

**2013-09-11: Honolulu, Hawaii: Don Baron taken Home with Jesus
Memorial service 2013-09-28, Honolulu**

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**by
Ia Mei and Chris
Baron**

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Don asked us to send an mail on the occasion of his Homegoing, to all on his email address book list.

Email may still be sent to wife Ia Mei at this address, simuliustus@gmail.com.

(His son Chris can be emailed at baron.chris@alumni.duke.edu or chrisbhi@gmail.com -- both arrive his same inbox).

With friendship and love in Christ Jesus,

Ia Mei, Chris
Baron

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Please feel free to read as little or much as desired

This letter's sections are arranged starting broadly at outset, then increase in detail as one reads on

-- for instance, Don's Bio, and key Scripture quotes Don asked to be conveyed.

Prior update from over the Summer, also pasted at bottom, FYI - for those wishing further context/reflections on the journey.

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Warm Aloha - love & friendship - to our dear Family & Friends,

Donald Baron, Ia-Mei's husband of 46 years, Chris' dad, serenely took Jesus' hand and never let go as he was drawn homeward to Heaven just after 9 pm Honolulu time, Wednesday 9/11, 2013. Don had been born May 6, 1931. His transfer Home with the Lord was painless, peace-filled and fulfilled - with *God's Word of steadfast assurance in his soul, and Christ's loving, peace-giving Spirit indwelling his.*

Don transitioned from his temporary 'earthly tent' (see Bible quote, [2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 1 to 8](#), also written out toward end of this email, along with other Scripture quotes he asked to be conveyed on this occasion) painlessly, while asleep here at home, where he had received hospice care with us since returning from major intestinal bypass surgery and hospitalization in late May (end-stage [4] colon and abdominal cancer was discovered in April). In Don's own words he wrote beforehand to pass to you, he "*went Home to be with Jesus my Lord to await the resurrection of the body at His return.*"

Don invested quite a lot of thought and heart, during the seasons beforehand, into leaving written instructions about what he requested be conveyed to all family & friends. He wanted a service celebrating God's goodness and gift of Life and Heaven through Christ:

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*Memorial Service
Saturday, September 28,
10 a.m.
(Open Visitation 9:30 a.m.)*

*at
Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu,
1640 Liliha St.*

*(Light lunch Reception afterward at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
638 North Kuakini St.)*

*(Extra Parking, also at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
Directions: one block north of Chinese Lutheran, along Liliha St., then one block west on N.
Kuakini St.
More Parking also at Lanakila Elementary School lot, Alaneo St. entrance, one more block
west of Good Shepherd)*

*** Dad requested instead of any flowers, any memorial donations may be given for missions:
Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute in Camrose; or Lutheran Bible Translators (both searchable
on internet) ***

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PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM DON:
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Among other things that we'll include below, Don also wrote this to be shared with all, after his passage to his eternal home with the Lord:

"Dear friend,

Each one of us has a Day - it's the Day that Jesus Christ, my God and Savior, calls me across the bridge of time to eternity with Him.

My Day has already come, and I am with Him. There is now a joy utterly beyond my imagination, to be with my Savior and await with Him the resurrection of the body, which He purchased at such high price for me. I am a justified ("just-as-if-I'd never sinned") person, declared innocent by Jesus and dressed in His own robe of righteousness.

My 'Life-Verse' from the Bible is:

2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 15, 17-21

¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be a sin offering on behalf of us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Please give God thanks with me, and pray that my life work may continue on deeply fruitful for eternal life in the lives of people I got to know (and those they get to know) on earth.

With love, your friend, and brother through Christ,"

Don Baron

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TESTIMONIALS & REFLECTIONS SECTION:
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*** For those who have time and inclination, here we spotlight a few further uplifting aspects of Don's homegoing which among the countless loving goodnesses and assurances God grants, outshine the temporary grief of this fleeting earthly separation ***

On Monday, Don's earthly body was cremated, and the urn, in which his earthly remains await the resurrection at Jesus Christ's return, bears a word he asked to be written reflecting the miraculous might of Jesus' salvation - freely offered to all willing: "Forgiven"

Colossians chapter 1, verses 13-14 (1:13-14) -

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have *redemption, the forgiveness of sins*.

