

METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

July 2018

At 7am on May 31, our daughter, Jennifer, texted her mother, Lisa, to see if she could drop off Abigail, our twenty-two month old granddaughter. Her husband Dan was in the ER. Well of course! There's no need to text.

When Jenn arrived with Abby and her ten-day-old daughter, Aurora, she explained that they had been in the ER since 4:45am. Dan was having chest pains. The doctors thought he might be having an anxiety attack; but they wanted to run some tests.

She left Abby, took Aurora and returned to the hospital; it's about fifteen minutes from our house. As soon as she returned to the hospital we got another call. **Dan had "coded" twice and it didn't look like he was going to make it.**



Jennifer was just coming out of the ER when I arrived. Aurora was in a car seat on the arm of a young nurse. Through tears, **my daughter told me that her twenty-nine-year-old husband was not expected to live.**

We sat in the waiting room outside the Cath Lab. The entire team worked on Dan for hours. His heart did not beat for an hour. They performed CPR continuously. Dan was intubated and connected to an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) machine. It pumps blood from the body, infuses it with oxygen and returns it. It is an advanced life-saving tool employed in grave situations.

At various intervals, medical staff came to update us on progress. Many different staff members said, "If you pray, now is the time to pray." Some even said, "We are praying for you and Dan." (I spend time visiting in large urban hospitals. This is very rare; I have never experienced it before.) Others in the waiting room were praying for us, too.

Each time the staff emerged, we experienced mixed emotions. Would their news be encouraging, or devastating? Finally, they came and said that they were able to place a stent in Dan's artery and stabilize him. A blood clot had caused one-hundred percent blockage in the left anterior descending artery. Later, we learned that this is the condition known as, "the widow maker."

The heroic efforts of the medical staff saved Dan's life. Jennifer is an RN who works as a Charge Nurse at a skilled nursing facility. She has been involved in many "codes". She was amazed that they managed to keep Dan alive. And, she was thankful that the doctor was willing to take aggressive action.

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Dr. Jim Brown,

Executive Director

Soon, a team from the main campus of Jefferson Hospital in Center City Philadelphia arrived to transport Dan. They wanted to airlift him, but the weather would not permit it. They had to transfer Dan to a different type of ECMO machine and then drive him in an ambulance through traffic to the hospital. A world-renown cardiologist had come from Center City to the local hospital to make the transfer. He spoke very seriously, stating that this machine was the final tool they could use to save Dan. If anything went wrong in the ambulance, they would not be able to keep Dan alive.

Our drive to Center City was difficult. **Dan's heart had stopped for a long time. Would he have brain damage? Would he ever wake up?** When Jennifer and I arrived at the main campus, we learned that Dan had awakened in the ambulance and tried to pull the tube from his throat. While that could be dangerous, it was also joyful! He had neurological function; he was able to feel, think and command his body!

During this time, we began to ask family, friends, our church family and others to pray with us for Dan's healing. Thousands of Christians from all over the world lifted this young man before God's throne of grace. And God answered!

Dan spent ten days in the cardiac intensive care unit. They removed the ECMO machine. They removed the ventilator. Dan woke up with no cognitive deficit. Doctors, nurses and other medical staff were amazed by his recovery. We are very thankful for the expertise of medical professionals; but we recognize that healing comes from the Lord!

Here's how Dan put it:

...All praise to GOD for keeping me around to see my 2 baby girls, wife and family again. I want to thank all the medical professionals, prayer warriors, and all of the people who have reached out. The love and support has been amazing. **There is no other answer for the way things panned out other than that GOD has more plans for me.** Please keep the prayers coming as the upcoming months will be tough. But as it stands, I'm walking away from this with just a little foot drop and a stent. This was nothing short of a miracle and **I will use this second chance at life to witness to people about the power of GOD and his love...**

Please ask the Lord to use this life-changing event for His glory. Pray for Dan, Jennifer and their family as they serve in our Holmesburg congregation. Pray that other young adults would recognize the fragility of life and live with purpose to glorify God!

James 4:14 - Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

Acts 20:24 - However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.



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