

4/13/24, Saturday. Update from Alisa.

Heath is Home! 🎉🎈



We discharged from inpatient at NeuroRestorative and now we'll take at least a week break to reset and get used to "home" before starting back with outpatient therapy.

**Prayers:**



Sleep for both of us



Grace as we establish and figure out new routines



Wisdom & the best plan for continued therapy for Heath

We'll be taking this week to have some fun, enjoy being home together, and planning a vacation

(or two) for the summer! 😊



**Update on Sierra:**

Peter Pan production week is starting and Sierra will be able to dance as her foot is healing well. She may have to make some minor adjustment, but she has a lot of roles in the production and is very excited for the show! Thank you all for praying for her and tickets are still available:


<https://tjc.universitytickets.com>

**4/10/24, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**


Pray for Heath as he's been exceptionally aggravated tonight about his arm and hand tonight. I haven't seen him so upset and emotional since Houston. It's been awhile. Please pray for him physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. The Lord knows what he's going through and what he needs.

**4/7/24, Sunday. Update from Alisa.**




Grateful for an incredible Easter weekend last week with Heath's parents and our niece! We had lots of fun together, and it was also personally refreshing to have some extra help and to have family around us to share both the burden and the love .



This week, thankful for visits from Pastor and also one of Heath's best friends, Ryan, and a mid-week outing with his speech therapist for Pie & sweet tea .




It's ALWAYS a treat to have a FaceTime visit, too! (Thank you to our parents, Heather, and to Kevin Cool!).

I often feel sad for what Heath has lost in the way of texting and calling and just keeping up with his friends as he would always do, so the visits and calls mean so much .

Along those lines, please pray for:



Language recovery. I don't even have words to express the loss I feel here—that we all feel here. Language touches every facet of life & independence and to have it so 'broken' is so very hard on many levels. Improvements are being made (especially in auditory & visual comprehension) but oh so slowly. (I wish it were leaps and bounds!) And Heath doesn't seem as

bothered by it as he is his arm/hand...so that's interesting (and frustrating) .



Heath will be discharged from inpatient on Friday 🎉 and come home for good. Pray for the transition to living at home full-time and for details about outpatient therapy, etc to work out for Heath's best.



Pray for my sleep. Heath has been able to spend the night at home the past few weekends, but I have not slept well at all. I'm thankful I can easily assist Heath in the night, but I have lots of trouble falling back asleep. I couldn't sleep last night between 12 to almost 4am! And before and



after was restless.



Pray for our hearts and conversations as we approach the 1 year mark soon. It's a lot to process and I also want to find ways to celebrate the challenges Heath's overcome this year!

Thank you all for continuing to pray and listen and reach out. We love you and pray for you as well!

### **3/29/24, Good Friday. Update from Alisa.**

We have been very busy spring cleaning and switching rooms around in anticipation of Heath being discharged to home mid-April. He will then continue with outpatient therapy.

Lots of thanks:



Visit from Josh Presley, a friend from 30 years ago! What a treat for Heath to see him after



so long and for me to finally meet him.



Visit from Hayley Westbrook this week who brought us a yummy dinner and gourmet

desserts (the biggest treat was her presence and smile!)



Heath's parents Bill & Marilyn Stoner and our niece Aleigha Nicole arrived yesterday from

MI to visit and celebrate Easter with us —so thrilled they are here with us



For good improvements and progress his last two weeks of the inpatient season.



Continue to pray for overall perseverance for Heath, for motor planning and safety awareness, and all the language areas of brain.



We continue to be grateful for the texts or messages and cards we receive to know that people are continuing to pray for Heath and for our family. You are the hands and feet of Christ to

us in so many ways.



**3/21/24, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**

We're coming up on 11 months post-stroke.



Heath has made it known to me through our own unique version of "charades" that he wants to go on a trip in the near future. If you know Heath and our family you know his 'side job'

was planning trips for us 😊—vacations, adventures, trips to see family, you name it. And it's been over a year since he's been out of the state! I'll have to start looking into it—I've been told an accessible cruise would be a good choice so I'll be looking into it.

Prayers:



Heath's very fixated on his right hand and the lack of movement there (more than his lack of speech or inability to walk). Pray for this area of concern for him.



Safety and awareness. Thankfully he has not been been hurt—though Heath has had two small 'falls' in the last couple weeks while transferring himself to the recliner from his wheelchair and vice versa. He has done it successfully at times, but is not supposed to do this without supervision. Now he has alarms to alert people if he tries on his own...pray he's able to overcome impulsivity and safely & steadily do all the steps needed for independence.



Continue praying also for his therapists and team— for hope, wisdom, and guidance specific to what Heath needs.

Thank you for praying also for myself and our children



This is Heath telling me he wants to 'fly away' on a trip with me

**3/18/24, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

A different 'update' today...(more like a journal entry)...because many of you ask how I am doing, and because I know you are also praying for me. I thought I'd share my reflections on a simple, but powerful analogy I heard recently—to give a glimpse into “how I'm doing” right now. I heard this on “The Good Hard Story” podcast (episode 55, featuring guest Jerry Sittser). I write this from my perspective, but I'm fully aware of many people I know who read my updates that can intimately relate with this, too—through your own unique experience of loss or suffering—or because you are our friends and family and have also lost Heath's particular 'voice' or presence in your life these past 11 months.

Jerry Sittser, who lives in Washington state, shared this analogy, “Mt Rainier is 14,410 feet. When you're close to Mt. Rainier, it's literally the only thing you see. It is so towering, and so massive it consumes the entire range of what your eye can see. Over time, as you leave it and back up and you see it not from a half mile away, but from 5 miles away, then 10 miles away and then 50 miles away. The size of the mountain never changes. It's always 14, 410 ft, but your perspective changes because it's integrated into a larger landscape.”

With Heath's stroke, an entirely new landscape of life erupted overnight. I have been living on this “Mt Rainier” for the past 11 months. It is my landscape. It's inescapably present in every way you can imagine. There's not anything I can think of in my life that is out of its shadow. Everything about our life changed drastically in the moment of Heath's stroke—from the simplest “hello” to the routines of household & financial responsibilities, from the favorite games we'd enjoy as a family to the way we'd celebrate birthdays and holidays. Heath has come a long way from that first explosive day when his life was hanging in the balance, but we are still very much on this mountain. For instance—here I am trying my best to communicate weekly updates of our journey because he is unable to express or process his own journey with you in words spoken or written. Indeed, our life right now is a completely different landscape than what we knew before.

I've never been to the real Mt. Rainier, but I'm sure my brother-in-law and nephew (who have climbed it), can attest to its massive power—and that though it's incredibly beautiful, it's far from tame—with the power to literally swallow you whole (those crevasses!) The mountain of Heath's stroke 'swallowed' up our life as we knew it, but our story goes on. We are here, on this wild mountainside. Many days I get glimpses of a fearful kind of beauty here, a trembling joy, and cloud breaks of hope where all is light and lifted. Other days have felt as if the mountain's weight is falling on me or I am being swallowed by the vast shadow of this mountain. Yet I am never crushed. Heath is not crushed. Our family is not crushed. No, we are being transformed. Life as we knew it has changed and no matter the level of recovery Heath attains, life will not simply “go back to normal”. This mountain is here. And honestly, I feel that rather than traveling slowly away from it, we are climbing it. There is a view from the top we have yet to see before we begin to move away and look at it from a distance.

I know what Jerry Sittser said about the mountain is true—no matter how close or far away we are, Mt Ranier is always 14,410 feet. And no matter how close or far away we are, it is also

incorporated into a larger landscape—but it takes a lot of hard work and distance to realize it. And that’s how I’ve been looking at our mountain and partly how I can keep stepping into each day with hope—because I know that even though this mountain may be all I can see right now, it is not the only view. The Lord sees the whole. He sees Heath, and he sees me, and he sees our kids, and our friends and family...all of us...in the greater story, in the greater landscape of time and place. We won’t live on this mountain forever and our life won’t always look the way it looks right now. Even though it’s changed our lives, this mountain is not what will define Heath or I or our family. Over time and with new mercies and grace each day, we will come to see more and more of the greater picture—and this mountain of ours will “take its own place and fulfill its own function” in the greater landscape of our lives.

So here I am on this mountain, living with loss and with life, too. I’m living with a constant tension—the tension between what is seen and unseen— of the mountain that is right in front of me every day, and of what that future landscape might look like. I do not know what tomorrow holds. What I do know is that we are here, alive, and more recovery is possible for Heath, and so I will not stop hoping and praying to that end. Right now, where the mountain of his stroke and all that has changed is still very close and consuming, it’s enough that we’re not alone on this mountain. It’s enough that the eyes of the Lord see us and know the bigger picture. I trust Him to take us from here—to where we can see things from His viewpoint—in His time.

Please, if you have time, I HIGHLY recommend watching or listening to this entire episode. There is just so much truth and hope and perspective shared in this one piece:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4yRNNm-sf4>



\*\*This picture is from our road trip to Yellowstone a few years ago (these are the Tetons, not Mt. Rainier) 😊

**3/14/24, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**



Heath’s insurance approved him for another month at NeuroRestorative.



Heath's progress meeting today was good. Here are prayer points for each area:



PT—for increase in endurance and balance that he can do more exercises without fatigue.



OT—while there are many good things, he's had an "increase in impulsivity and a decrease in safety awareness". I think some of that is because he gets impatient and doesn't always want to wait for someone to assist him or supervise...pray he understands that when he can demonstrate sequencing actions safely, then he will be more free to do things without assistance.



Speech therapy is HARD. He's been a little more frustrated during the past week or so. Pray that new things "click" in language comprehension and expression.



Update on Sierra: her big toe will heal fine, but she is not to try dancing on it for another couple weeks, maybe more. Pray she's able to get back to it safely in time for the Peter Pan

performance in April. 

*Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God ~ [1 Corinthians 10:31b](#)*

### **3/11/24, Monday. Update from Alisa.**



Enjoyed some great visits last week from pastor David & LuAnn Watson Hickey and Daniel Westbrook!



We had a beautiful time of learning, support, and prayer at the Aphasia Support Group in Tyler. We've gone there monthly and it's been very meaningful and encouraging.



Enjoyed a quiet weekend at home and trying out the new fire pit on our deck.



FaceTime videos with family.



We'll have another progress meeting this week. Pray for insurance to cover therapy for as long as possible that Heath will continue to have these wonderful people in his life and the opportunities to further his recovery here at NeuroRestorative.





Health and safety



Increased function in all areas—mobility, comprehension, expression, etc

Here is a song that I discovered yesterday and my favorite photo of Heath Stoner and I from the fall.



\*Extra Note—for those who are on Instagram, I will be sharing updates to Heaths account (since mine was taken over by hacker February 11). Follow us at [heath.stoner](https://youtu.be/y6Zipfza6B0?si=9J5ddFueQx-jZK6E)  
<https://youtu.be/y6Zipfza6B0?si=9J5ddFueQx-jZK6E>.

**3/4/24, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

Quick highs and lows from the weekend



Alexander Clay's & Calli Johnson beautiful wedding



Visit from Kevin Cool




Visit from Rob Nunziato




HVAC installed and working great. The Lord provided for us!!



The week is starting off good with Heath in good spirits and giving me  about his day in therapy.



Sierra experienced a grievous injury for a dancer—a fracture in her big toe—not from dancing, but from stubbing her toe on a brick paving stone. Please pray for complete and speedy

healing and especially for her heart  as she was in the middle of a wonderful semester of classes and preparing for performances—it seemed every day she was coming home with more joy and anticipation for dance. Not sure to what extent this will impact the close of her semester,

but we will know more Wednesday after seeing podiatrist. 

**2/29/24, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**

We had our progress meeting yesterday and Heath is making small gains in every area.

Thank you for praying, supporting, and fighting alongside us. We know we are not alone!



<https://youtu.be/tl3GrkRHsvk?si=CGLfNMpNFJ7sEioe>

**2/27/24, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.**

Lots to be thankful for! There’s a lot I’ve needed to do over the last week so I feel behind in sharing updates on all the good things. This is a longer update than normal, and I still can’t fit it all in!



We’ll have another progress meeting this week, and from what I can see Heath is making gains! In general, he seems more balanced and that his mobility is increasing. I can see it in the little things more consistently, and I’m very encouraged by it.



With the help of his speech therapist, he has also been able to ‘approximate’ the phrase ‘I love you, Alisa’ with prompting  and I feel like I can pick out more ‘no’s and ‘yeah’s in the day. This may seem so small, but every bit is big compared to the

past 10 months!



I know the lack of movement in his right hand is such a big deal to Heath. Continue to pray for grace and patience and healing. Even in the middle of discouragement about it, he still points forward, nods, and smiles when I remind him of how far he's come and that we're not stopping now.



And thank you you for continuing to pray for Heath and his safety! I think he is feeling a little more confident than he technically should be in some areas, and isn't always wanting—or maybe doesn't quite understand—that he's not supposed to transfer himself without someone watching or assisting him. Thank you for praying about this—for awareness of safety, patience, and for protection from falls or injuries that could set back progress.



Finally, a short-ish 'testimony'—Saturday night I took Heath to the East TX Symphony Orchestra, which partnered with the TJC Dance Academy, to see Sierra dance (she was beautiful as always!) Afterwards, at an awkward crosswalk, Heath's right foot slid off the rest and got caught or bent and he cried out like he was in terrible pain. It was awful and I felt so horrible. A kind couple saw our distress and stayed with Heath while I got the car and I'm sure they prayed for him, too. Anyways, Heath had NO swelling or pain when the nurse look a look when we got back! He's fine! I praise God that He watched over Heath's foot that night and protected or healed him!



Photo: I met Heath at an 'outing' to a TJC baseball game and they were killing it!



Heath was so thrilled to have me show up



**2/20/24, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.**

Prayer points:



Heath has been frustrated, discouraged, and often preoccupied with his lack of movement in his right hand in recent days.



Also pray for possible related irritability/impulsiveness in therapy. There's been just a couple of instances where he's attempted to do more on his own than what he has been safely cleared to do independently. Pray for his safety—and patience with himself (and others).




Always pray for his language comprehension increasing and especially for sweet fellowship with the Lord in his heart and mind as God continues to work in and through him.

### **2/16/24, Friday. Update from Alisa.**

Heath's season of inpatient care will come to and end either March 13 or April 4 depending on if insurance approves additional time into April. Then he will move home and continue therapies during the Neuro day program.



We'll all be happy to have Heath home , but it is with mixed feelings—I had hoped he would be farther along at this particular finish line. Still, I'm so grateful for all how far he's come and we're gonna keep going forward!!



Continue to pray for Heath to have restful, restorative sleep and energy and determination during the day.



Pray specifically for his reading comprehension and written word retrieval to keep improving so that he will be able to communicate with writing.



Continue to pray for increased mobility overall and attending to his right side more to improve balance and weight-bearing.



[Hebrews 13:21](#)

### **2/9/24, Friday. Update from Alisa.**

Friday update of thanks:

I am so thankful for your prayers. I have felt them very tangibly this week—like a shield and shelter around me—and I give thanks for answered prayers!

Heath has had a good week, and from what I've heard, his walking endurance was much better. We had a very restful weekend last weekend and his sleep has seemed better, too.

This is overdue— but I am happy to report that the bathroom remodel and ramp are finished! I can't thank you all enough for your overwhelming generosity in helping make our home accessible for Heath!

Looking forward to another weekend, chilling at home together...and going on a date tonight!

"Don't wait to celebrate the life you have been given, even if it looks different from the one you thought you would have" Katherine Wolf

### **2/3/24, Saturday. Update from Alisa.**

I'm thankful that there's no gas leak at our home and the HVAC is working for now (but I'll need to get a new one in near future and grateful for those who have reached out with help in making that

decision ) ... and we haven't seen anymore mice.



Prayer points—they haven't been able to use the FES system on Heath for walking yet so I hope

that will be soon and help to bring some improvements.



I didn't know how I was going to write this one, but here we go—it is primarily to ask you to especially intercede for Heath for breakthrough and more progress. The team at NeuroRestorative and I have both noticed a 'loss' in Heath's overall mobility/strength (and walking in PT sessions) the latter half of January. There are several factors that could be contributing, but right now I don't know or understand why. He doesn't have pain and his mood seems pretty consistent. He has seemed to be more tired lately (he may not be sleeping well?—among other possible factors.)