(to save space, the following have clickable links to open and read this "Roman road" row of roadmarks) :

[Romans 3:21-26](#), [Romans 5:8-11](#), [Romans 6:20-23](#)

In light of that, Don had always said that anytime the Lord decided to take him Home, he was totally ready and at peace -- which also serves to furnish us with God's genuine peace. Highlighting that, the Bible reading in the devotional book "[Jesus Calling](#)," which we read together the day following Don's departure, was

John 14:26- 27

²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

- Together, no matter whether external circumstances were hard or wonderful, God provided our family with supernatural peace and joy in Jesus presence. We got to celebrate Mom's birthday all together on September 1st... after enjoying together Dad's 82nd birthday May 6, then Father's Day, Mother's Day, their 46th Anniversary June 23, and Chris' birthday Aug. 4...and *appreciating* life and one another.

On Sep. 10, just after our last earthbound interaction -- a daily family devotional time reading God's Word (the passages which the Holy Spirit really tailored to fit with incredible personal relevance, are included at bottom of this email) -- Don slipped into a steady sleep or rest, no longer responding with gestures or the words which had been gradually fading with his stamina and wakefulness over the previous two weeks. The whole next day, 9/11 -- a day always

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poignant to us and in the nation's history with so many unexpected departures experienced by American families -- with dad in what seemed a semi-coma, mom and I got to spend nearly the entire day at his side communicating to him (he could likely hear most). We held him, told him again from our hearts thank you and we love you, sharing treasured portions of God's Word, praying together, and appreciating our close fellowship as a family - the primary gift, which God built over our lifetimes, granted us by His grace and love.

- We both have authentic peace and are deeply thankful to Jesus. Sadness during this temporary separation is far eclipsed by the many beautiful aspects which the Lord provided in all of His love and goodness, down to the small details.

For instance, one miracle and answered Prayer Request from before (Thank YOU for everyone's prayer assist) was embodied in the fact that when the hospice nurse arrived right after Don's passing, she was able to take the whole morphine supply the Hospice had issued to us, and dispose of it, all UNUSED (destroying it required our presence as signed witnesses - making us all the more thankful Don didn't have to use). The nurse said "99.9%" of end stage cancer patients deal with pain issue, but dad's pains that arose in June and increased to episodic sharp side and abdominal pains, were completely eradicated by God's intervention, answering prayers. Within days of starting to topically/internally use therapeutic-grade essential plant/herb oils such as frankincense (used by civilizations over millenia to counter cancer and other afflictions) the pain decreased then vanished for good by the second week. An extensive, raw bed rash that had stubbornly worsened in defiance of many weeks of pharmaceuticals, turned around then totally cleared in days with a few daily applied drops of the therapeutic oils, including from the antibacterial melaleuca.

Several wonderful friends that had personally seen highly responsive effects, including brother in Christ, Nowlan Correa of the Correa Ranch in Waimanalo, who in August saw his "death-sentence" stage 4 brain/bone cancer healed and disappear, verified by Queens Hospital... What a privilege we've been given with this precious opportunity for special rejoicing and exultation in the Lord together! (This miracle transpired subsequent to Nowlan introducing us to therapeutic oils (via doterra.com) plus a nutrition therapy while he was three months into his own usage.)

Praise God in all things! The Lord in His highest wisdom and love chose to deal with Nowlan's cancer with the temporary- extension miracle of a healing on earth, and for Don, God's customized miracle was to have him hop the lines and enter his ultimate healed state in Heaven...!

Also, another wondrous mercy of the Lord: about a week after our last update Aug. 2, with Don's all-night insomnia and hazardous restless wanderings being a priority prayer concern we'd shared, the Lord answered by turning around this mountainous symptom which had afflicted him ever since the cancer discovery surgery in April. The medical team had unsuccessfully tried a marathon 4-mos. sequence of almost 10 either unhelpful or bad side-effecting sleep medications (all operate thru brain and thus practically mind-altering). We took Don off the unending procession of sleep meds, deciding to rely solely on the God's help thru prayer, then the natural therapeutics, and dad finally started sleeping serenely through

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nights! Thus Jesus also enabled Ia Mei in the last month to be freed of her urgently acute sleep deprivation which Don's insomnia had triggered. Praise God for His answers (always) to prayer.

