's no longer losing blood in her stools; and she's on a medication to reduce colon inflammation. Her hematologist thinks red cell production has been suppressed by inflammatory disease processes and that as these subside normal bone marrow function will resume; she sees him for follow-up on Tuesday. (Claire received transfusions on 2 different days during this 2nd hospital stay.)

On discharge, we were left 'holding the bag' to find Claire an addictionologist and treatment center that is also equipped to monitor her continuing medical needs plus physical therapy and depression-counseling needs. She's lost 25-30# since March 6th and is extremely weak from being in bed so long. We have some hopeful rehab leads after *numerous* phone calls. Home health nursing assessed her today; physical therapy comes tomorrow.

Wendy recovers from a bad head & chest cold but is holding up *amazingly* well in her own Lyme-recovery. We praise God for that. **Madalyn** recovers from a cold & strep throat but last nite had a high fever. Today we're grateful that it's been only lo-grade, plus she's much perkier.

We're grateful for the many expressions of God's love through His people. They are providing food; babysitting Madalyn; and updating folks by email for Wendy. They provided airport rides plus a vehicle for me while in OH. A friend from PA bought

my airline ticket to return a 2nd time, and a church in Birmingham chauffeured me to and from the airport to save me \$90 in parking. **Praise God I'm well** despite little sleep, exposure to respiratory 'bugs' and the stress of my mind and emotions working overtime. Wendy and I rest in Jesus' peace and presence, but Claire doesn't know that yet. We covet your prayers for her physical-emotional-spiritual healing; Wendy's continued healing, stamina and endurance; Madalyn's healing; rehab plans for Claire; and that God would get the glory for ALL THINGS.

May 3-5 to Panama City, Destin & Fort Walton, FL: sharing at 3 churches for final spring support-raising travels. **May 31-June 7 medical team to Mexico:** Cub, Mark, Helen, Megan, me and possibly Jonathan coming alongside the Burkempers, our missionaries in Acapulco with whom we will serve Christ. Please pray that as we minister to felt needs of those the Spirit calls to our clinics we'd share Jesus in compassionate ways that draw them to His saving grace.

Thank you for your faithful intercessions and your practical expressions of His love, especially this past month! God has given us the best family, friends and prayer warriors!

Gratefully in His grip,

Betsy

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