The Dr. took labs Friday to check his metabolic numbers.



Pray for insight and all that Heath needs to be provided for him and in him.

I hate to admit it, but this 'setback' has shaken me and I've been battling to remain hopeful and prayerful instead of worrying or thinking that it's up to me to fix and figure it out—and to not show my concern to Heath in the moment.

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Thank you for praying and standing with us for this long, hard, journey. Your prayers and presence are invaluable to me (and Heath)!

#### **1/28/24, Sunday. Update from Alisa.**

I had the opportunity to join Heath in PT Friday and was able to help 'interpret'/figure out some communication issues. At first, Heath seemed unwilling to walk and was frustrated. I was able to figure out that his frustration was because to him, the PT wasn't going fast enough in helping him when his foot gets stuck (they are trialing him without his AFO [Ankle Foot Orthoses brace] to see if he can get some ankle muscle return, but this also causes his foot to drop and get stuck while walking). At one point, he was even mocking falling asleep and snoring while waiting for help with

his foot 😂. It's a tricky balance for the PT who wants to give him time to activate his muscles and not help too much, and yet frustrating for Heath who wants to go faster. I'm so thankful I was able to help and looking forward to see how he will progress this week as they 'learn' each other's language.

Prayers as we get ready to start the week:







Heath will be able to handle FES [Functional Electrical Stimulation] while walking to help get better return in his muscles, especially his quads and dorsiflexors, with no increased muscle spasticity.



For communication breakthroughs. His speech therapist says he's really paying close attention and working hard. It drains him though, so pray for stamina and increased 'light' to understand and 'get' words and language again—receptive and also expressive.



Also pray for decisions I need to make with our home. We're going to have to replace our HVAC system any day and I have been advised to have a plumber come to test to see if we have gas leak (hopefully tomorrow!). And we've also caught 3  mice over the last few weeks on top of that...  . And I sure could use a good night's sleep! 

Love you all and thank you so much for continuing to follow our updates and praying for our whole family 

**1/25/24, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**



**Quick update for prayer:**

Heath has shown improvement in all areas over the past couple weeks, however, yesterday Heath did not want to walk in PT and wasn't using as many of his muscles in OT either. They called it a 'slump.' He didn't indicate any pain or reason why...and I don't know what it is, but the Lord does...



so pray that Heath is ready to get back to the hard work today no matter what and won't stay in a 'slump'



that he is able to find the way to clearly express what bothers him at times like this.



for more activation in bicep and triceps muscles and the right leg muscles for walking.

**1/23/24, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.**

Today is 9 months. It is entirely by God's grace. Tears still come frequently, mostly when I'm alone and on my way home for the night, but then I sleep and wake and have enough for the new day.





One thing I love about Heath is that he's never been one to dwell in the past or long for the "good ol days" or wish that he could "go back" to some previous space in time. He recognizes the past, but he's always been one to keep his eyes on the road ahead of him, welcoming new seasons and opportunities instead of grieving too long on what has passed or changed. He seems the same in this way now, and it is a grace. I ask him sometimes if he wishes he could go back to \_\_\_\_\_. Or if he's sad he can't be \_\_\_\_\_. While I know there is sadness in all of this, he is not dwelling in that space, but continues to press on. This is the gesture that he gives to communicate it when I ask him these things. It's as if he's saying 'Press on.' 'Keep going forward.'

"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."


**1/22/24, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

**Thankful for some special moments:**

Heath's former team at TJC came by Friday evening for a visit. Thank you Adam R. Williams!

Saturday morning a group of guys he's known for decades video called while they were on a Montana trip that Heath would have been at. They spoke such encouraging words to him. I couldn't hold back tears listening. They prayed for him, too. Thank you David Hasz for making that happen!

Also an old friend of Heath's Matt Inama sent him this really cool hat, and we've surprised by cards and donations several times this week, too. And yesterday, two women I hadn't met yet at our church came up to me yesterday to introduce themselves and express how they have been

praying for Heath and our family . Thank you to everyone —your continued prayers, calls, visits, words, cards, etc are a lifeline to Heath & I and our whole family.

**Prayers:**



PT —for wisdom and favor and insight for how to help Heath to get stronger in his right leg. For increased balance, endurance, and strength.



For all Heath's therapists to have wisdom and insight to how to help Heath reach goals.



Health, safety, and overall motivation and understanding of what it will take to work hard

each day and of Gods sufficient grace



**1/19/24, Friday. Update from Alisa.**



There has been some sickness going around NeuroRestorative among the staff. Please pray for them and also for Heath and the other inpatients to remain healthy with immune systems

fighting strong



**1/16/24, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.**



Thankful I was able to safely drive the Texas winter roads this weekend so Heath could enjoy some time at home each day.



Yesterday and today therapy was cancelled, but we still got practice in and his speech therapist came today to work with him. Grateful.



Please continue to pray for all areas, but I have especially been a little concerned about his right leg as he is not as consistent with his strength and mobility as he was in past months. It seemed to lessen sometime just around end of December.



Also pray for his emotions and understanding about his right hand which he "asks" me about a dozen times a day. From what I've been told and what I've read, the hand is typically the

very last thing to see improvement with and sometimes it doesn't...right now I'm encouraging him and praying and hoping for the best outcomes.

**1/12/24, Friday. Update from Alisa.**

“Steadfast”

This word keeps ringing out in my heart and mind.



Pray for grace and strength for Heath to remain steadfast in his therapy and hard work—and through the slumps and inconsistencies of his physical body and mind. I witness his daily frustration and the perplexity he is experiencing over his right side. MANY times a day it's as if he's asking me, “Why isn't it working yet? When will it get in line with the rest of me?”



Pray for me to remain steadfast in hope and prayer and advocacy for Heath.



If you've ever changed or tuned guitar strings (especially as a beginner) —you probably know that tense ‘jack in the box’ feeling that at any moment the string might suddenly pop and break under the strain. Well, there's a fairly constant tension in my heart —sometimes it's as if there's such a strain of longing for ‘more’ for Heath that one ‘set-back’ will simply break it all to pieces. All I can say is, “Lord, tune my heart to yours. And give me grace to not break under the tension of these days.”



\*Photo is from Monday night—a great WIN for Michigan and a great night with friends. Heath thoroughly enjoyed it

**1/8/24, Monday. Update from Alisa.**



Thankful for the chance to go to a friend's house tonight for the college Championship game~go Michigan!



Thankful for all the prayers and encouragement of friends and family. It's so wonderful to be "home!"



Thankful our heating was fixed!



Heath's ability to get his muscles moving in the way he wants is inconsistent. Pray he's especially able to activate muscles during therapy sessions to maximize his progress and that his strength will increase.



Pray for therapists/staff here at NeuroRestorative as they are revamping the schedule a bit to allow for more individualized treatment & and need wisdom as they make this transition to best serve everyone here.

"The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." [Psalm 29:11](#)

#### **1/4/24, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**



##### **Prayer requests:**

Pray for Heath's right leg movement. The past week he hasn't been lifting it for me or activating his quad muscles much at all when I'm with him. When I ask he just shakes his head. I thought maybe he was just tired but I've been asking multiple times a day and he's just not doing it—and it was just last Thursday that he extended his right leg farther than I'd ever seen him do it before on his own so I don't know what's going on. I've asked PT about this but haven't heard back from them yet.

Also, our heating upstairs keeps going out every few days and I have to call them back today to take another look. So far what they've fixed has not resolved the problem so please pray they find the real problem(s) to fix today.

#### **10:30 AM Update to the update.**

I had a chance to talk to PT this morning and they have noticed it too. He was unable to do previous exercises and also not responding to as many verbal cues as before so something is definitely off. They will keep working on it all and hope it's just an 'off' week...but if not better by

next week will look into it more...she also said that emotions can have an affect on the body so pray for his emotional well-being, too.

Honestly, this is such a disappointing 'blow' to me and I've cried many tears over this over the past few days as it seems like a loss of something so long & hard-fought for. I am doing all I can to hope and trust that it's just a temporary 'glitch'.

### 8:45 PM Update from Alisa.

Praising Jesus! Heath extended his leg again several times tonight! And lifted his arm a bit more, too! A happy ending to this day...this journey is so humbling, the struggle is unrelenting at times, but He gives enough grace for each day. I'm so grateful to all of you lifting us up when we are struggling. I had several strengthening moments with people today where I was able to cry and express my heart and troubles and I'm truly grateful for all my precious friendships.

Continue praying he is able to continually access these muscles to make them stronger, especially in PT sessions.

Video Player



### 1/3/24, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

#### Update on our GoFundMe:

We have exceeded the fundraising goal by \$1000, after some generous donations I received via GoFundMe and directly to A2Z Services, who we are using for the remodel building projects.

We have it covered!!! **THANK YOU** to every single person who prayed and shared and donated. I'm overjoyed and overcome by gratitude to you and to the Lord—Heath has shed tears over it when I give him updates and show him the people who have blessed us—and my children, too, are in awe.



### 1/2/24, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.



There is a long list of thanks we have in closing out the hardest year of our lives, and a list of hopes as we enter this new year. I plan to share more of these thanks and moments in days ahead...

Specific prayer requests for Heath:



Continued improvement in mobility with right leg. He struggles with balance and to bear weight due to the weakness in the right side that tells him he 'shouldn't' or 'can't.' We want to see him overcome this barrier and increase in strength and balance and bear more weight as he practices walking in PT.



Continued improvement in right arm muscle activation and sensation.



Continued improvement in cognitive functions and language comprehension.

[Psalm 18:28](#) Lord, you light my lamp; my God illuminates my darkness

[Ephesians 1: 17-19](#). I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.

### **12/25/23, Christmas. Update from Alisa.**

I received the best Christmas gift today—an answer to prayer!

I asked the Lord several times in prayer to see voluntary movement/activation in Heath's right arm as a Christmas gift...and it happened today! Heath was expressing frustration over his arm in his usual way and so I told him we should work on it together (our regular routine of estim and passive range of motion). Then he moved his arm toward his body a bit and I said "you just moved your arm" (I wasn't sure if it was a contraction or purposeful) and then he focused and raised his shoulder with a slight move of his arm and did it over and over in response to my commands. It is the first sign of a willful "shrug" of shoulder on that side! I cried tears of joy and thanks and so

happy to share this with you all 🙌. I've been told several times that typical arm activation begins with the shoulder so this is an important development in his recovery!

Thought you would appreciate this video ... So you all can see it, too. It takes a lot of effort to

move a little bit, but he couldn't do this at all until yesterday!! 🙌

Video Player

00:00  
00:19

**12/22/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa.**

Today marks 8 months since our world came to a sudden stop. By God's grace Heath survived a massive hemorrhagic stroke which led to a lengthy recovery journey that we are in the middle of.

\*10 days in ICU CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances hospital in Tyler

\*Nearly 2 months in Tyler ContinueCare Hospital

\*Just over a month TIRR Memorial Hermann in Houston

\*Nearly 5 months Pate Rehabilitation in Fort Worth

\*And finally we are 1 step closer to home at NeuroRestorative, Texas in Tyler! —and Heath makes

continued progress 🙌 .

I am so full of gratefulness and joy as I look back at these months—where Heath started and where he is now. And I'm full of renewed hope for the next months ahead and the continued recovery we will see.

Heath finished his first week full at NeuroRestorative and every day he gives me 👍 and is at peace and in good spirits when I see him. Now, we're heading into a long weekend and even though we won't be traveling as usual to see extended family, we will be at HOME together as

much as possible this weekend, and will get to be at CCF for candlelight 🕯️ Christmas Eve service Sunday night!

🙌 Some friends from church Kelly & Katharina Grizzard came to the house a couple days ago and cleaned up our deck, burned brush and boxes, and raked leaves, etc, AND came again

yesterday with more friends and tackled the inside of the house!!! 😄 😭

🙌 Also, A2Z Services has come a long way in the bathroom and brought it to a clean and usable place for us this weekend. Thank you, Jason Reed Hartong!

I have more on my heart to write—it's hard to find the words to say all that's in my heart—so for now I will say THANK YOU! Thank you to all of you who have been so faithful in prayer for us, and for all who have served us in our time of need. Can you see your prayers are being answered before your eyes?! This move has been marked by peace and joy, Heath's motivation is renewed, his labs came back normal, and Heath's cognitive and receptive language improvements have seemed to

take a noticable jump this past month! 🙌



*Merry Christmas!*

**12/18/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

**Thankful:**



The move to Tyler has been easier than any so far—abundant grace and peace both for Heath & myself. Thank you for your prayers!



Heath didn't want to wait to attend church again. Yesterday was his first time back since the day of his stroke in April.



So glad to be back “home” here at CCF.

**Prayer:**



Continued prayers for Heath's recovery as evals & therapy routine begins today with new team of people.



Heath had some low levels of RBC & Hemoglobin in labs so they are repeating. Pray for Dr's to accurately discern a cause or if it's just his “normal”.



Pray again for my friends back at Pate, Petra & Edgar. His insurance denied him again. He is progressing so much but needs more!!



**12/16/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa.**

We are here! We made it through the rain to NeuroRestorative Tyler yesterday around lunch. We spent the day meeting staff, doing all the initial admin stuff, and getting settled into his room. Everyone has been very kind and including and I'm so grateful for all the prayers over this

transition, which is already much smoother than the moves in the past. 🙌 😊

Heath didn't have the best sleep, however—I think it's just being in a new ("normal") bed and at a new place.

Visitors are welcome if any friends want to drop in over the weekend or late afternoon/early

evening on a weekday—let me know and I'll give you directions. 😊

**12/13/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**

🙌 Heath had a GREAT day today (mood, motivation, hard work) in all his therapies. Thank you so much for praying for him. He was joyful and filled with gratitude toward his therapists and techs.

🙌 Looks like his admin day to NeuroRestorative in Tyler will be Friday! So his last day here will be tomorrow (or Friday at latest). It is bittersweet as we will say goodbye to a great group of people we've met and who have cared for us.

🙏 Please keep both of us in your prayers for this move. My prayer especially for Heath is that his determination and hope for more recovery will be reinvigorated and he will be accepting and peaceful about the 'newness' of environment and routine.

🙏 Pray for his new new team and techs. I've met a few of them awhile back and I'm anticipating getting to know this new group. We are so grateful for this door opening up for us

close to home, friends, and our community again. 😊

**12/12/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.**

**Thankful:**



Worship, prayer, and “happy birthday” seeing some of the youth at our house on Saturday.



Watching Sierra perform in an amazing production of the nutcracker ballet at TJC.



Breakthrough with insurance yesterday & hopefully all will be cleared up in next day or 2.

**Prayerful:**



Our final family conference at Pate is this afternoon. Heath had a bit of a rough week last couple weeks, but I’m hoping to leave on a ‘high note’ so continue to pray for his motivation & recovery this week!



Continue to pray over upcoming transfer to Tyler NeuroRestorative likely happening in the near future. Transitioning into a new environment with new care and routines and new therapists will be challenging. I’m praying that it would be refreshing for Heath to be nearer to home and also for a renewed motivation to work toward goals.

**12/8/23, Friday. Update from Alisa.**

THANK YOU ALL! For making Heath Stoner’s 50th so special!—we haven’t had time to read all the cards or all the notes or even to watch every greeting yet, but we will read & watch each and every one over the next days!



Without a doubt the sincere words and videos of memories, affirming friendships, and support and encouragement have filled his soul and made a tremendous effect on his overall mood and hope. I could see it in his eyes and his whole countenance today. It is a pretty lonely place that we're in right now, even more so for Heath with aphasia profoundly affecting "normal" conversation. So thank you to everyone for taking time of your day to make a short video or send a note of friendship & love. It means more than you know.

One of the reasons I fell in love with this man is because of the sincere and loyal love he has for his family and friends. I'm so blessed to see his heart filled with the love shown by all of you.



**12/6/23, Wednesday. Personal note from friends.**

Some people have asked about practical ways of helping the Stoner family. Two upcoming big expenses are a deck ramp for wheelchair access to the house, and modification the bathroom. Just those 2 things have over a \$26K price tag.