- God's love He furnishes through the living Jesus, has been beautifully reflected not only in the past 5 months the Lord gifted us with, but also over the 5 years since dad's miraculous recovery from what the doctor emphasized should have been a fatal stroke. Such supernatural gifts are always a wonderous and only temporary extension of this brief layover in the transit terminal which is planet earth. The ultimate miracle and (Christmas/Easter) Gift is that which Jesus delivered when He visited our transit terminal and accomplished the reconciliation and eternal friendship God is intent on offering each of us.

As our family has continually seen faithfully fulfilled from Jesus' Rock-solid Word, He's upheld us throughout our journeys. We all actually are together in the same boat, moving on life's one journey that God meant to truly count, Homeward-bound at the same rate... *each second at a time*... on approach to the Arrival gate of Christ's intended ultimate Destination for us all: not this fleeting shadow-world ("Shadowlands" as Oxford and Cambridge professor C.S. Lewis -- and one of Don's all-time favorite Christian authors-- put it in a book and movie of same term; King David also chimes in, Psalm 23 verse 4, in the Old Testament) but rather, the eternal *real-world* of God's Heaven.

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SIGNIFICANT SCRIPTURES SECTION:
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* * *We would like to close, by relaying to you special passages from the Bible, God's Word which He highlighted and brought to us in this meaningful transit season we family and friends are together in.* * *

One beautiful example of how the Holy Spirit so personally communicated God's heart and thoughts is this past Sunday, the first after Don's departure. The church we happened to be scheduled to visit (Calvary Chapel Honolulu) hadn't yet heard about Don, yet the Bible readings were BOTH the Psalms (84 and 42) that Mom had last shared with Dad. The associated worship song words seemed just as miraculously customized. And (! as if that hadn't already stirred us deeply), pastor Bill Stonebraker's current message series on the Bible's book of Revelation, was just starting on chapter 19, the one focused on Heaven & *God's Family Reunion Party!*

Besides the staggering odds of the first church service visit we make after Don's passing away having a message the ultimate Homecoming of God's redeemed children, let alone dedicated SOLELY to the main chapter regarding our final prepared Destination, in the final Book in the Bible (the one which assures that we've been adopted onto God's team that wins in the end!), there is more...

This very chapter is the one George Frederick Handel quotes (particularly verses 6 & 16) for his world-famous "Hallelujah" chorus. That is the best known section of his musical work "The Messiah" which was probably Don's favorite musical piece - as it traces God's entire reconciliation and salvation plan involving Himself and humanity, Don often utilized it as a teaching tool for his Bible Institute of Hawaii courses such as Bible Overview. We had it playing many times at home, along with other Scripture and music on CD especially during the last weeks when he was in bed more and more - including much of 9/11 which turned out to be his transfer date. And this past Christmas, we as a family also finally made it to the annual live performance in Honolulu.

This is part of what it means that God Is Good All The Time

- *Bible readings from the Sept. 10 devotional reading in the book "Jesus Calling" that we read during our family devotions & final wakeful interaction with Don -- the day before his Homegoing:*

Isaiah 54:10

¹⁰ Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will

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not be shake nor My covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

[Genesis. 28:15](#)

¹⁵ I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

[Matthew 28: 19-20](#)

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

- *Scripture on audio CD in background (likely to be heard even if in coma) during final earthly minutes:*

[Gospel of Mark, chapter 8, verse 25 to chapter 9, verse 10](#)

(click this reference for link to read)

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- KEY BIBLE PASSAGES DAD SELECTED TO CONVEY FOR THIS OCCASION:

[Philippians 1:19-24](#)

¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. ²⁰ I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far

[1 Thessalonians 4:13- 5:11](#) (click this reference for link to read)

[2 Corinthians chapter 4](#) (click this reference for link to read)

[2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 1-8:](#)

[1](#)For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. [2](#)We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. [3](#)For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. ^a[4](#)While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. [5](#)God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

[6](#)So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. [7](#)For we live by believing and not by seeing. [8](#)Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord.

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BIO SECTION :

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BIO

Donald William Baron

"For You created my inmost being; you kit me together in my mother's womb...Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your Book before one of them came to be..." - Psalm 139: 13,16

Don Baron was born May 6, 1931, only child of Albert Louis Baron and Amelia Elizabeth Baron, in Queen's Village, Long Island, just east of New York city.