There are 3 methods to help us with these costs:

1. You may go to any Texas Bank and Trust location and make a deposit into the Heath Stoner BENEFIT account.
2. Mail any checks to Texas Bank and Trust, PO Box 8, Lindale, TX 75771, Payee: FBO Heath Stoner.
3. Kevin Cool is a very close friend of Heath's, and has organized a GoFundMe. If you, or someone you can think of would be interested in donating, to help prepare the home for Heath's eventual return, please share this link to their GoFundMe campaign: <https://gofund.me/8c35b2a2>

**12/6/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**



Requesting urgent prayer for Heath's disability retirement insurance plan. There is a hold up somewhere and I'm desperately trying to resolve it so insurance benefits can be uploaded to system.

**12/4/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

Thankful:



Friends like Kevin Cool for open invitations to his house for the Michigan games, lunches after church and random ice cream drop-off!



Encouraging visit from Williams family today.



Bonfire, S'mores, and Christmas music tonight.



Heath's receptive language skills are improving.



We both seem to be sleeping better this week.

Prayer:



Continue to pray over frustration with gait belt at PT. They've come to me for 'back-up encouragement' several times (which works, but pray he will 'just do it' willingly from the start).



Blood pressure has been running a little higher since they weaned a couple of the meds, so pray his body adjusts and they won't need to up the dosage again.



Looks likely that Heath will make the move to NeuorRestorative in Tyler this month so pray over the transition and adjustments we will all be making.



Finally, I hesitate to share but I know that I can and should share my specific burden —that I am feeling the weariness of waiting and would appreciate prayers for my heart & mind.

I can honestly say, though, that every moment of my weakness when tears well to the surface over what we're going through is matched with grace to savor the moments with Heath with

thanksgiving and joy, which I find so precious and sweet despite their overall 'silence'. So much is still communicated in eyes and facial expressions. Still, as we enter December, I do feel a great identification with this season of waiting and longing and silence. I'm praying continually for the "advent" (arrival) of my hopes for Heath...



Thank you for praying and hoping with me.

#### **11/30/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.**



I'd like to ask for prayer for Heath specifically about his walking practice and Physical Therapy exercises. He has to wear a gait belt for safety (it's been a standard practice here for therapy since the beginning) but off and on over the months he's had times of frustration or stubbornness about having to wear it and it hinders that days activities (walking practice recently). Please pray for his understanding and that his natural bent to 'achieve' and 'maximize' every opportunity will be stronger than the frustration over the small things like needing to wear a gait belt



or brace.

#### **11/27/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

Prayer focuses this week:



Heath has 2 appts this week: Rehab Dr. on Tuesday & Neurologist on Wednesday.



Insurance stuff gets worked out (I'm "on hold" with them right now because we haven't received the new cards for our plan that starts Friday).



Sierra has a busy 2 weeks with Nutcracker performances plus big projects due in the

middle, and both girls have finals coming up.



Transition to NeuroRestorative in Tyler coming up in mid-December.



Peaceful sleep for all.

### 11/26/23, Sunday. Thanksgiving Update from Alisa.



Thanksgiving 2023!



my Mom&Dad & our family together at HOME



thankful the temporary accommodations to our home worked just fine for Health



thankful for Cracker Barrel cooking our meal together



to give us more time (and peace)



thankful for safe travels back and forth on Thursday and on Friday, for beautiful weather, a

walk at the park, a dinner out at Leos, and time just being together at home



LIFE, FAMILY, COMMUNITY, JESUS, GRACE & STRENGTH for each day...

Heath continually blew kisses of thanks to the familiar places we passed driving into town (CCF, JAMA, roads and landmarks, etc). And lots of 👍, too.

11/21/23, Tuesday. ★ Update from Alisa. ★



Heath got his AFO (brace) today to help improve his walking and PT was pleased with the first go using it. We're calling it 'AL' after a special friend who funded it for us when insurance denied it. Our gratitude for the myriad of ways others have helped us is foremost in our hearts this Thanksgiving!



My parents made it here and we've been enjoying the time together this week so far. The kids will join us here tomorrow for my Dad's 70th birthday! Then... drumroll 🎵 🎵 🎵 ...we will ALL go home Thanksgiving day to spend time together. It will be Heath's first day home in exactly 7 months!



He still has more weeks/months? before moving home (and we still have some renovations to make in the home) but we're eager to make the trip to spend a special day together.





Pray for our sleep (Heath & I both have been a bit restless/unable to fall back asleep this past week)

### **11/15/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**

**Family Conference was good with overall positives gains to report:**

- Some improvement with Apraxia & motor planning and...
- Visual spatial skills
- Walking distance (with walker)
- Leg extensions (right leg)
- Receptive language

### **Areas to highlight for prayer:**

- Still no active movement of right arm. We all want to see that arm move!
- Heath's shown a bit of resistance & expressed some frustration with gait belt in last 2 weeks (mostly with PT in particular circumstances, not overall). Pray Heath understands these tasks and is willing at all times to "do whatever it takes"!
- Nursing/Dr is changing up some things with one of the BP meds. I'm hoping he won't need this particular one anymore—but God knows best what he needs and when, so praying He guides it all!
- Continue praying over our "next steps", which will be to an in-patient closer to home (in Tyler) in mid-December, Lord-willing. Transition will be difficult no matter when or where, so please pray for Heath and all of us.
- Home projects will begin shortly to make our home accessible to Heath.
- Insurance changes in December.
- There are other things besides this, and each of the kids also have their own unique burdens. Thank you all for praying so faithfully for us.

I praise the Lord who has been faithful to to us through this. And I thank you all who have been

extensions of his love and care to our family.



### **11/12/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa.**


This past week was a roller coaster of emotions for me. Perhaps I'll post another time after I'm able to process a bit more. But here's a 'surface' look:




Grateful for Heath & progress, however slow it feels to me—"no plateau" & "whatever it takes" are


the mottos I'm saying to him (and myself) daily.






I went home for a couple days & was grateful for the chance to visit youth group & see some familiar faces that we have missed so much! I'm thankful for faithful leaders, parent volunteers, & youth continuing to press into Jesus & community. 

It was with mixed emotions that I stopped by TJC to collect Heath's things from his office. Just knowing how much he invested and loved his work there and the coworkers & students—it moved me to tears, as did a few kind notes they left for him which I read to him when I got back. TJC has been incredible to Heath & our family during this time.   

I'm very blessed by anonymous friends who donated for me to have some 'beauty care' time, so I got my hair done and next time I'll get a pedi, etc. 

Then my sister came to Fort Worth area, so we had an incredible visit—much laughter and coffee and down-time just being together. Heath was so happy to see her, too! 

\*\*\*\*\*



Please pray for us this week. I'll go to our 'family meeting' Monday afternoon to hear updates from all the therapists on Heath's progress. Pray over that time as it's always a bit overwhelming for me to take it all in and process clearly.



My parents are coming to town this Saturday for Thanksgiving week so pray to for their health, travels, and a special time together. We cannot wait!!

### **11/6/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

We had a wonderful weekend with Heath's parents in town!



Went out to eat & to Starbucks several times, played games, and laughed a lot together.



Heath's Mom showered him with gifts and love as always



His Dad worked with him on some exercises and helping him pay attention to his right arm.



The whole family was together for Zach's 21st birthday- made special with a delicious brunch at First Watch, guys watching the Cowboys game, and pizza & cake to celebrate!

Our hearts are full...and we are grateful...but were  to see them go.



New  update:

Heath seems to be particularly frustrated & concerned over his right arm over the past week. It is not in pain, but what I think he's always trying to tell me is that it's been sooo long and wants a Dr (or me) to tell him how much longer before it does something.

Thank you all so much for praying. I feel strengthened every day and I know it's because so many of you are 'holding the ropes' as we climb this mountain.  
Love you all!

#### **11/1/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**

**UPDATE:** After an unexpected delay, Heath was supposed to receive his AFO this week (a brace for lower leg stability and alignment when walking). However insurance authorization issues are holding this up so I'd just like prayer for this to be resolved for Heath. I'll keep you all posted!

#### **10/20/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

**UPDATE:** Today marks 6 months since Heath's stroke, April 23-October 23.

I struggle sometimes these days to give updates when I feel like our prayer requests are all the same—when it seems the progress is slow or 'stalling' at one place for longer than we'd hoped.

We were told many hard things on April 23 and the days after, and we continue to hear echos of those same hard things along the road the last 6 months—the list of 'Heath may never's.

I've envisioned crossing all of them off, one by one. Thankfully, I have crossed many things off that scary list, by the gracious hand of God—Heath has come SO FAR!! And there's no doubt I continue to see improvements in little things every week. Yet there remains a 'list' of things that haven't happened yet. There's more mountains to climb and valleys to walk through.

"It's a marathon," we've been told. Must be the 100-mile kind...and when I start thinking of the '90 miles left' to go I start to waver and faint—like Peter looking at those dark rolling waves he was standing on. But marathons are run step by step. Breath by breath is the only way. So day by day

I'm staying this course, celebrating the day we have & the progress made, praying for more recovery of functions, believing that God is the author of our story and he's got something good going on, though it might be many more miles yet before we can see the view.



I want to boldly ask any of you who are willing—to pray daily from today until Thanksgiving Day—for our list of bigger breakthroughs—specifically that:

1. Heath's right shoulder/arm would show voluntary movement
2. Heath would be able to speak/repeat some recognizable words
3. Heath's leg strength, endurance, & overall mobility to increase significantly
4. Those are the things we want to 'see' on the outside, but there's even more that goes on inside that's not obvious but so important...so pray also for all the 'inner' things that stroke has affected inside the brain—like initiation, attention, motivation, working memory, sequencing, reasoning, motor planning, etc.

[2 Thessalonians 1:11-12](#) “To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him according to the grace of our God & the Lord Jesus Christ.”

#### **10/20/23, Friday. Update from Alisa.**

Heath seems to be a little down the last couple days.



Pray for him to be encouraged and Holy Spirit fill him with hope and purpose, understanding and strength!

“Seek the Lord and his strength; Seek his face continually” – [1 Chronicles 16:11](#)

#### **10/14/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa.**

First some thanks: I'm grateful for the truly abundant provision, grace, and strength that we continue to experience.

- I'm thankful for the community of friends and family persevering with us in prayer.
- I'm thankful for the new friends we are making here.
- And I'm grateful for a visit from our Pastor & his wife on Friday and that Sierra was able to come that day, too.

Heath continues to improve, however slowly (it will be 6 months for us October 23)...all we can do is continue to work and wait and pray.

I'm now ready to look at the modifications and things we'll need to do to make our home accessible to Heath so no matter where we are living at the time, that we will be able to be together as a family AT HOME over the holidays.



Please pray for Heath to make 'functional gains' and improve his independence and of course all areas of recovery we long to see.



Thank you also for keeping our kids and me in your prayers.

I will instruct you and show you the way to go; with my eye on you, I will give counsel. [Psalm 32:8](#)

### **10/9/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.**

Had a very nice weekend. Took Heath out for a short visit to B&N to share an iced chai and then to a nearby park to meander the paths together on a beautiful fall Saturday. Sierra & Savannah came

Sunday and we made it a special night with a visit to Chilis 🌶️ & then for Ice cream 🍦 . Tonight,

Pate staff lit the fire pit 🔥 on the patio and we enjoyed s'mores.

I can tell Heath is encouraged by gaining strength little by little in his right leg but frustrated at the continued lack of movement in his right arm.

Thank you all for your continued prayers over all areas of mobility & cognitive/language.



Pray also for Dr appt tomorrow morning with the rehab physician, and for our monthly rehab update meeting on Thursday.

Our story isn't over. I'm celebrating what Heath can do every day while praying for as much recovery as possible and for the Lord to continually direct our steps.



We love you all

### **10/6/23, Friday. End of week Update from Alisa.**

Thankful for—



chance to go home for a couple days and spend time with Zach on Wednesday



special visits from friends on Thursday & Friday



Heath is in good health, sleeping well, and seems to be slowly improving in language comprehension.



that Heath loves times of prayer and worship and when I read scripture.



For clarity of thinking and breakthroughs in all language avenues.



For gait pattern improvement and strength/activation of more muscles in right leg during PT walking & strengthening exercises.

### **10/1/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa.**

Wow! What an ending to a great weekend. We had more special visits this weekend with

friends—I'm so grateful and looking forward to seeing other friends this week.



Please continue to pray for:



Heath's progress in right side mobility, strength & endurance.



Language processing in all areas (verbal motor, word recognition, auditory comprehension, etc)



Everything pertaining to rehab progress, insurance, the eventual transition to NeuroRestorative in Tyler (unknown at present), and eventually home (also unknown) etc.

Heath is doing well and improving. To me, he always seems eager to “work”—doing extra exercises with me and working on his therapy app (speech/cognitive) during his ‘off’ hours. Thank you for praying with me that Heath will continue to ‘work out’ what God is ‘working in’ him in all areas!

Thank you for praying for all of us, especially for Heath.

### 9/25/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

Saturday marked 5 months. Today is day 155.

The road is long and I see no horizon in sight...yet.

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for You are with me”. I can't count how many times I've sang this Psalm...among others. Prayers are ceaseless. Lord have mercy on Heath. Help his mind to think clearly and remember words and language, and help him to pay attention to his right side as he's in therapy so new connections will continuously form. Give him understanding of where he needs to go and let your grace abound to him, Lord, strength to get him there.

Thank you for praying for all of us, especially for Heath.



### 9/21/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.

Just want to step in to say I'm grateful for many things right now in the midst of the still very painful and grief-laden road I'm on.

I give thanks for:



**PEOPLE!** All of you near and far who are life-long friends and for those I don't even know but are praying for Heath and following his progress—for every act of kindness, provision, note, text, call, joke, card, 'like,' smile and prayer sent my way. If I had NOTHING else in life I'd still be rich because of all of the people we know & love.



I'm grateful for **Pate Rehab**. That we get to be here in this phase of stroke recovery, rehab 5 days a week, a residence I can stay at with Heath, and for meeting other wives going through similar things with their husbands here.



**Heath is alive!** and continues to improve! and is still in love with me!



Continue praying for his team of therapists and Drs and for ongoing progress in all areas—physical, occupations and speech therapy, and in general health.



Continue praying for our Zach, Sierra and Savannah.

### 9/18/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

So I had a WONDERFUL time in Colorado with my sisters. My heart was filled in every possible way. Thank you all for your prayers and encouragement.

Good things going on with Heath right now:



One of his blood pressure medicines has not been needed as much because it's being managed well.



Shoulder subluxation is improving.



Heath is initiating movement in his right leg so he's just had the chance to try supported walking with a cane & help from PT with stabilizing/balance. It's a start!



Pray he will gain more confidence in bearing weight through his right side to improve balance, strength, and activation of more muscles.



Language/Speech continues to be a BIG area of prayer. Writing, reading, understanding, forming sounds, motor planning—it's all been damaged from the stroke. I am grateful his intellect and memory are intact, but this is a huge area of desired breakthrough.


**9/13/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.**



I am leaving town to spend time with my sisters for a few days  and Zach will be with Heath. Pray this time that it's 'uneventful' in a medical way and that they have some good communication breakthroughs and special time together.



We have all as individuals in our family faced some personal disappointments lately and I'd

ask to pray for God to help us strengthen our hearts in Him.  Finally, pray specifically for Heath:

1. Comprehension of language to greatly improve
2. Motor planning & coordination (healing of apraxia).

These 2 things seem key pieces in making bigger breakthroughs in all his therapies.

**9/10/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa.**

Prayer requests for the remainder of the week:

We enjoyed a nice weekend going out for ice cream, a Chili's  outing with other Pate residents, church, and meals out with friends.

I am also thankful that Heath's blood pressure has been amazing over the last couple weeks. Here are a couple specific prayer requests to start off the week.



Family meeting with therapists and staff tomorrow afternoon (Monday) to report on progress and goals. Pray this time is full of hope and they are able to fully address my questions.



Pray for guidance on when to make the move closer to home to continue inpatient therapy. I'd love to be closer to kids, home, community, etc. so appreciate prayers for favor & that perfect timing for Heath/all of us.