After obtaining his B.A. degree from Gordon College in Boston in 1953, he studied at Lutheran Bible Institue, Teaneck, NJ. He then completed a Master of Divinity degree in 1959 from Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, MN, including a two-year internship at Truth Lutheran Church in Hong Kong. He studied Mandarin Chinese at the Institute of Far Eastern Languages at Yale University, 1959-61, then completed a two year scholarship (done in Mandarin!) at National Taiwan University, Taipei, 1961-63.

He met Ia Mei in an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) Bible study group while both did graduate studies (Don completed M.A. in East Asian studies in 1965) as East-West Center grantees at the University of Hawaii.

After being ordained as a pastor and missionary to Taiwan in 1966, working especially with youth/students, they married June 23, 1967. They and new infant son Christopher (means "carrier of Christ") went on to his next call pastoring Prince of Peace Lutheran church in Margate, Florida in 1969.

Called by Seattle Lutheran Bible Institute in 1972 to found the Bible Institute of Hawaii (BIH), he served as the Director and a faculty member until 1989. At that point the Lord led him to take a call to replant and pastor Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Honolulu.

Upon retirement ("re-FIREment" as he loved to remind) in 2001, the Baron couple spent nearly 6 years serving the Lutheran Church of New Zealand in pastoral and training ministries before returning home to Honolulu. More recently, he continued to teach with BIH and to serve pastorally the Chinese Lutheran Church of Honolulu he had co-founded in 1974.

Don Baron transferred Home to Heaven with Christ on 9-11, 2013. The president of Bible Institute of Hawaii's board of directors issued a tribute the day after Don's departure, where he wrote: "I particularly appreciated that Pastor Don not only taught biblical truths and the Christian life, but lived consistently with his teaching. After offering courses on church growth

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through BIH, he felt that he needed to find out if what he was teaching would really work. He resigned as Executive Director and took on pastoral duties at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. He continued to teach for BIH, even attending our planning retreat last year to offer counsel. Along with his wife and his son Chris, he leaves a wonderful legacy of faithful work in the kingdom of God."

Don Baron loves his Savior, the Son of God Jesus Christ, and people. His compassionate life reflects Christ as a mirror does the Son. As reflected by his request that his earthly remains await Christ's Second Coming in a vessel inscribed with 'Forgiven', his life's purpose - self-described as a hungry one, showing others who are hungry where to find the Bread of Life - is continually to know Christ and to make Him known...

"O Lord, You have searched me and You know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue You know it completely, O Lord. You hem me in - behind and before; You have laid Your hand upon me... Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, You are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast...How precious concerning me are Your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with You...Search me, O God, and know my heart...and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139: 1-5, 7-12, 17-18, 23, 24)

Thank you, we truly appreciate you- your life truly a gift of God - and all that folks have done to show supportive love at every juncture and in countless ways!

From the depth of our hearts, we thank God for Him, for our husband and father Don, and for each of you...

With sincere gratitude, hope & mutual prayer -

Ia Mei, Chris

Baron

**Christopher A. Baron Consulting, LLC/ Education Management Consultants Hawaii, LLC
international affairs - education - energy**

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PREVIOUS UPDATE: AUGUST 2, 2013

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Chris Baron
Date: Fri, Aug 2, 2013 at 3:00 PM
Subject:
To: "Baron.Chris"

Aloha, dear family & friends -

Sending you this update on Dad's cancer crisis:

(The last one, from early June, is also pasted at bottom for those who want.)

It's now been almost 4 months from the time doctors discovered Dad had stage 4 colon cancer that had metastasized into the abdominal area - and from the time Kaiser hospital doctors dropped the bombshell of a life-expectancy "around 6-months."

Dad's now been living back at home under hospice care with mom as primary caregiver for just over 8 weeks, after 6 weeks in hospital.

The whole of life has been rollercoaster-ish for our family ever since Dad's hospitalization in April. Just living day to day can seem to stump us with new mysteries daily, even merely trying to grasp and respond to the volatile mix of Dad's individual health conditions (including heart/stroke and vein blockage hi-risk profile, degrees of dementia) compounded by their bizarre interactions and effects. Such that one can often get the sensation of groping one's way in the dark of an alien world we've suddenly been thrust into...

*At the same time, Mom & Dad (who celebrated his 82nd birthday in May + 46 years of marriage June 23!) and I start off by **thanking the Lord Jesus for His amazing personality & heart, and all He does so extravagantly for everyone as source of ALL life.***

God has truly given HIS ALL for US ALL, and daily, wondrously upholds us with Jesus' Holy Spirit, as we set our hearts & minds NOT on ever-changing external circumstances & uncertainties -- (In the time since we last wrote, there have been more major ups and down:

- Meaningful celebrations & milestones --- while Dad's "terminal" cancer with its fallible human forecast of a few months' time ticking off;*
- Encouraging occasions like visits from friends, even some flying from halfway around the globe --- interspersed with harrowing happenings like 2 dangerous falls in one week's time, stemming from Dad's misguided attempt to defy doctor's order to always use a walker, or an episodic degree of dementia;*

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- *Slight improvements in appetite to consume helpful natural nutrient supplements to boost immune system --- sequenced with coping for many unbroken sleepless days + nights during 2 separate occurrences of acute reactions to pain then sleep medicines which sent him near the brink of death, for all we knew according to hospice's checklist for family members describing imminent departure symptoms;*

. . . Well, that's just a fuzzy picture of the tip of our life's iceberg since we last wrote 😊) -- BUT RATHER, we receive authentic peace, joy and love only from what Jesus and His sure, trustworthy character & Word promise and say about our lives & situations.

+ + + Once again, we can't say enough -- our gratitude to the Lord & you, for so many who've prayed & helped in Prayer, messages, supplies, and so many meaningful ways! + + +

1st Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 16-17, and 23-25 has been a recurring theme verse in our family's lives during this season. Journeying thru the midst of rough seas, we invite praying friends & family to join with us in drawing empowerment & guidance from Jesus' Word and purpose in coming times:

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus...

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it... [spiritual family], pray for us."

PRAYER POINTS

For those at this time not having the wherewithal to read in further detail below, we'd like to right off convey, besides prayer for God's healing, 4 main specific Prayer requests (think acronym "SEAS", below). If you could be so kind to pray for us in our journey through these heavy SEAS of dealing with life impacted by Stage 4 cancer:

S - Sleep: Dad still massively struggling daily to get sleep, for weeks he's been unable to fall asleep at night; this then magnifies the already unimaginably fatigue in body, mind and spirit during days (on occasion w/ degree of delirium from his personal metabolic reaction to sleep medication). In ongoing tries w/ a procession of sleep meds: some had horrific side-effects (brought him seemingly to edge of death symptomatically once, thank God He led us identify the true culprit & get Dad right off it). Mom is most impacted being kept awake, having to be in same room as dad gets up and down, sometimes disoriented &/or incontinent under partial influence of whatever sleep med. She sometimes and I a couple times have been on the very edge of human endurance. We've also gotten some help offered by friends to occasionally sit with dad so mom can go to other room to try rest -- she's not easily able to lie down and fall asleep, either during daytime or after being awakened.

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E - Energy (+ overall Health): Difficult for us who've never experienced severe surgery or cancer to even begin to fathom how overwhelming the depth of fatigue can be in every aspect --mind, body, spirit, motivation...(searching google or wikipedia on 'cancer related fatigue' gives good idea how to pray). Dad's 'batteries' have been at very low 'capacity' so to speak: while he can interact, converse and walk with quite regular capabilities for around 15 minutes, he then starts to feel totally drained, and compelled to lie down & rest. After 20 minutes he can be somewhat recharged and get up again; it often goes in such cycle. For instance, Dad's been a lifelong avid reader/researcher, yet reading has been often too mentally exhausting a prospect to even get started, because his whole being will very soon feel so tired.

Also, just recently Dad started having occasional shortness of breath, usually after physical movement -- this week the hospice nurse got us oxygen kit as backup if needed.

Ever since the hospital, he's suffering occasional pains in sides and constriction discomfort, especially after eating in his "messed-with" digestive tract where cancer was found (these have started to decrease in past few weeks - thank the Lord - don't know exactly why especially since under hospice-care status, Kaiser insurance will not cover further scans to look at the cancer's increase or decrease at cellular level, but the trend started about 10 days after we started using supplemental therapies; let's pray the trend continues).

A - Appetite: This is so vital to the therapeutic nutrients and supplements we've identified for him (natural extracts, essential oils, nutrition plan -- all to boost God-given immune system functions. After some previous setbacks, food appetite thankfully has started on an improving trajectory in past 10 days and we pray it will steady & persist. However, his desire and willingness to drink crucial water/liquid is persisting well below what a human body needs; he's had consequent abdominal problems of bloating, constipation, discomfort, so please pray for water intake (he's been unwilling to drink anything unless he *feels* thirsty for it, however much we try to explain.)