I'd also ask you to pray for Heath for an increase of peace & understanding and decrease in frustration & agitation.

9/6/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

Prayer requests for the remainder of the week:



Continue praying for deep night's sleep. Heath seems to be waking in middle of night and just staying awake—not restless, but not sleeping. Not sure what's going on but pray he gets all the healing rest he needs to stay alert & strong for the days of therapy.



Pray also for Heath to be more peaceful, understanding, and compliant with the "stuff" he sometimes needs to wear to help his weak side and the e-stim to activate muscles. I think he sees these things as restraining and confining and uncomfortable—but they are truly for his best and I want him to really 'get' that.



Appetite, learning, language and mobility—and his God-given "competition, achiever, maximizer, focus, and learner" strengths to function for his greatest benefit along this journey! Lord, complete the work you began in Heath.

9/4/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

Thankful for:



Fun memories made with Heather & Chris who visited us this weekend



Celebrating Savannah's 18th birthday here (all 5 of us together for the first time since June!)







Prayers:

I can't believe we've been here almost 6 weeks... I have seen progress in some areas, but I still wait/long for bigger breakthroughs. I wish Heath could tell me the things he's doing in therapy everyday or that I could report new improvements every day. I wish. But I don't dwell on the wishes, most days are the same routines and interactions and I am content. Waiting. Praying. Hoping.

"Be joyful in hope; patient in affliction; faithful in prayer" [Romans 12:12](#).

Thank you all for praying as I can't imagine carrying this burden alone



Pray for Heath's sleep. It's been good but this past week it seems he's not been sleeping as deeply. (And several days I've had difficulty going back to sleep if I wake up in middle of the night)



Pray for his therapists.



mobility, language and learning.

[Philippians 2:13](#) –for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

8/31/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.



Heath was very happy to see me when I returned last night. It was good to be 'home' for a couple

days, but in this season it does seem more like "home" whenever I'm with Heath. 


We are thrilled that Heath's sister Heather and her husband Chris are visiting this weekend.



Pray for their safe travels and for us to have a special time together this weekend



Savannah turns 18 on Saturday, so we're going to plan an outing to celebrate together! Thank you all for your continued prayers! Truly, you are all a part of every good thing we are experiencing along this hard road. We couldn't do it without your love, support, prayers, and

encouragement. We love you all   
8/28/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

I am home for a couple nights for Doctor check-ups and to be around as the girls start TJC (Tyler Junior College) classes tomorrow!

Heath will be enjoying some 'guy' time with Zach and our good friend Rob from Indiana!



Pray they have an encouraging & joy-filled time.



Pray that Heath continues to improve in all areas—strength, movement, learning, and language



and for Sierra & Savannah as they adjust to new routine balancing college classes, work, etc

We love you all!

8/25/23, Friday. Update from Alisa.



We are free

Heath is right now on his way to afternoon therapy at Pate!

Thank you all for praying.

8/24/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.

Thankfully, all scans and blood work are looking good. Nothing acute. They are just going to add a low-dose anti-seizure med to the mix. Thank you for those prayers!



Please pray we can go back to Pate sooner than later. We've been waiting on discharge protocols since we finished hospital tests yesterday. Now Pate Rehab needs to get insurance authorization again to take him back, because he was here longer than 24 hours—it shouldn't be a problem.

Unfortunately, it might not happen until tomorrow , or at the "latest," Monday 

Pretty frustrating delays. Anyway—we've been 'done' in the hospital since yesterday afternoon. Heath slept great, but I barely slept...



Please be praying that they can rush the insurance approvals and get us out of here sooner

than later, and tomorrow at the latest... I don't want him to miss another day of therapy.



8/23/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

Thank you for your prayers.

They've done multiple tests last night & today (CT, MRI, EEG, blood work). I'm with Heath now at hospital and he is doing good. They're keeping him 1 more night for observation and will compile all tests in the the AM.

Pray for our rest tonight & Doctor's wisdom and perfect timing in discharge.



(I'd prefer soon!) 😊

8/22/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.

Heath Prayer Update.



Heath will begin trialing an AAC (Augmentative & Assisted Communication) device to help foster better communication.



He has lab work & a Dr. appointment this week.



I am home until tomorrow (Wed) night & will also be home next week for few days. Zach is with Heath right now. Pray they have a special time together.



Everyone starts college (Zach is taking a couple online courses & girls have a full load at TJC this fall). Please keep them all in your prayers as they navigate school & jobs & traveling to see us in Fort Worth.

=====

Approx. 6:00pm From Alisa...Urgent prayer request—It appears that Heath had a sudden seizure episode lasting maybe 30 seconds there while in the room with Zach. He's never had a seizure before. Blood pressure is ok and nothing else seemed off. He is ok now. Pate is taking him to hospital probably for a CT scan. Zach will be with him. I Will keep you posted.

=====

8/18/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at Pate Rehab.

Heath had a great week—I can tell his balance, strength, and endurance are increasing. He had the opportunity to play ping pong this week—first time since Houston—and he played standing this time, with helpers to stabilize his balance. He also enjoyed several lunch breaks with friends during the week and I know that blessed him so much. I'm thankful he's resting well and blood pressure is also good.



Pray for appetite—don't know why, but he hasn't been wanting to eat lunch this week.



Pray for a greater willingness to accept the uncomfortable things he has to wear to stabilize and protect important joints (shoulder support & lower arm splint)—as well as for continued healing of brain & right side & language pathways.

Thank you all for the love and cards and messages you send. We read them all—and go back to

them often. 

8/16/23, Thursday.

A Thank You to the CCF Family, *from Alisa Stoner*

Dear CCF Family,



I've told others many times over the years in different conversations, that one of the reasons I love CCF—the people of CCF so much—is that I know it's full of people who would truly be there for me if I ever went through a difficult time. Though I 'knew' it then, I didn't expect to experience it. At least not like this. Thank you, CCF family. Thank you for your faithful and fervent prayers. Thank you for visiting us in the hospital. Thank you for bringing food and goodies or taking me out to lunch. Thank you for all the donations of money and gift cards. Thank you for taking care of so many different things in and around our house and with our vehicles. Thank you for taking care of our children, for visiting them at the hospital, for bringing them food, welcoming them to take part in your family, and inviting them to share in "normal" for a few hours or even a few days at a time.

Thank you, Pastor David and LuAnn, for showing up several times each week to pray for Heath and all of us in Tyler, and for visiting us in Houston (and now in Fort Worth, too!). Thank you Kevin

Trigueiro, for being the logistical/communications ‘conductor’ and taking so many details off my plate since day one. Thank you to Phil Belier and all the “Men on the Night Watch” for spending your evenings present with my husband and in prayer so that I could sleep at home when we were in Tyler. Your gift of time and presence to him and to me for that season is priceless.



It was a hard adjustment moving to Houston for a month. It is hard again being in Fort Worth—closer, yes, but still not close enough—and we may be here for several months. It is a necessary season, but being away from ‘home,’ being separated as a family, not having familiar faces stopping by daily, and not being able to sleep in my own bed each night—it has brought another level of emotional vulnerability to me, another level of ‘suffering,’ if that makes sense. It is very hard to be ‘away.’ My heart now understands and goes out to all of you I know who have ‘been in this boat’ before— in and out of hospitals in Dallas or taking care of loved ones or as missionaries facing various trials in foreign countries away from the closeness of community and family. We all face different battles, but it’s the same war.

Thank you for continuing to pray for Heath—and for me and my children. This is another tough adjustment for me. The things that we want to see change for Heath in these next few months seem so weighty and large. God has brought Heath past many medical milestones, and I know he is working good things even as I write, but the healing I long to see seems still so far away.



Pray for Heath’s sleep at night to be deep, peaceful, and healing. Pray for restoration of all receptive & expressive language & right side mobility and

strength. Pray for my sleep and that my energy be renewed at night so I can return refreshed for Heath—and that I would face these days/months with the Lord’s perspective.

Pray for our children to experience the peace of Christ, for their faith and trust in Him to grow, and for them to receive wisdom and counsel in all areas of need—especially in all the ways Heath would have been helping and counseling them in this season of their lives—college, jobs, finances, relationships, etc. (Heath was always intentional and involved in walking through these practical areas with them, so his voice is a big ‘loss’ in their lives right now).



Heath has been connected to so many cords and tubes and machines, and has had dozens of Doctors, Nurses, and people attending to him these past several months. YOU all have been my cords—the life-saving lines of provision in all areas of my need. Thank you CCF, for being family to me. I love you all dearly. I am grateful for your carrying of me and my family in this season.

Love, *Alisa*

8/15/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at Pate Rehab.

Heath enjoyed another great weekend having the chance to go out to eat several times, attend church, and spend time with family & friends—I know it encourages Heath a lot to see familiar


faces. 

Continue praying for increased strength & mobility as well as healing of ‘global aphasia’ (due to the language centers of brain being affected by stroke).

“With God all things are possible.”

8/10/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa



Grateful that Heath's response to the new things here has greatly improved as he is growing more comfortable with the staff & therapists! Thank you for praying for this 



Grateful for the therapists working with Heath and setting clear goals & plans for him to achieve.



Continue to pray for wisdom for all of them—that God would give them discernment & knowledge specific to his needs along the way!

8/8/23, Tuesday: Update from Alisa



Pray for Heath to overcome all feelings of 'agitation' when it comes to new things here. That he would respond 100% to all that is asked of him so that he can get maximum benefit from therapy.



Continued medical stability & appetite for food/liquids



Breakthrough in areas of receptive and expressive language/communication



Our family conference with Pate on Thursday.

8/6/23, Sunday: Weekend Update from Alisa

We had a great weekend! Alisa enjoyed a needed reprieve at home where she enjoyed hugging her dog, Asher, connecting with friends & catching up with her church family.

Heath had an exciting weekend—he got to leave the residence for a few hours Saturday & Sunday



to enjoy time with Zach & Kevin Cool, eating at restaurants, visiting a bookstore at the mall, and to church! This is the first time in 3 months he's been able to do these things! I'm so grateful. Our hearts are full of thanks for your continued prayers and all the messages of love & encouragement.

We still have a long road ahead of us, but weekends like this help us see how far we've already come and remind us of what to hold fast to in the days ahead—faith, hope, & love.

8/2/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (Ft Worth)

We have now been 1 week at Pate Rehab, Fort Worth.

Transitions are rough and emotional, but it's gotten better for me as I've leaned into the Lord, friends, and the care team here. Everyone I've talked with has been very genuine and

understanding and that has helped me a lot. We are both slowly settling in to new ways, trust is building, and I've met a couple other women who either stay here with their husbands or visit often. Thank you to everyone who has reached out or sent encouragement or funny videos or scriptures



to me this week



Heath's blood pressure has been running high at early evening and morning times the past couple days



Heath gets agitated with some of the safety measures here so pray he's able to settle into the changes soon.



I'm going home for the first time in 6 weeks (this weekend) and Zach will stay with Heath. Keep them in your prayers.

7/30/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (DFW area)

As before, weekends are super chill with nothing going on besides what I make of it for Heath. Thankful for:



Heath's trach & peg sites are healing well.



We watched our CCF service this morning and both shed tears as they set aside time to pray for us



The friends who stopped by to visit & pray & brought lunch & snacks

This week please pray for:



My mind and heart to trust and rest (and my body to sleep!)



Therapists and every member of care team here to 'learn' Heath and to discern what his needs are as they plan his therapy goals, etc.



Protection from medical complications during his stay here.

7/27/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (DFW area)

I may move to posting updates a couple times a week instead of daily--& sharing prayer focuses if anything specific or urgent comes up.



My biggest longing is that Heath would be able to communicate clearly again & with total cognitive function. Please continue to join me in asking the Lord for this healing & for abundant grace in the waiting, as well as for restored mobility to his right side.

Also—wisdom for and favor with everyone placed in his life this season. I can't tell you how many amazing Drs, nurses, PCAs, case managers, and cleaning & kitchen workers & other technicians I have met throughout this journey thus far — they are heroes. Pray for them as well.

7/26/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa, getting ready to leave TIRR

Please be praying for us today! Transition day—last time it was particularly difficult so I'm praying and hoping this is a smoother start.

Heath will be transported via van to Fort Worth and I will follow in the car. It's a long drive (4 hours at least) so pray that Heath will tolerate it well and the drivers will be caring and comforting to him and discerning of his needs (since he can't verbalize those clearly).

---

9:00PM UPDATE From Alisa at Pate Rehab.

We arrived today around 4:30 and Heath really seemed to enjoy the less 'hospital' environment and reached out to kiss my hand in 'thank you.' It's more like an apartment and wanted to explore and open all the doors and look at the patio and take it all in. He'll get to see more of the facility when he has evaluations with all the therapists over the next few days.

Thank you for continuing to pray over this adjustment as we learn new ways, new routine, and new people and build trust with them.

Pray especially for our family as we are each feeling the weight of separation and longing to be 'one' again. It is very difficult.

7/25/23, Monday & Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath continues in therapy for the last couple days here at TIRR. The plan/hope is to be transported tomorrow morning (Wednesday).

Continue to pray for discharge & details to be taken care of as well as for insurance approving maximum requested days.

7/23/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today marks 3 months exactly. There have been numerous ups and downs, and I look back knowing the Lord will continue to bring us through and guide us with his faithful hand.

Discharge is Tuesday (but there's a chance everything won't be 'official' until Wednesday). Either way, pray:

\*For discharge/admission process to be seamless & details well-attended to.

\*Heath's (and all of us) adjustment to new environment, routine, therapists, etc.

\*Continued medical stability & wisdom/guidance for all those working with him in days to come.

7/22/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath's parents are flying back to Michigan tonight so pray for safe travels. It's sure been a wonderful week having them here!

Also pray for Sierra & Savannah who will be flying back from SLU 301 tomorrow.



Heath is medically stable 🎉 and ready to move forward with more rehab. This coming week he will be discharged from TIRR and head to Pate Rehabilitation in Fort Worth. Even though it's not home yet, we believe this is the next step in getting him there.

7/21/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

This was our last full week at TIRR. Looking back, even at the last week, I am so thankful for God's hand and favor & for how far Heath has come here at TIRR! PT has noticed some activation in upper right leg and they have been trying to maximize that with weight bearing & other activities. Speech combined with music again today, and Heath had good success with some puzzles in OT among other exercises to bear weight & strengthen awareness of his right side.

Thank you everyone for your prayers and for those who sent timely scripture reminders to me this week. I will update more tomorrow!!

I have set the Lord continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

[Psalm 16:8](#)

We continually look to the Lord and ask for healing for Heath, confident that He who began a good work in Heath will perform it—that every step we take we take in Him and through him and for him and His glory.

7/20/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

More gains today in forming some correct sounds in Speech Therapy, seeing cognitive improvement in understanding/ answering questions with the neuropsychologist (who also said Heath said the word 'lion' in their session!), and Occupational Therapy computer games for motor planning, which he did well with, too.

I treasure your prayers for Heath & our family as he transitions to an inpatient rehab facility next week—wherever he lands it will mean a significant adjustment in the amount of time I see him throughout the day. Pray for special grace for Heath (and me) to handle this change and favor with every person handling his care & Therapy.

"In him we live and move and have our being"

7/19/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath had another great day of therapy. We're enjoying having his parents in town!

Pray Heath continues to advance in mobility and cognition/speech, and remains free from infections and complications as we prepare for the next steps to come.

"O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever"

7/18/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath had more e-stim on the legs walking/stepping and on the arm bike. And he played his best game of ping pong here yet 🏓 😊

🙏 There are 2 rehab facilities near the Dallas area that I have talked with and Kevin Cool will tour. Please pray for the Lord's clear guidance in making this decision. Every new 'step' for Heath is also requiring for me to trust the Lord in new and unknown territory. I'd appreciate your prayers for me in this as well (and always for sleep/rest). I can't say enough how much your prayers and love are treasured!  
7/17/23, Monday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath's parents made it in for the week and the day was full—sorry for the late update!

★ Highlight—  
Heath had more opportunity to stand and walk (with assistance, stimulation and added stability from the PT team). Every time he's able to do more and getting stronger.  
Prayer

🙏 This morning the team will again reevaluate his discharge date

🙏 Evaluations & favor/acceptance to rehab facility in Dallas/Ft Worth area (2 locations will be evaluating him today)  
7/16/23, Saturday/Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

The weekend was pretty quiet once again.

For this week:

🙏 Placement decisions and timing for inpatient rehab facility coming soon

🙏 1:1 assistance at night is being dropped and so a monitored camera will be in room (and Patient Care Assistants [PCA's] will be in and out to check during the night as usual). I may spend the night with Heath tonight & see how it goes.

🙏 Pray for a super week of therapy—as this may be our last week at TIRR.  
7/14/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Praising God for good things this week:

🎉 Trach removed

🎉 Bladder working

🎉 More strength



Eating a regular diet and increasing appetite and fluid intake



Blood pressure is looking like it's getting back on track

Specific areas of prayer on my heart:



Next step decisions on which inpatient rehab facility in Dallas is best for Heath



Cognitive/Speech therapy is area I deeply long to see big breakthrough in.

7/13/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

8:08am They removed foley (catheter) again early this morning so please pray Heath's bladder works on its own!!!

This is a specific need for prayer today for healing.

12:39pm Prayers are being answered! Bladder worked for the first time on its own! They will continue to monitor

5:37pm Today was a big day.

Trach is out! It will take up to a couple weeks to heal.

Today was also the first time bladder has worked on its own since his stroke. So grateful for the removal of both of these things. The peg tube will be removed once it's certain Heath is taking in enough fluids. His appetite is getting a little better every day (depending on the food served)



Thank you for praying for Heath's healing, rest, and safety.

7/12/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

I can tell Heath is getting stronger with therapy. The trach capping is going well so far –thank you for continuing to pray for this. Today he had another opportunity to play ping pong for therapeutic Rec time, to stand and “walk” with help of technology and awesome PTs, and another speech & music therapy session, as well as OT. It was a full day so pray tonight is restful and restorative.

Inpatient rehab will most likely take place in Dallas because of availability. I ask for wisdom/guidance in choosing the appointed place for Heath to continue to progress!

7/11/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Discharge date is now July 21 depending on if blood pressure is regulated and trach is removed and healing well. Next steps following are hopefully to be at an inpatient rehab closer to home (I hope) depending on insurance. Prayers are for medical stability and of course for the therapies

he's receiving here to improve activation of right side mobility and cognitive/language. I treasure all



your prayers for these things.

7/10/23, Monday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Zach came in today and will be here for at least the week. Heath's therapy went well today. They capped his trach this evening 🎉 so please pray this 2nd trial run is successful over the next 3 days so he can have it removed by end of week!

Also continue to pray for restful sleep and favor with all the therapists & medical team. They meet tomorrow to discuss his progress and review the discharge date, etc,

7/9/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Quiet Sunday.

Blood pressure continues to be a mystery as it's been fluctuating high-normal.

Prayers this week for:



increased strength & cognition/language improvement.



Drs to have wisdom in all medical decisions made this week.



for normal bladder function to be restored.



for Trach to be removed soon.

7/8/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Weekends are very low-key around here.

Thank you for keeping Heath in your prayers before the Father. Next week will bring new challenges & opportunities—pray for Heath to be rested, and mentally & physically ready for all they put before him.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” [2 Corinthians 12:9](#)

7/7/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Good reports/answered prayers—blood pressure was back down today. ENT procedure went smooth and everything looks great with moving forward in hopes he can have trach removed



(possibly by end of next week )

Heath is on a regular diet in solids and liquids both 👍 , but still gets supplemental calories and fluid through peg tube until his appetite increases.

Continue in prayer for his healing, strength, appetite, and improved cognition/communication.

For our God is able!

7/6/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

🎉 Sierra & Savannah made it safely here this afternoon. Heath had the opportunity to “walk” around the track using the vector technology & assistance from PT team & muscle stimulation, as well as practice more standing. He also got to try out a new upright wheelchair that he can control himself with his left leg & his hand on the wheel—he got the hang of it quickly. Speech/cognitive therapy continues to be challenging, but I know he’s giving his best in all he does.

Pray 🙏

Several procedures tomorrow—pray that he will be able to tolerate the ENT appointment with good results as well as an updated “swallow test” so that he can have more liquids.

Continue to keep the medical care & therapist team in your prayers as well!

### [Romans 8:23-25](#)

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

7/5/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today was a great day. Heath’s mood, attitude, and response to therapies was great. He’s eating better every day, too and taking meds with food which is also a step in the right direction. His pain has improved. We praise God for answering these prayers! I’m also so thankful for the encouraging words being sent to me almost every day! Thank you for strengthening me with your words and prayers.

🙏 Pray:

Besides good rest at night & things mentioned before, pray for ENT appointment on Friday—for Heath to tolerate the procedure and for it to reveal no abnormalities so that he will be able to have trach capped again and then removed for good next week.

Also he begins some music therapy on Friday alongside his speech therapy which I think will be great—Pray for all his therapists!

### Isaiah 64:8

Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

7/4/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Happy 4th of July!

Today Heath got to ride a stimulation bike in PT. The glute muscles were too painful when activated so pray that he's able to tolerate those better next time as they are also important in standing. He had some speech therapy today—this is an area of specific prayer for healing miracles to happen in his comprehension & communication channels.

Right now he 'speaks' in lots of sentences and can 'sing' to a tune like amazing grace but he doesn't realize he's not saying actual words and can't be understood, and his understanding of what I'm saying or asking is inconsistent.

Pray also for favor and provision for next steps—discharge date is July 19 (it could change) and that seems way too soon for me...

May the Lord meet all of Heath's needs.

7/3/23, Monday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today Heath got to sit & stand many times with the help of neuro stimulations and his PT, Pam, and another assisting him. Occupational Therapy (OT) did similar therapy with his right arm and Speech Therapy consists of trying to find a reliable way of communicating yes/no answers as well as vocalizing. Heath has LOTS to say at times but it is 'speaking in tongues' at this point 😊

Pray for connections with cognitive & speech/motor functions as well as overall health in his body & restful sleep.

Tomorrow will be low-key because of the holiday.

Thank you always for the prayers and encouragement!!


7/2/23, Sunday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Weekends here are pretty low-key. Today Heath had PT to try to activate leg muscles and then therapeutic rec time at the ping pong table— he used to practice with his left hand so that helped! I took him outside for a bit in the morning before it got too hot. Other than that, it's been pretty uneventful.

Please pray for breakthroughs this week and all around health. Also please pray for my sleep and energy.

7/1/23, Saturday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

It took a long time and no clear words came but it really seems like this is what Heath wanted to say to me and specifically for me to post it on Facebook (of course he'd do that, right?)

—I love Alisa Stoner I am thankful for you and you have my  heart. and I am going to fight strong for her and my family and everyone. Thank you for praying.

He continually took my hand to kiss it, pointed at my heart, grabbed my hand with a “strong” motion, kept going to the Facebook app and drew a heart with his finger.

This was a very emotional day for him—it's evident he is coming to a fuller realization of his inability to move his right side though he tries a lot, and the frustration of knowing what he wants to say and the inability to get the right sounds out.

Pray for Holy Spirit to comfort him, and for restful sleep.

6/30/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

I don't know what to say today. It was a very difficult day for Heath and also for me.

Highlights: He got to stand for 10 minutes with the help of a vector machine and had speech therapy and got a nice massage in OT. But, today he has been experiencing significant restlessness, as well as pain and discomfort from needed procedures. Doctors and team are evaluating if the mix of meds he's gone off of, and others that have been added are the cause, or if it's other factors (like some procedures).

Please pray for wisdom for team here as well as for all the therapists to discern what is helpful for Heath to improve cognition, speech, and overall physical health.

I'd appreciate prayers for me and my children too. This leg of the journey has been most trying for me as it's requiring more of me in every way.

6/29/23, Thursday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today we saw some good things happening but new areas of prayer are highlighted as well:

1. Bladder function to resume
2. Pain management of right knee. CT scan revealed heterotopic ossification (boney growth in soft tissue) happening by his right knee and it is causing significant pain.

Thankful that's Zach & Sierra and made it safely here around lunch and joined in for his speech and occupational therapy sessions today.

Thank you all for standing firmly in prayer with us and for our whole family.

UPDATE from Alisa @ 5PM: Heath is experiencing significant pain right now so I'd appreciate your prayers for him now so he can be able to eat dinner and be at peace for the night.



6/28/23, Wednesday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

Today was host to a lot of victories! Heath had a lot of firsts:



1. First taste of real food: mashed potatoes and pudding were at the top of the list!
2. Able to throw a ball and catch a ball outside!
3. Began making a joyful noise (although we cannot make out what he is trying to communicate, he is aggressively trying to talk)

A lot to rejoice over today! However, we need prayer warriors to step in over the next several weeks. Here's where we are heading:

1. Heath needs a cognitive breakthrough! He is having to relearn all forms of communication: speech, hand eye coordination and mobility.
2. We need his body to function on its own in several areas: specifically in the areas of restroom privileges and the right side to wake up on its own, and be fully responsive.
3. Strength for Alisa – this is one strong woman! This has been a rollercoaster of emotions and deep empathic feelings for Heath. She needs Divine rest and wisdom. If you have any words of encouragement for her, humorous memes or calls/texts that are meant for support or laughter – all are welcome!
4. Traveling mercies for their amazing family as they come this week to fully support and engage with their dad's healing process!

We are so grateful for each of you! Many of you have been through something tragic/long suffering process! We covet all your prayers and support. We do not take you for granted. Gratitude is the fuel of our souls! Thank you!

6/27/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

To be honest, a lot of growth but a lot of struggle today. He wants to be further along but the process is laborious and tiresome. If you have been praying, thank you it is showing greatly! So much of this journey is public but in private the soul is anguished for full recovery and restoration. Heath is a fighter. Heath is a conqueror. He is a champion.

Tonight, through struggle and tears we claim victory in every step we are walking! Tomorrow we will provide specifics of the challenges and victories we are facing! But please tonight, lift up this precious family through their tears, grief, laughter and desire to be made completely whole!

Prayer requests:

- For clear diagnosis & pain management of right knee so rehab is easier for him
- Swallow test is tomorrow, pray that is successful
- pray for the PT, OT, and speech therapists to all have discernment & wisdom from above when it comes to helping Heath recover!

6/26/23, Monday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

Today was Heath's most active day yet! His day started at 9am with PT. During that session, with the help of automated equipment he was able to be strapped in securely and stand! He practiced moving his neck and head back to a full upright position.

Immediately following PT, he had speech therapy. We practiced answering basic questions and commands with the help of cue cards and audio devices. He is trying diligently to communicate and accurately answer all questions.

During his occupational therapy session- we worked on stimulating the muscles in his arms and triceps.

The day was full of mixed emotions but overall Heath is in good spirits!

Please pray for:

– Communication and speech to progress forward

– pain and discomfort to be alleviated in all his extremities

-rest for Alisa and Heath. This is a long journey and they both need strength.

Also, pray for successful swallow & airway test so he can make progress toward removing trach.

6/25/23, Sunday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Thanking the Lord that Sierra and I had a great night of sleep and Sierra drove safely home today for work the next few days.

Heath, however, has been either drowsy or in pain most of the day today. He participated in PT this morning, but it was fairly low-key because of his pain & sleepiness. He will be evaluated for possible reasons for pain (kidney stones, gout, bed sore, swelling in trachea, etc)



Pray for Drs to find the exact problem of pain and correct treatment if needed.



Pray for protection & healing over his body –that he will sleep peacefully tonight and be ready and able to participate in his first big day of therapy tomorrow.

6/24/23, Saturday. Morning Update from Alisa at TIRR, Houston.

Pray for Heath:

To be honest the first night was ROUGH—for Heath & for both Sierra & I who were his 'sitters' watching over him. But this morning is much better with all the therapy teams interacting with him for evaluations.

Monday will begin the goal setting and official start to the regular rehab schedule.



Pray over this transition for him and control and peace over the impulsiveness that has gotten the best of him at times (pulling at important cords & things)—and for big gains in cognitive, motor and speech.

Finally pray for the abiding peace and grace of Christ over all of us!

6/23/23, Friday. Update 11:30am.

They are planning on transporting Heath via ambulance to the TIRR facility in the next hour...Alisa and Sierra will then go home and pack up quickly and head down there. Pray that they are able to remember and pack everything that they might need, that they find the facility and get settled quickly, and that Alisa/Sierra would have favor with the staff so that they can both stay in the room and not forced to get a hotel if they don't want to.

Please Pray for the rest of the crew (Zach, Savannah) at home, and for the kids as they travel back-and-forth to Houston, balancing jobs, school and other responsibilities.

6/22/23, Thursday. Evening Update from Alisa.

Good things!



Heath will be heading to TIRR in Houston (likely within the next 24 hours!). This is one



of top in nation for brain injury rehab.



His trach is capped!



I watched him mouth the words of the song "Graves Into Gardens" tonight as he was listening/resting—"There's nothing better than you...you're the only one who can" He didn't sing it with his voice but I could read his lips.

Pray for



The emotional & physical pain Heath is experiencing to be comforted & healed.



Transition for our family at this time.



Heath to meet and exceed goals set for him by rehab in the days/weeks to come.

[2 Corinthians 12:9-10](#)

“When I am weak, then I am strong!”

6/21/23, Wednesday. Evening Update from Alisa.



Praise report y'all

Rehab is just days around the corner!

I sat in a meeting about a month ago where the medical opinion was that Heath would not be able to participate in a rehabilitation program due to the severity of the stroke, and a nursing home would be the next step for him. Now here we are! The Lord has brought him far and his story is still being written—there are many pages to go and we are ready for the next chapter!

Pending insurance authorization, Heath will be admitted to TIRR in Houston as early as this Friday or next week.



Continued prayers for Heath’s healing in every way, and also for our family as we navigate this next stage. I will go with Heath to Houston for this season, and the children will likely commute at different times during the week depending on their schedules. I’ll be sending out more updates as we learn more details.

6/21/23, Wednesday. Morning Update from Alisa.



Zach gets home from Amsterdam this afternoon!!

thank you all for keeping our children in your prayers!

6/20/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Alisa.

Prayer Update Tuesday:



Placement approval for Heath’s rehab.



Right side mobility



Cognition & communication—and the emotions of frustration/sadness that accompany is inability to do so successfully right now.

[Romans 5:3-5](#) And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup> and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

6/19/23, Monday. Afternoon Update from Alisa.

Heath is progressing step by step & care team here says he is ready for the next stage of rehab, so please pray for favor & provision for all we need in God's perfect timing.

Heath's pain and discomfort is primarily from a Urinary Tract Infection. Please pray for healing as well as both peace & strength in his physical body and for fresh hope and comfort of Holy Spirit to fill his heart ❤️

Thank you!

---

I should include some 'thanks' from this morning too: Heath did a great job holding himself up when PT sat him on the side of the bed, and they stood him up again and he did a good job pushing up in his left leg, AND he is more consistent in turning to right side to find people talking to



him—all these things were great today

6/18/23, Sunday. Father's Day Update from Alisa

Well yesterday was a great day all around, but the night was restless and Heath began pulling at all the things attached to him and trying to 'get out'. This morning it was obvious he was in pain somewhere and hurting. They gave him a dose of pain/anxiety medicine and so he will be sleepy today I'm sure. Please pray for the needed rest to be healing to his body and for tomorrow to be another alert & 'milestone' day.

Sierra & Savannah are bringing him cards and balloons when they get here, so also pray he is encouraged by how loved and celebrated he is.

"The Joy of the Lord is our Strength"

And Happy Father's Day to all you Dads out there! Thank you for all the ways you love and serve your families ❤️

6/17/23, Saturday. Afternoon Update from Alisa

Praising God for Heath humming a little bit on command today so we could hear him! He tried to respond to one of his parent's questions on the phone, too, though it wasn't coherent. Heath knew that, and when we asked him to respond more times, he gave us some looks as if so 'Sorry, but you know I would if I could'.

This is a hope-filled step and I'm confident he'll make more progress in days and weeks ahead!

6/16/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa

Heath had a good day—no fever, alert and more 'himself' today!