S - Spirit: Saved most important for last -- with the various crises and setbacks, sometimes discouragement & weariness, compounded by sleep deprivation while already exhausted, tries to overshadow our perspectives: sapping motivation & optimism, especially Dad who has had his former independent life quite utterly altered. Also, ironically as a retired pastor who ministered to countless folks in similar life conditions, it's sometimes as the saying goes: "a seamstress knows every stitch she misses," there can be at times that added human dimension of self-disappointment to the responses we find in ourselves. Indeed, the ground is level at the foot of the Cross; we're all in the same boat in being needful recipients of God's grace. Please pray the Holy Spirit impart hope, joy, peace (*Romans 13:15*) to Dad's mind/emotions/will, & a constant view and yielding to Jesus' own indwelling presence, power and purpose.*

* We highly recommend the daily devotional book "Jesus Calling" written by a missionary Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson publishers) who's mother had cancer - it has a couple of Bible passages and commentary written in Jesus' first-person voice, designed to foster one's personal friendship with God while navigating life's journey - both big picture & daily details. It

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was given by longtime dear friends Randy and Gay Hongo (*please join us in prayer for Randy, still actively serving the Lord with cancer, most recently on a Japan ministry trip*)

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Situation & Prayer update

For those interested in some further detail, or as you may know from previously, advanced *cancer* was discovered during difficult *surgery* in April to create a bypass around an obstructing tumor that had suddenly blocked Dad's colon.

The cancer was found to already be "stage 4" (having spread/metastasized out from the original colon site, to the abdominal cavity walls and surface areas of most of the intestines -- unknown as to where else in the body the cancer cells may have started to colonize via Dad's lymphatic & blood vessels).

Traditional medicine offers no cure options for dad's situation - cancer doctor (oncologist) said that the conventional treatments of surgery, chemo, and radiation would likely kill Dad before the cancer would, so in April the Kaiser system doctors *estimated his prognosis* at around 6 months.

- While the traditional medical establishment is out of solutions, we know God is not limited to the confines of human medicine:

One of the doctors who's a Christian, said she knows of cases of total cancer disappearance & cures by ways "medical knowledge can't explain" -- we know Who that's about!

Accordingly, family and friends have been proactively praying our request (Philippians 4: 6-7) for the Lord's healing work in dad -- and leaving the determination totally to the Jesus' best will, timing and purposes.

We single-heartedly look to Jesus who is able, and into Who's hands we commit the full determination of whether to heal physically, dad's cancer. After all, God's children are all headed to the only *ultimate* healing & wellness of Heaven, by Jesus' gift of grace... Whether & when He chooses to do miraculous physical healing-- what in fact is just a temporary extension of our already-brief earthly layover on the way to Eternity -- is in the Lord's most capable hands!

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Some further items for prayer & filling in more of picture:

- Communicating & Visits: Folks have asked, and since Dad not currently doing email, best way to write to him is postal. Phone (land [808-396-3887](tel:808-396-3887)) and in-person visits to pray and to briefly talk with him have often been possible; please understand if we can't always get to the phone immediately. Feel free to call me (contact info at signature) to look together at our schedules for workable time to aim for, subject naturally to Dad's daily condition. Apologies in advance that I'm also not always able to respond as I'd wish, to all of the various correspondences we receive..
- Pray for safety: Dad had 2 horrifying falls in the span of one week last month when he didn't use the walker as constant backup, per medical team's orders -- totally God's mercy each time that he break hip or such, and then contract deadly pneumonia or become permanently bedridden/hospitalized as often befalls the elderly.
- Naturopathic therapy & nutrition supplements: We've been engaged throughout in ongoing research & consultations on the vast array of integrated & alternative medicine therapies available - quite eye-opening; it can be like a never-ending archeological dig thru endless existent therapeutic/health-promoting options & claims from thousands of sources & sites worldwide. Often our attempts to sort out what is relevant for dad in particular proves to be enigmatic, changeable, or both. In June we'd started on a preliminary screening process regarding a mainland cancer treatment center for, but it became apparent Dad was currently too weak to travel -- even outings have been only a handful of times in the last month; however, the last one was on Wednesday!
- Other ministries and dimensions of recent life: A number of friends have been hit by crises as well -- some very nearly dying (and surviving miraculously thanks to God, against the specific odds given by doctor before surgery in one case, another after hitting head falling off a cliff hiking), or going thru immediate family or professional crises...so we're humbled & grateful to God for His hand of help, and the opportunity to also minister to others. Even apart from that, it would have been an rather intense spring/summer, slated with ministry projects (grassroots leadership development and joint cross-cultural Great Commission type project ventures through my consultancy and NewZEALandHawaii foundation), and marketplace ministry projects, including either co-founding or participation in a couple of enterprise startups (newest being an Education Management Organization [EMO] providing educational and global education services to institutions, schools and companies with a partner affiliated with Harvard's School of Education).