Dr. did feel the need to put him on another antibiotic based on a culture—unfortunately, antibiotics have undesirable side-effects on digestive system, so please pray for healing and protection during this round.

Also, would especially like prayer this weekend for 'next steps', and the Lord's provision & timing for all that Heath needs!

Thank you all for your support & love!

6/15/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa

Heath was able to follow some commands a little better with the speech therapist today but as of yet, no attempt to talk. PT 'stood him up' a few times this morning to activate response in right side but nothing yet. He is still quite drowsy today and has a low fever, but they are going to remove one of the 'calming' medicines they gave him the past few nights which I believe is making him less alert.

Thank you for your support, love, and prayers.

Be joyful in hope; patient in affliction; faithful in prayer. [Romans 12:12](#)

6/14/23, Wednesday. Morning update from Alisa

Heath running a fever this morning...please pray it resolves quickly, and that they discern the



cause (ideally, I'd really like for him to not need more antibiotics )

6/13/23, Tuesday. Evening update from Alisa

Today was a full day—many visitors and lots of awake times and more obvious communications. Praising God for continued healing and small progress each day. Today they set up the trach to a more natural breathing flow and the ability to speak when he chooses.

Pray for relief from discomfort.

Pray for Heath to speak.

Pray for encouragement & hope and dependence on God's grace & power as he becomes more aware of his current lack of independence and the frustration that brings with it.



[2 Corinthians 1:3-11](#)



6/12/23, Monday. Evening update from Kevin Cool...

Today was another encouraging day for Heath as he continues to show strong signs of cognitive progression and movement. He is improving strongly with intentional eye contact and lifting his head to make adjustments etc. At one point today he overheard a friend on the phone and began imitating him in a “fun but mocking” way as is in line with his humor and personality! 😄

Let's continue to pray for his continued improvements in:

-sleeping all the way through the night with no pain or coughing spells.

– pressure injuries to heal quickly

-wisdom on next steps for rehab

6/12/23, Monday. Morning update from Alisa...

As you continue to join us praying for wisdom in family decisions and the best continuation of care and therapy for Heath in the weeks ahead, please also pray for:



Big progress in cognition and mobility



Immune system and protection from infections or any complications that might require more meds/antibiotics/treatments.



My children:

Zach graduates DTS Friday and is staying a few extra days to return June 21st.

Sierra has a tough science course online this month, and is working more.

Savannah will be starting her first job any day.

6/11/23, Sunday. Evening update from Alisa...

Please pray for Heath to rest at night again. He had a restless night and the evening has been similar. Please pray nurses will be discerning and attentive and that Heath will rest—body, soul and mind.

6/10/23, Saturday. Evening update from Alisa...

Weekends are a different pace—much quieter, not many people. Maybe that's why he's a little drowsier today. Still a good day with some sweet interactions and a little turning of eyes, head—mostly just to midline today rather than all the way to the right, but we'll keep working on it! Continued prayers for timing, placement, and favor for further rehab, for right side, and the healing/protection of Heath's entire body.

6/9/23, Friday. Morning update from Alisa...

Praising God that the health care team here is pleased with Heath's progress and referrals are being made for specialized rehab. Please pray that Heath will be approved for all he needs to progress and the Lord will order his steps and guide our family in decisions that will need to be made in upcoming days/weeks as we continue to pray and trust the Lord for healing.

Pray also for progress to be made with trach and complete healing of sore on lower back.

6/8/23, Thursday. Morning update from Alisa...

...There may be another progress update or prayer request later but here are some things on my mind to pray about:

🙏 Lungs/tracheostomy—pray for total healing of irritation and bleeding & Drs wisdom/skill.

🙏 Next steps—Heath will not be here at Christus indefinitely so please pray for next steps. Pray that Heath has favor and is provided with every opportunity he needs to further his healing!

🙏 Pray for mobility & cognitive improvements!

Also, I think Heath is encouraged by visitors so don't hesitate to reach out to me if you want to stop by.

6/7/23, Wednesday. Morning update from Alisa...

Heath didn't sleep much last night and has been restless and his BP has been higher as a result...It seems to me he may be in discomfort and pain—agitated—please pray whatever he is



feeling would be healed and Drs have wisdom and discernment in all treatment today. And that



Heath would be able to rest when needed.

9:15am Quick answer to prayer! I read scriptures to him for awhile and after doctor/nurses made their rounds he is resting...they'll move him and come through again before long and wake him up



but thanks for praying for peace for him

6/6/23, Tuesday. Evening update from Alisa...

I saw some encouraging signs when PT came by this morning. Keep praying!

They are doing a small wound care procedure tomorrow (for bed sore), pray it helps speed the healing process.

Pray for Heath to continue to have peace and joy and know deep inside that he is not alone and there is hope! He's in good hands at all times.

6/5/23, Monday. Morning update from Alisa...

🙏 Lungs not out of the clear quite yet—they are going to continue medicine for 3 more days for some bleeding. Pray that the irritated area clears up.

🙏 PT came to evaluate today and Heath followed some commands (or tried); some were delayed, and some not consistent, or he was not able to do. Pray that his strength and ability to understand AND do increases day by day.

[Philippians 2:13](#) For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

6/4/23, Sunday. Evening update from Alisa...

Another quiet day. This afternoon he was much more alert and moving his left side quite a bit. Continue praying for Heath to move and track his eyes and head toward the right side past the midline, and continue praying for his right side to 'wake up'.

6/3/23, Saturday. Evening Update from Alisa...

Today Heath had smiles for visitors and the nurses and held out his hand for the aid who checks blood sugar levels.

I am thankful that though the days are long and often monotonous and quiet, there is peace and joy in seeing these simple things. I am content with 'today' and praying and waiting for more good things 'tomorrow'.

Psalm 131

Lord, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes arrogant; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me. I have certainly soothed and quieted my soul; Like a weaned child resting against his mother, My soul within me is like a weaned child.

Israel, wait for the Lord from this time on and forever.

6/2/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa...

Seems like 'active' days are sometimes followed by sleepy days. Today is another fairly sleepy one...resting to get ready for the next step.

Thanks:

Heath is still smiling and peaceful with all the staff and visitors. (They like him of course!)

He was trying to "get up" with the left side of his body so a little more movement is happening there.

Also, thankful the antibiotics are working on lungs and Dr is not concerned.

Prayers:

Pray specifically for the right side of his body (left brain) to begin to activate. He is not moving on that side or turning his eyes or head toward his right side. Continue praying for mobility, cognitive understanding, and ability to follow commands.

Thank you all for your faithfulness in praying for my Love and my family.



**6/1/23, Thu** – Evening Update by Kevin Cool

What another encouraging day with Heath! He continues to try to move his hands and trying to respond on command.

He is smiling more and more and can see the tenacity to fight in his eyes! We continue to thank our God for the positive signs Heath is displaying on a daily basis!

Things to pray:

1. That joy rules Heath's heart as he continues to improve.
2. His body to regulate normally without the seizure medicine.
3. When he is resting, he fully rests to regain his strength.
4. During PT, his right side begins to respond with proper movement.

**5/31/23, Wed** – Afternoon update by Alisa

Great things today so far—He followed some of the PT commands and also tried to say something to one of our friends who was visiting (because of trach Heath can't use his voice but he moved his lips and tongue like he was trying to say something to them) :). First time we've seen that. We praise the Lord for these good things!!!

He followed some commands and He doesn't have strength to follow all of them, but there were many times they could tell he was trying.

**5/30/23, Tue** – Afternoon update by Alisa

Good things:

Dear friends near and far who have come to visit us.

Today Heath moving more (still just on the left) but definitely moving more muscles in legs and arms and trying to straighten himself more and move with intention. It's still not 'on command' but believing we'll get there step by step

A person stopped me in the hall to ask to pray for Heath and was very encouraging. He happens to be a pastor in a nearby town.

**Prayer:**

Heath has an Irritating cough and is also being treated with some antibiotics for his lungs, after culture shows some things growing.

Tomorrow they will reduce the anti-seizure medicine a bit. Pray the results are positive (intentional movement, not erratic).

**5/29/23, Mon** – Afternoon update by Alisa

I also eagerly desire to see (and for the Drs to see! ) improvement in hopes for rehab—which means foremost consistency in his response to commands/voluntary mobility. He moves to relieve discomfort, scratch his face or nose, etc., but he is not consistent in lifting, resisting, squeezing or moving to commands. Please pray for this to happen soon, and for Heath to have favor with Doctors when it comes to our time here. I trust the Lord's timing and know patience is necessary. I just want so very much for the Drs to see and to share the hope I have for him.

**5/29/23, Mon** – Morning update by Alisa

Can continue to pray for some minor irritation in lungs to heal and continue to have no infection or complications. Thank you!

**5/28/23, SUN** – Evening update by Kevin Cool, Heath's "brother"

Heath had an eventful weekend with family and friends, he spent much of the weekend awake with eyes open and smiles. We continue to worship around him and we can see his facial expressions change when one of his favorites come on the speaker.

Today he was ready for much needed rest. Please continue to pray for his cognitive abilities to improve and for peace and comfort to be on him as he attempts to do some of the normal functions he used to.

Know this, Heath is a fighter and he will continue to improve each week with your continued prayers and strength of our Heavenly Father.

### **5/27/23, SAT – LATE IN THE EVE**



\*This is a collage I, Alisa, made in 2016 at CCF, inspired by these verses [2 Corinthians 4:7-10](#) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

Frailty, weakness, suffering (earthen vessels)—these are true, especially now. But then so is hope, light, and life (the power of Holy Spirit).

Today brought some glimmers of light & life—I hope to share more specifics in the days ahead as we continue to love and comfort and pray and worship in the hospital room.

### **5/26/23, FRI – 6:30 PM**

Heath had an awake day today. Lots of moving his left arm and hand up and around like he's trying things out again—and some movements in left leg too. Lots of opened eyes and smiles (especially when the guys visit—you know who you all are!). Temp and BP have been great 👍. They will slowly reduce the seizure medicine over the next weeks. Continue to pray for cognitive function and mobility.

### **5/24/23, WED – 9 PM**

Blood pressure was great all day, and no fever during the day either. There was some intentional movement with his left arm and hand trying to relieve discomfort. That is a good sign, and we want more of that intentionality and even more—responses to commands. There seems to be some responsive squeezes with his hand, but it is still inconsistent at this point. His friend Ryan came to see him today and he smiled so big his teeth showed! It's a lopsided smile, but we LOVE to see it.

I was impressed today to ask the Lord to provide for all that Heath needs in the days ahead. Please join me in also asking the Lord to provide the strength, the understanding, the care, the resources, the favor, the therapies or whatever it is that he needs in the days ahead!

And thank you to everyone praying for peace for me.

It was also good for me to visit the CCF youth group tonight for 'senior graduation' night. I miss everyone and I know Heath does as well.

**5/23/23, TUE – 8 PM**

Today marks 1 month.

## **THANKSGIVINGS**

- \*friends and family near and far for all rallying to support us in every conceivable way
- \*the army of 'prayer warriors' and 'persistent widows' continually knocking and seeking and asking the Lord for healing for Heath and strength for our family.
- \*Drs. and Christus health care team who are attentive and kind and skilled in what they do.
- \*"baby steps" of opening eyes and smiles and movements.
- \*Reduced fevers, controlled blood pressure, and no persistent infections.
- \*sustaining grace and peace of Christ carrying us daily
- \*God's perfect love and trustworthy hands.

## **PRAYERS**

- \*spiked a fever last night, pray that doesn't continue
- \*bed sore, pray that it heals and doesn't get worse.
- \*Timeline to 'new baseline function' is unknown and Drs since the beginning have had little expectations due to the severity of Heath's hemorrhage. The baby steps we are seeing are expected but beyond that, it is unknown (according to Drs). So join us in asking God for greater expectations. Continue praying for healing, for voluntary mobility, for cognitive function—and for God to be glorified above all—Heath's story isn't over—our story isn't over.
- \*Pray for our children and for renewed faith and trust every day

[Ephesians 3:20-21](#) – Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**5/22/23, MON – 4 PM**

Saw some encouraging things today—Heath lifting his left arm more and moving left hand and even a few squeezes on command. Also (and the Doctor agrees) that his eyes have been more focused and open and tracking us more. One of the most beautiful moments to me this weekend was when Savannah came to the hospital in her cap & gown and his look of pride and big smile as he focused on her was obvious to all of us in the room. Also today, the PT said that he could feel the right side was also attempting to ‘fire’ after time in the neuro chair. These are ‘Baby steps’ and we’re encouraged by all of them. Continue praying for awakening of muscles—both the left and the right ‘paralyzed’ side—sustained alertness, and ability to respond to verbal commands. Thank you all!

**5/22/23, MON – 8 AM**

One specific thing to **pray** for besides healing in brain, is for continued progress with the tracheostomy. Right now he is breathing on his own, no ventilator. He has humidified O2 blowing through trach to help keep adequate O2 saturation in his body. We eventually want the amount to decrease and his body to adjust to the air in the room. It will be a progression of adjustments. Also there is some blood in the suction that is probably from minor irritation but please pray it’s nothing worse and that his lungs are protected and get stronger.

**5/21/23, SUN – 8:30 AM**

From Alisa.. I wanted to share this written from my Dad — and extend it to everyone who has been so generous in every thinkable way and especially in prayer.

Thank you all for your thoughtful gifts. It is amazing how much love has been sent to Heath and my daughter Alisa and family. Your love and gifts have been relentless. We are amazed at everybody’s response. Thank you for your expression of love at this time. Your love is giving her the strength necessary to not only get through this hard time but to actually triumph in it due to your expressions of love. You are responsible for upholding her through this hard time.

Words can not express my thankfulness to you all.

With deepest gratitude!  
Chris, Wendy, Alisa and family.

**5/20/23, SAT – 8:30 AM**

Today our youngest graduates and the ceremony is at 2pm, so we will be with Heath in the hospital only in the morning. Please pray for our Savannah today—an extra-large dose of the tangible love of God—and joy and peace for our family in the midst of the sadness, and continued healing for Heath

[Romans 12:12](#) Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

#### **5/19/23, FRI – 4:30 PM**

Thankful for reduction in fevers at night and continued stability of vitals and for more times that Heath has his eyes open and moving a little bit more; although at this point, it still seems mostly spontaneous instead of on command. Also, thankful that today we got moved across the hall into a larger room that better accommodates our family and there's more windows.

[Psalm 29:11](#) the Lord will help give strength to his people. He blesses his people with peace.

#### **5/18/23, THU – 4 PM**

Not much change to report. **Continued prayers** for Heath to be alert & responsive and follow commands for PT and health team. PT is doing something a little different every day to try to activate things—today they sat him up on the side of the bed, tomorrow they will do the upright neuro chair again. The main person besides each of us that Heath opens his eyes and gives a smile to is the respiratory therapist —almost every time she comes in and says his name —so that's been fun to see. We are grateful for the daily sustaining grace and strength of God so evident in the midst of what we're in.

Today, I'd like to especially express thanks and admiration for the team of men at our church who are serving us by spending nights with Heath so we can be in our beds to sleep at night! And to all the women at church who are organizing Savannah's graduation party for us! Words just can't express enough how thankful we are to have you all in our lives. 💖

#### **5/17/23, WED – 1 PM**

The MRI & EEG both showed good reports that he is not having any seizures and that there is not more bleeding happening that would need to be treated. They do show the damage to regions in left hemisphere, but we're thankful there's nothing else that's been left untreated since the initial trauma.

We are thankful that Heath is opening his eyes more often and responding with some smiles and squeezes and turning his head to our voice sometimes. PT had him upright in the neuro chair today for stimulation and it did appear he was more alert and trying to move his arms and hands and head.

**PRAY:** Our biggest prayer request right now— besides continued healing & protection from infections—is that he would actively respond to commands from us and from the health team, to move his body when asked. This is so that he will be able to participate in rehab. Also pray for his nervous system to regulate body temperature better, as he still has fevers that come and go.

Thank you all so much for standing in prayer with us!

**5/16/23, TUE – 12 PM**

I walked in this morning and as I talked to Heath he opened his eyes to me and gave a little smile. (Pray he will do that when the Dr is around next time ) He will have an EEG today to look at brain activity and to make sure there is nothing ‘seizing’ inside that we can’t see. Continued prayers as always .

**5/15/23, MON – 3 PM**

Heath had an MRI this morning and we will talk to Dr later today or tomorrow if there is anything to report.

Good news: Heath looked at us today and turned his head toward us several times during PT and after—and seemed to try to smile, too. Pastor David came and said, “Heath I’m here to pray for you!” And he opened both his eyes again. Also—all cultures came back clear of infection, too.

**PRAY:** Continue to pray for healing and alertness and ability to respond to commands with his body.

**5/14/23, SUN – 2:15 PM**

MRI was backed up today. So, MRI will be tomorrow (most likely).

Good news is they wheeled the ventilator out of the room since he’s not needed it for 5 days and nights now. His trach has humidified oxygen blowing through the t-bar. That’s it.

**5/14/23, SUN – 11 AM**

Heath will have an MRI today. Thank you for your continued prayers.

My meditation this morning: [James 5:11](#), “See, we count as blessed those who have endured. You have heard of Job’s endurance and have seen the outcome that the Lord brought about—the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”

**5/13/23, SAT – 10:30 AM**



Heath has been running fevers (mostly at night) and they think it's central nervous fever due to the stroke, but they are doing a bunch of lab work today to make sure there's not something else. Please pray over this as his blood pressure raises and he's even less responsive while feverish. Continue praying for healing, protection, and connections restored!

Also to clarify—Heath is not on any sedation medications. He is not being kept asleep by Drs. We are waiting for him to heal and for the Lord to wake him up.

Please know that I love you all and read every comment, card, and prayer—oh, how your words have strengthened me. In time I will thank each and every one of you individually for every card and note and gift and prayer. You mean the world to us and words are just not adequate for all you've given to support our family and all the prayers you've brought to the Father for Heath. We keep asking and keep seeking and keep knocking. We will be like the parable of the persistent widow in [Luke 18:1](#) "Now Jesus was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart. 🙏"

#### **5/12/23, FRI – 7:30 PM**

Update on the kids: Sierra made it through finals with high grades, got 100% on her last speech and has 4.0 her first year at TJC! She has to finish her math course over the summer and has a couple more summer classes that will start in June. Savannah graduates in 1 week, then she hopes to get a part time job over the summer. Zach heads back to North Africa/Amsterdam tomorrow to finish his last month of YWAM DTS. Please continue lifting them up in prayer and that they keep their focus and hope in the Lord. 🙏

#### **5/12/23, FRI – 2 PM**

Heath continues to maintain good vitals and breathing. We continue to wait and trust the Lord. When PT came to move him today he opened his eyes and looked at me and stared and winced because of the stiffness. Keep praying for healing deep inside and for him wake up for better reasons than pain or discomfort, although I still take that as a good sign.

His parents arrived safely and are at the hospital with us now.

As always, words can't express the depth of thanks for all your kind words, cards, and especially your prayers for Heath and us every day.

#### **5/11/23, THU – 3:30 PM**

Heath doing same today—good with all the med changes and with the vent not on. We are moving limbs and joints from time to time so that he stays more flexible. So now we continue praying for healing and waiting for the Lord to wake him up.

**5/10/23, WED – 12 PM**

Heath is doing ok right now. They took him off of the IV blood pressure drip (again) and are sticking with the other meds, so pray he's able to do good with those again and be off the IV drip all the time. Heavy pain meds are on as-needed basis, too. Breathing going good, too. Physical Therapy came in to move his limbs and he grimaced, so he can feel what's going on.

Along with prayer of protection from infections, Pray continued healing and connections be restored and that he will eventually awake and be able to follow commands. We trust the Lord with all these things—our help comes from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth.

**5/8/23, MON – 6 PM**

THANKFUL for:

Blood pressure being overall stable day & night and treated well by medications.

Handling vent great—breathing mostly on his own right now

No heavy sedation meds today or heavy narcotic drugs; and what they do still give, they will continue to reduce.

Heath's eyes did open briefly and his head turned slightly (I couldn't tell if he could actually 'see' us though). I could tell he tried to move his left arm. Also squeezed my hands under discomfort of procedure they have to do to clear lungs of fluid.

The battle in prayer is fiercely on!

Please PRAY:

Pneumonia that is being treated with antibiotics.

Blood pressure is currently high, pray that it comes back down and stabilizes.

Healing of brain trauma & ability to respond to commands.

Continued protection from other infections.

Healing and rest and peace.

**5/8/23, MON – 9 AM**

They have been adjusting meds and vent settings to wean Heath off of sedation and to progress with the ventilator. Lowering of the sedation meds yesterday caused a bit of agitation with his breathing, however, so they didn't make adjustments to vent. Please pray for the medical team to have wisdom for all settings and that Heath would respond to them better today. Also, it looks like he will have an MRI (first one) and/or another CT scan today so pray over that as well.

💖 Today is our 24th anniversary 💖

### **5/7/23, SUN – 10:30 AM**

Overall same report—will continue to have slow adjustments made. Pray especially over the process of lowering ventilator settings and medications that he will adjust well and infections/pneumonia will not become a problem.

### **5/6/23, SAT – 9 AM**

Heath had another calm night and continues to do well on his medication adjustments and lowering settings on the ventilator so far, so I praise God for these things. Lord heal and give peace.

Alisa continues ... Today our niece, Aleigha, gets married to Jason 3pm EST!

Right now they are putting the trach/vent to 'T-bar' for hopefully a couple hours, which is a good step so pray it all goes well.

They will slowly lower sedation/pain medications and vent settings—It is a balance between vent and sedation and blood pressure so will be a gradual process day by day adjusting things depending on how his body handles it.

### **5/5/23, FRI – 9:30 AM**

Heath had an overall peaceful night and looks like today will be the same. He is doing well with adjustments they made on ventilator (they will change settings day by day to eventually wean him off it). He's also handling adjustments in medications so far. Still keeping him calm so he doesn't storm dangerously high. Rest and time. I can wait for what is best for him and trusting the Lord in his perfect time Heath will awaken and progress more.

### **5/4/23, THU – 4:30 PM**

They are getting Heath settled in the new room.

From Alisa...Not much to report today. I would call it a 'stable rest day' if I could name it. They have him on blood pressure medications that have seemed to stop the storms, but he is not weaned from sedation yet either. Please pray over next steps as they wean him off of these things that his body will respond well to this and move toward healing and awakening.

Thank you for your love and continuing prayers!

We are believing God to be glorified in and through this as He heals Heath day by day

#### **5/4/23, THU – 9:30 AM**

Heath had an overall peaceful night and looks like today will be the same. He is doing well with adjustments they made on ventilator (they will change settings day by day to eventually wean him off it). He's also handling adjustments in medications so far. Still keeping him calm so he doesn't storm dangerously high. Rest and time. I can wait for what is best for him and trusting the Lord in his perfect time Heath will awaken and progress more.

#### **5/3/23, WED – 4:30 PM**

They are getting settled in the new room.

From Alisa...Not much to report today. I would call it a 'stable rest day' if I could name it. They have him on blood pressure medications that have seemed to stop the storms, but he is not weaned from sedation yet either. Please pray over next steps as they wean him off of these things that his body will respond well to this and move toward healing and awakening.

Thank you for your love and continuing prayers!

We are believing God to be glorified in and through this as He heals Heath day by day

#### **5/3/23, WED – 10:30 AM**

Heath had a better night with blood pressure and into morning until about 9:15a. They were able to keep him off a lot of things and lower sedation. However, it appears the lowering of sedation caused him to spike dangerously high again, so they upped the sedation a bit and administering some medications to calm the storm. They said he's very sensitive to stimulus.

They are preparing the room for the feeding tube (PEG) insertion surgery which will be done this morning.

Pray for surgery to go smoothly. Pray for his body to handle lowering of sedation without dangerous storms.

**5/2/23, TUE – 12 PM**

Looks like today or tomorrow they will move Heath to the long term acute care here at Christus. Need to hold off on people bringing things until we get settled in another place.

**5/2/23, TUE – 9 AM**

Nurse said it was a rough night. But, thankfully they got his blood pressure down and he is calm now.

While Heath was being given a breathing treatment this morning and coughing, he squeezed Alisa's hand several times with his right hand. We take that as a good sign for better things coming

Dr. Applebaum trauma surgeon came by and said hoping to do Tracheostomy today—this morning or afternoon. Please pray for this procedure to be performed at just the right time and no complications.

**5/1/23, MON – 10 PM**

Alisa talked to a surgeon around 6:30pm tonight and he said they may be able to perform the tracheostomy tomorrow at the earliest, or Wednesday. Most likely the feeding tube (called a "PEG") will be done another time, as she hasn't talked to the GI Dr yet. There is one team for the trach surgery and a different GI team for the PEG. Please pray for timing to be God's perfect timing and for Heath's best healing.

His blood pressure remained lower and less frequent storms than before— but can't say it's "all better" yet.

Please continue to pray over blood pressure, as well as protection over his entire body and the healing of his brain.

**5/1/23, MON – 12:30 PM**

We are so grateful that overall Heath did better through the night last night than previous ones; and this morning overall has been good, too.

He did have another dangerous spike in blood pressure (212) early this morning, but it appears that he's heading in the right direction. Please continue praying and targeting these sympathetic storms of blood pressure, breathing and heart rate. We need them to be brought under control.

Jesus, Calm these Storms.

The disciples called out to Jesus during a perilous storm: "...who is this man?" they asked each other. "When he gives a command, even the wind and waves obey him." (Luke 8:24,25)

#### **4/30/23, SUN – 12 PM**

We are encouraged by some improvement in Heath's kidney numbers. 😊

Please continue prayer for Heath and these "sympathetic storms" when his blood pressure, breathing, and heart rate increase.

These storms are what we need to see improvement in to move forward with removing sedation and other things. Pray the Drs are able in the wisdom of God to figure out the right balance of medications and that Heath will favorably respond to them today, always in the direction of healing.

#### **4/29/23, SAT – 11:35 AM**

TARGET BLOOD PRESSURE: Alisa asked to emphasize the need for prayers to relieve the intensity of the blood pressure (BP) storms. Please focus prayers on Heath's blood pressure. It is a serious need.

#### **4/29/23, SAT – 11:30 AM**

Rough night, Good morning.

The nights have been difficult with Heath's blood pressure, and last night was no exception. His blood pressure climbed gradually, then launched to a high of 220, which is critically High. Normal range should be around 120.

The discussion with the neurosurgeon this morning gave a little more light and color to previous discussions.

We asked the surgeon directly about an area of concern, related to Heath's memory. The doctor said Heath is likely to have no memory of the incident. BUT, Heath has a good chance of recognizing Alisa and the faces of his children. He even has a good chance of having life memories intact! Pray, pray, pray that would be the case!

PRAY: Continue to pray for healing and a decrease in these blood pressure 'storms' and wisdom for Drs/nurses in this regard.

#### **4/28/23, FRI – 5 PM**

We've had a couple nice changes in the last couple days, including being able to touch Heath while we are talking to and praying for him. Yesterday they said we are also able to massage, and gently move his joints for him, to help encourage circulation and reduce swelling in the extremities.

Sierra was able to deliver her speech in a private room at the hospital yesterday. Even with unfamiliar surroundings and supremely challenging circumstances, she remained composed and is confident she got the needed score. She was also granted favor with some teachers who offered her an option for an 'incomplete', thus allowing her make up class requirements this summer.

Blood pressure continues to reach very high levels when they move him or do the sedation removal procedures. Please pray for him and those difficult times.

#### **4/28/23, FRI – 12 PM**

Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning. [Psalms 30:5b](#)

Even the smallest light can chase out the darkness . Today we are finding great strength and encouragement from some glimmers of light.

Early this morning, Sierra was comforting and rubbing Heath's hand and she felt two, solid squeezes when they were doing a test removal of him from sedation. They were not the kind that you would question whether it actually happened or not. They were two, clearly discernable squeezes....from his right hand.

That was a source of significant encouragement because the right is the paralyzed side. So we have now had some form of squeeze from both left and right hands!

Pray specifically for Heath's blood pressure to be ok as they continue trying to adjust sedation and eventually get him off of it—he will need to be less agitated, with blood pressure not rising to dangerous levels, in order to progress; and to eventually (hopefully) get off of a ventilator someday.

Also need wisdom on when or if the tracheostomy should be scheduled. We are seeking clarification on clear benefits and risks for his case.

#### **4/27/23, THU – 6:30PM**

We're very thankful for the capable and God-honoring medical staff called to be present to serve Heath at this time.. They have done a great job trying to pinpoint exactly where Heath is in his journey, from the human perspective, and to offer the best of their understanding that medical knowledge is ready to offer..

God is now perfectly poised to receive the glory that only He deserves, for the work ahead that only He can do. Man has effectively been eliminated from the competition for taking the credit of any future hope or healing in Heath's life.

The trauma that he's experienced was in his dominant (left) side of his brain, which houses key areas like comprehension, talking, walking, and swallowing to name a few.

The path seen from their medical perspective is long and arduous, with numerous and very real threats and perils along the way.

However in the same breath, the doctor said that his 25 years of critical care experience has humbled him and that all the things they do to make things better is only 10% of it– the rest is in God's hands. He was very generous in his use of the phrases "I don't know," and "only time will tell."

God is the only one who has a say in Heath's future. Everyone agrees that God could not have crafted a better challenge; perfectly tailored to Heath's voracious appetite to take on a challenge, crush goals, surpass expectations and eventually end up with a crown so big that it makes a loud, resounding clanking sound when he throws it down at the feet of the lamb.

#### **4/26/23, WED – 4PM**

We will take encouragement where we can get it. Today, as Heath's mom, Marilyn, stood at Heath's bed and held his hand, she felt what she said were "kind of strong" squeezes. Whether they were voluntary or involuntary muscle responses cannot be known, but we are taking it to be a blessing.

Kidney specialist said they saw no additional negative changes in the kidney function. The absence of bad news is good.





We have been able to use some generous snack provisions for our new Dr/Nurse bribery ministry. A nice basket stuffed with a variety of chocolates and sweets are now in Heath's room. They are labelled for Drs, nurses and staff to help themselves. Friends well experienced in hospitals say they have seen that it encourages them to visit often. 😊 And, they also brought a slew of additional snacks for our newly birthed waiting room welcome wagon ministry that Kevin Cool started. It's opened people up, brought little smiles to their worried faces and has allowed several to accept offers of prayer.

These families would not have these blessings and needed ministry in Jesus's name if Heath weren't here.

**4/26/23, WED – 10:20 AM**

The report this morning was good.

The surgeon said that he was pleased with the CAT scan that he was looking at from today. It verified that the procedures that they have done were needed and accomplished what they wanted it to accomplish. The air pockets in the brain that resulted from the draining of fluids look to be subsiding. That is a positive sign and important for the brain swelling reduction.

They have also removed the physical drain from his brain because it also has served its purpose.

When they temporarily remove the sedation, it causes what they called an irritation response. Body realizes there is a foreign object in the throat, etc., and it elevates his blood pressure and other levels. To alleviate that irritation, they plan to relocate the breathing tube to a tracheotomy connection.

When asked what we should pray for, the doctor said that there are areas of the brain that are damaged; pray that the brain would begin reforming new connections to compensate for any injured areas/functions, particularly mobility and cognitive areas.

Also for today, Sierra has her biggest group speech for her class, and will have finals in the next two weeks. Savannah may also have a senior thesis to present in the next week or so before school ends. Also, be praying in the weeks ahead that Heath would begin breathing on his own.

Finally, the first words in Alisa's journal, that she started when they first got here was...**"Our story is not over."**

4/25/23, TUE

4/25, 10 AM – They temporarily removed him from sedation to test or observe for any function or reaction. Checking kidney function today.

4/25: Zach arrived from an outreach in Egypt. Arrived today through Dubai.



4/25, 3 PM – from Alisa: Heath needs continued prayer for healing of injury in his brain as well as protection over kidneys and all vital organs—specifically for now that he would maintain a good blood pressure range and low cranial pressure—Those things have risen when taken off sedation so keeping him sedated for most part.