To close, our family is like any other -- life foists upon us all aforesaid kinds of unforeseen changes, and we give our best, game try to somehow weave them into the already-demanding layers of our lives.

[God encourages us all](#), by reminding: no need to worry, fret, nor fear (Matthew 6: 25-34, 2nd Timothy 1: 7-10). [We are in good spirits, thanks to God's Spirit, and His Word that's always good...](#)

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So, we shall keep on keeping on -- cheering one another via prayer, onward & upward to our Great Co-mission calling for the Lord _while in our fleeting season on earth ([Philippians 3: 8-16](#)),

Together in His best hands, and in prayer touch,

*Chris
and for Dad & Mom*

"Rejoice in the Lord always... the Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. "

- Philippians 4:4-7

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EARLIER UPDATE: JUNE 6, 2013
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Aloha greetings, dear family & friends --

We want to give an update on Dad...& to again thank God & you, for so many wonderful folks who've prayed & helped in incredible ways. We have experienced love, support, miracles & more... through Jesus' unending presence & faithfulness.

- As you may know from previous emails, extensive *cancer* was discovered and diagnosed as most severe stage 4, during complicated *surgery* in April to create a bypass around an obstructing tumor that had suddenly blocked Dad's colon.

The cancer was found to have spread out from the original colon site, to the abdominal cavity walls and surface areas of the small intestine. (It's unknown where else in the body the cancer cells have started to, or may in future, colonize via Dad's blood and lymphatic vessels.)

- As traditional medicine offers no cure for such stage of 'terminal' cancer, doctors have estimated his prognosis to be about six months.

The cancer specialist (oncologist) doctor has said that the conventional treatment methods of surgery, chemo, and radiation would most likely kill Dad before the cancer would.

- So life remains very much in flux for us. We abide in Christ, trusting and praying; though it is undoubtably one of life's hard and often chaotic seasons, we remain in steadfast spirits, by His Spirit and the promises of God's Word.

Gratitude for another milestone week before last:

- Late May, Dad arrived *back home for Hospice care* for the next chapter of his cancer journey, having been discharged from the skilled nursing facility after 3 weeks of physical therapy to regain strength post-op (this followed on the heels of 3 and half weeks in hospital).

Dad has no localized pain yet from cancer, which they say is most unusual (thanks, Lord); he feels mostly periodic, moderate discomfort overall, especially when fatigued from insufficient sleep, or during digestion.

All medical team members were surprised by the pace & extent of how Dad's walking, digestion & overall state of body, mind, spirit rebounded from the surgery (it will still take months to recuperate just from the operation, apart from the cancer effects)...

Many have also mentioned how they've been touched by the peace, assurance, joy, and love in our interactions...

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The many who've prayed know Who the credit goes to! (The Spirit of God imparts authentic Life like springs of living water, Jesus said.)

- Dad, Mom, other family members & I are doing okay, as in I guess rollercoasters are okay LOL :-). Mixed in with occasional natural moments of intensity & overwhelm, there are also manifold times & aspects of beauty and feeling the privilege of life & relationships...

Our *overarching reality & sense* is one of gratefulness for the many ways the Lord prepared us and has given Himself, our family & friends into our lives. And we continue to *intentionally* appreciate: the incredible gifts of life, one another, and the heritage of eternity together.

- Dad & we are all working to adjust; medical team points out he'll have various aspects of his body & life that are changed, while others that will be as before.

Cognitive/geriatric doctor believes he'll have ongoing neural/cognitive issues, some which started since the stroke he survived few years ago. This can affect daily dealings with Dad's health practices, and overall quality of life - as his memory or judgement can at occasional times be sorta touch & go.

This has made it rather more complex process for Dad - and in turn, for Mom & me - to grapple with responding to, interpreting, and planning for life with the alterations and ambiguities of life-threatening cancer journey.

We've been told that Dad's overall health condition due to cancer will be very changeable -- i.e. a person could be steady for a while, have a stable-looking checkup, and then just a couple days later conditions/symptoms could plummet; then things might taper off again... or not.

(On the other hand, some few people do "graduate" from hospice - actually improving to such degree that they may attain prospects warranting more proactive treatments. A few cancer patients in hospice program go into remission.)

As you'd imagine, it's a sometimes mystifying process trying to sort which is which, what can be expected, and how each of us ought to respond.

- Dad has usually been hoping & trying (tho' naturally there are momentary times of setbacks, lack of progress and discouragement, which can at those times include feeling like preferring to go truly Home, to heaven with the Lord) to regain abilities as approximal as possible to pre-hospitalization.

So we all have deep appreciation of the help & prayers we've been furnished by many, as we try to learn how to navigate the many altered issues & routines we now face, in ways both safe & rewarding... finding right balances and leaning upon wisdom from God.

- As for Dad's first 10 days home, he managed to receive some visits (*feel free - though we ask to please call ahead to check & arrange*), and to take a handful of brief outings: walking small

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distances outside house, going with family by car briefly to a couple of local viewpoints, going to an appointment with his physician.

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We'd be grateful for prayer for:

1)-- *Over the next couple weeks, we'll be having some appointments with doctors and cancer specialists, who would like to review prognoses and maybe consider possible cancer therapy options.*

(These we've been learning some about, from many resources -- traditional, alternative, and integrated cancer approaches/therapies. Some options that possibly involve proactive treatments to either try to slow or eradicate cancer, may necessitate Dad suspending from Hospice status).*

Very much for us to process & to seek God's purposes about.

Please pray for God's healing of the cancer (a temporary extension of the short layover which is earthly life) and ultimate healing (the lasting kind at our journey's destination in heaven) to happen through whatever best ways and times He purposes for Dad.

*(*Hospice, a wonderful program that's covered by dad's insurance/medicare, ministers to patients & families w/ a comprehensive medical & aid teams visiting weekly as needed for check-ups, any treatment and helps needed, to keep a person comfortable and with best possible quality of life in the face of life-threatening illnesses.*

2)-- *At present, Dad's greatest need is for ability to sleep at night: ever since entering hospital in mid April, he has struggled terribly to fall asleep just about every night.*

Despite feeling terribly tired, he finds he can't fall asleep through most of the night.

He's averaged 2-3 hours of sleep overnight; as you'd imagine, this can have pretty devastating effects during the days in terms of fatigue, outlook, feeling lousy, erosion of immune system, and other aspects that you'd imagine if sleep deprived.

Medical team has tried various medications but haven't yet found one that helps or avoids bad side-effects for him; only in a couple of the last nights has one type of pill seemed to show some partial effect.

Please pray for quality sleep & resulting energy.

3)-- *We are also trying to help Dad attune his nutrition to the new awareness of his situation; while his medical guides have said he can eat anything he wants, still there is the consideration that cancer can get fueled by sugars, accelerating its growth and effects.*

Since Dad has a deeply ingrained sweet-tooth (and can be insistent about what and how he wants to eat - for example he persists to drink Diet Coke almost in place of water), please pray that God will give Dad a renewed mind & internal compass regarding food/nutrition.

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Likewise, we pray for renewed inner thoughts, feelings & decisions regarding exercise (Physical Therapy folks gave him homework to retain mobility, which he's not yet fulfilling), and safety (care team emphasized --Dad often dismisses -- that he must always use walking aids: to protect from risk of falls, which too often statistically cause elderly hip/bone breakage, then pneumonia infection that can often dead-end life's path at hospital); Plus other helpful things that boost the immune and overall systems, thereby mobilizing the body's God-given capacities to counter disease & pathogens like cancer.

* * *

[THANK YOU](#) for the prayers & supportiveness!

In closing, a reassuring revelation of Jesus to his disciples & future friends:

"...the Counselor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 14:26

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus..."

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it... [Spiritual family], pray for us"

I Thessalonians 5:16-17, 23-25

Appreciating being in prayer touch,

Chris
and for Dad & Mom

--

Chris Baron

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