Thank you all! Through your prayers I'm able to stay in the moment and hopeful and we are well. And I know God is working in his body in ways that we can't see... yet. Love you all and thank you for everything.

4/24/23, MON

At around 11am 4/23, surgeons performed surgery to remove the hemorrhaged blood from around Heath's brain. The surgeons reported that the procedure was successful. That is, they were did what was needed and it went well. They did a post op CT scan which will help them evaluate the next steps.

4/24 – Parents arrived. Drove from Michigan.



L-to-R: Rob Nunziato, Bill Stoner (Heath's Dad), Kevin Cool (Heath's great friend), Marilyn Stoner (Heath's Mom).

### **4/23/23, SUN**

At around 2:00 pm 4/23 Heath Stoner suffered a major hemorrhagic stroke. He was taken to Christus hospital in Tyler. Doctors were able to control the hemorrhaging. He is in serious but stable condition. The doctors expect damage but don't know the extent. PLEASE PRAY for God's miraculous power in his physical body and wisdom and skill for the doctors.

9/13/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

- I am leaving town to spend time with my sisters for a few days ❤️ and Zach will be with Heath. Pray this time that it's 'uneventful' in a medical way and that they have some good communication breakthroughs and special time together.
- We have all as individuals in our family faced some personal disappointments lately and I'd ask to pray for God to help us strengthen our hearts in Him.
- Finally, pray specifically for Heath:

1. Comprehension of language to greatly improve
2. Motor planning & coordination (healing of apraxia).

These 2 things seem key pieces in making bigger breakthroughs in all his therapies.

9/10/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa.

Prayer requests for the remainder of the week:

We enjoyed a nice weekend going out for ice cream, a Chili's  outing with other Pate residents, church, and meals out with friends.

I am also thankful that Heath's blood pressure has been amazing over the last couple weeks.

Here are a couple specific prayer requests to start off the week.

- Family meeting with therapists and staff tomorrow afternoon (Monday) to report on progress

and goals. Pray this time is full of hope and they are able to fully address my questions.

Pray for guidance on when to make the move closer to home to continue inpatient therapy. I'd love to be closer to kids, home, community, etc. so appreciate prayers for favor & that perfect timing for Heath/all of us.

I'd also ask you to pray for Heath for an increase of peace & understanding and decrease in frustration & agitation.

9/6/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

Prayer requests for the remainder of the week:



Continue praying for deep night's sleep. Heath seems to be waking in middle of night and just staying awake—not restless, but not sleeping. Not sure what's going on but pray he gets all the healing rest he needs to stay alert & strong for the days of therapy.



Pray also for Heath to be more peaceful, understanding, and compliant with the "stuff" he sometimes needs to wear to help his weak side and the e-stim to activate muscles. I think he sees these things as restraining and confining and uncomfortable—but they are truly for his best and I want him to really 'get' that.



Appetite, learning, language and mobility—and his God-given "competition, achiever, maximizer, focus, and learner" strengths to function for his greatest benefit along this journey! Lord, complete the work you began in Heath.

9/4/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

Thankful for:



Fun memories made with Heather & Chris who visited us this weekend



Celebrating Savannah's 18th birthday here (all 5 of us together for the first time since

June!)





Prayers:

I can't believe we've been here almost 6 weeks... I have seen progress in some areas, but I still wait/long for bigger breakthroughs. I wish Heath could tell me the things he's doing in therapy everyday or that I could report new improvements every day. I wish. But I don't dwell on the wishes, most days are the same routines and interactions and I am content. Waiting. Praying. Hoping.

"Be joyful in hope; patient in affliction; faithful in prayer" [Romans 12:12](#).

Thank you all for praying as I can't imagine carrying this burden alone



Pray for Heath's sleep. It's been good but this past week it seems he's not been sleeping as deeply. (And several days I've had difficulty going back to sleep if I wake up in middle of the night)



Pray for his therapists.



mobility, language and learning.

[Philippians 2:13](#) –for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

8/31/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.



Heath was very happy to see me when I returned last night. It was good to be 'home' for a couple



days, but in this season it does seem more like "home" whenever I'm with Heath. We are thrilled that Heath's sister Heather and her husband Chris are visiting this weekend.



Pray for their safe travels and for us to have a special time together this weekend



Savannah turns 18 on Saturday, so we're going to plan an outing to celebrate together! Thank you all for your continued prayers! Truly, you are all a part of every good thing we are experiencing along this hard road. We couldn't do it without your love, support, prayers, and



encouragement. We love you all  
8/28/23, Monday. Update from Alisa.

I am home for a couple nights for Doctor check-ups and to be around as the girls start TJC (Tyler Junior College) classes tomorrow!

Heath will be enjoying some 'guy' time with Zach and our good friend Rob from Indiana!



Pray they have an encouraging & joy-filled time.



Pray that Heath continues to improve in all areas—strength, movement, learning, and language



and for Sierra & Savannah as they adjust to new routine balancing college classes, work, etc

We love you all!

8/25/23, Friday. Update from Alisa.



We are free

Heath is right now on his way to afternoon therapy at Pate!

Thank you all for praying.

8/24/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa.

Thankfully, all scans and blood work are looking good. Nothing acute. They are just going to add a low-dose anti-seizure med to the mix. Thank you for those prayers!



Please pray we can go back to Pate sooner than later. We've been waiting on discharge protocols since we finished hospital tests yesterday. Now Pate Rehab needs to get insurance authorization again to take him back, because he was here longer than 24 hours—it shouldn't be a problem.



Unfortunately, it might not happen until tomorrow, or at the "latest," Monday. Pretty frustrating delays. Anyway—we've been 'done' in the hospital since yesterday afternoon. Heath slept great, but I barely slept...



Please be praying that they can rush the insurance approvals and get us out of here sooner

than later, and tomorrow at the latest... I don't want him to miss another day of therapy.



8/23/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa.

Thank you for your prayers.

They've done multiple tests last night & today (CT, MRI, EEG, blood work). I'm with Heath now at hospital and he is doing good. They're keeping him 1 more night for observation and will compile all tests in the the AM.

Pray for our rest tonight & Doctor's wisdom and perfect timing in discharge.



(I'd prefer soon!) 😊

8/22/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa.

Heath Prayer Update.



Heath will begin trialing an AAC (Augmentative & Assisted Communication) device to help foster better communication.



He has lab work & a Dr. appointment this week.



I am home until tomorrow (Wed) night & will also be home next week for few days. Zach is with Heath right now. Pray they have a special time together.



Everyone starts college (Zach is taking a couple online courses & girls have a full load at TJC this fall). Please keep them all in your prayers as they navigate school & jobs & traveling to see us in Fort Worth.

=====

Approx. 6:00pm From Alisa...Urgent prayer request—It appears that Heath had a sudden seizure episode lasting maybe 30 seconds there while in the room with Zach. He’s never had a seizure before. Blood pressure is ok and nothing else seemed off. He is ok now. Pate is taking him to hospital probably for a CT scan. Zach will be with him. I Will keep you posted.

=====

8/18/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at Pate Rehab.

Heath had a great week—I can tell his balance, strength, and endurance are increasing. He had the opportunity to play ping pong this week—first time since Houston—and he played standing this time, with helpers to stabilize his balance. He also enjoyed several lunch breaks with friends during the week and I know that blessed him so much. I’m thankful he’s resting well and blood pressure is also good.



Pray for appetite—don’t know why, but he hasn’t been wanting to eat lunch this week.



Pray for a greater willingness to accept the uncomfortable things he has to wear to stabilize and protect important joints (shoulder support & lower arm splint)—as well as for continued healing of brain & right side & language pathways.

Thank you all for the love and cards and messages you send. We read them all—and go back to

them often.



8/16/23, Thursday.

A Thank You to the CCF Family, *from Alisa Stoner*

Dear CCF Family,





I've told others many times over the years in different conversations, that one of the reasons I love CCF—the people of CCF so much—is that I know it's full of people who would truly be there for me if I ever went through a difficult time. Though I 'knew' it then, I didn't expect to experience it. At least not like this. Thank you, CCF family. Thank you for your faithful and fervent prayers. Thank you for visiting us in the hospital. Thank you for bringing food and goodies or taking me out to lunch. Thank you for all the donations of money and gift cards. Thank you for taking care of so many different things in and around our house and with our vehicles. Thank you for taking care of our children, for visiting them at the hospital, for bringing them food, welcoming them to take part in your family, and inviting them to share in "normal" for a few hours or even a few days at a time.

Thank you, Pastor David and LuAnn, for showing up several times each week to pray for Heath and all of us in Tyler, and for visiting us in Houston (and now in Fort Worth, too!). Thank you Kevin Trigueiro, for being the logistical/communications 'conductor' and taking so many details off my plate since day one. Thank you to Phil Belier and all the "Men on the Night Watch" for spending your evenings present with my husband and in prayer so that I could sleep at home when we were in Tyler. Your gift of time and presence to him and to me for that season is priceless.



It was a hard adjustment moving to Houston for a month. It is hard again being in Fort Worth—closer, yes, but still not close enough—and we may be here for several months. It is a necessary season, but being away from ‘home,’ being separated as a family, not having familiar faces stopping by daily, and not being able to sleep in my own bed each night—it has brought another level of emotional vulnerability to me, another level of ‘suffering,’ if that makes sense. It is very hard to be ‘away.’ My heart now understands and goes out to all of you I know who have ‘been in this boat’ before— in and out of hospitals in Dallas or taking care of loved ones or as missionaries facing various trials in foreign countries away from the closeness of community and family. We all face different battles, but it’s the same war.

Thank you for continuing to pray for Heath—and for me and my children. This is another tough adjustment for me. The things that we want to see change for Heath in these next few months seem so weighty and large. God has brought Heath past many medical milestones, and I know he is working good things even as I write, but the healing I long to see seems still so far away.



Pray for Heath’s sleep at night to be deep, peaceful, and healing. Pray for restoration of all receptive & expressive language & right side mobility and strength. Pray for my sleep and that my energy be renewed at night so I can return refreshed for Heath—and that I would face these days/months with the Lord’s perspective.

Pray for our children to experience the peace of Christ, for their faith and trust in Him to grow, and for them to receive wisdom and counsel in all areas of need—especially in all the ways Heath would

have been helping and counseling them in this season of their lives—college, jobs, finances, relationships, etc. (Heath was always intentional and involved in walking through these practical areas with them, so his voice is a big ‘loss’ in their lives right now).



Heath has been connected to so many cords and tubes and machines, and has had dozens of Doctors, Nurses, and people attending to him these past several months. YOU all have been my cords—the life-saving lines of provision in all areas of my need. Thank you CCF, for being family to me. I love you all dearly. I am grateful for your carrying of me and my family in this season.

Love, *Alisa*

8/15/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at Pate Rehab.



Heath enjoyed another great weekend having the chance to go out to eat several times, attend church, and spend time with family & friends—I know it encourages Heath a lot to see familiar

faces. 

Continue praying for increased strength & mobility as well as healing of ‘global aphasia’ (due to the language centers of brain being affected by stroke).

“With God all things are possible.”

8/10/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa

 Grateful that Heath’s response to the new things here has greatly improved as he is growing more comfortable with the staff & therapists! Thank you for praying for this 



Grateful for the therapists working with Heath and setting clear goals & plans for him to achieve.



Continue to pray for wisdom for all of them—that God would give them discernment & knowledge specific to his needs along the way!

8/8/23, Tuesday: Update from Alisa



Pray for Heath to overcome all feelings of ‘agitation’ when it comes to new things here. That he would respond 100% to all that is asked of him so that he can get maximum benefit from therapy.



Continued medical stability & appetite for food/liquids



Breakthrough in areas of receptive and expressive language/communication



Our family conference with Pate on Thursday.

8/6/23, Sunday: Weekend Update from Alisa

We had a great weekend! Alisa enjoyed a needed reprieve at home where she enjoyed hugging her dog, Asher, connecting with friends & catching up with her church family.

Heath had an exciting weekend—he got to leave the residence for a few hours Saturday & Sunday



to enjoy time with Zach & Kevin Cool, eating at restaurants, visiting a bookstore at the mall, and to church! This is the first time in 3 months he’s been able to do these things! I’m so grateful.

Our hearts are full of thanks for your continued prayers and all the messages of love & encouragement.

We still have a long road ahead of us, but weekends like this help us see how far we’ve already come and remind us of what to hold fast to in the days ahead—faith, hope, & love.

8/2/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (Ft Worth)

We have now been 1 week at Pate Rehab, Fort Worth.

Transitions are rough and emotional, but it’s gotten better for me as I’ve leaned into the Lord, friends, and the care team here. Everyone I’ve talked with has been very genuine and understanding and that has helped me a lot. We are both slowly settling in to new ways, trust is building, and I’ve met a couple other women who either stay here with their husbands or visit often. Thank you to everyone who has reached out or sent encouragement or funny videos or scriptures

to me this week





Heath's blood pressure has been running high at early evening and morning times the past couple days



Heath gets agitated with some of the safety measures here so pray he's able to settle into the changes soon.



I'm going home for the first time in 6 weeks (this weekend) and Zach will stay with Heath. Keep them in your prayers.

7/30/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (DFW area)

As before, weekends are super chill with nothing going on besides what I make of it for Heath.

Thankful for:



Heath's trach & peg sites are healing well.



We watched our CCF service this morning and both shed tears as they set aside time to pray for us



The friends who stopped by to visit & pray & brought lunch & snacks

This week please pray for:



My mind and heart to trust and rest (and my body to sleep!)



Therapists and every member of care team here to 'learn' Heath and to discern what his needs are as they plan his therapy goals, etc.



Protection from medical complications during his stay here.

7/27/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa, at Pate Rehab (DFW area)

I may move to posting updates a couple times a week instead of daily—& sharing prayer focuses if anything specific or urgent comes up.

My biggest longing is that Heath would be able to communicate clearly again & with total cognitive function. Please continue to join me in asking the Lord for this healing & for abundant grace in the waiting, as well as for restored mobility to his right side.

Also—wisdom for and favor with everyone placed in his life this season. I can't tell you how many amazing Drs, nurses, PCAs, case managers, and cleaning & kitchen workers & other technicians I have met throughout this journey thus far — they are heroes. Pray for them as well.

7/26/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa, getting ready to leave TIRR

Please be praying for us today! Transition day—last time it was particularly difficult so I'm praying and hoping this is a smoother start.

Heath will be transported via van to Fort Worth and I will follow in the car. It's a long drive (4 hours at least) so pray that Heath will tolerate it well and the drivers will be caring and comforting to him and discerning of his needs (since he can't verbalize those clearly).

---

9:00PM UPDATE From Alisa at Pate Rehab.

We arrived today around 4:30 and Heath really seemed to enjoy the less 'hospital' environment and reached out to kiss my hand in 'thank you.' It's more like an apartment and wanted to explore and open all the doors and look at the patio and take it all in. He'll get to see more of the facility when he has evaluations with all the therapists over the next few days.

Thank you for continuing to pray over this adjustment as we learn new ways, new routine, and new people and build trust with them.

Pray especially for our family as we are each feeling the weight of separation and longing to be 'one' again. It is very difficult.

7/25/23, Monday & Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath continues in therapy for the last couple days here at TIRR. The plan/hope is to be transported tomorrow morning (Wednesday).

Continue to pray for discharge & details to be taken care of as well as for insurance approving maximum requested days.

7/23/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today marks 3 months exactly. There have been numerous ups and downs, and I look back knowing the Lord will continue to bring us through and guide us with his faithful hand.

Discharge is Tuesday (but there's a chance everything won't be 'official' until Wednesday). Either way, pray:

\*For discharge/admission process to be seamless & details well-attended to.

\*Heath's (and all of us) adjustment to new environment, routine, therapists, etc.

\*Continued medical stability & wisdom/guidance for all those working with him in days to come.

7/22/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath's parents are flying back to Michigan tonight so pray for safe travels. It's sure been a wonderful week having them here!



Also pray for Sierra & Savannah who will be flying back from SLU 301 tomorrow.



Heath is medically stable and ready to move forward with more rehab. This coming week he will be discharged from TIRR and head to Pate Rehabilitation in Fort Worth. Even though it's not home yet, we believe this is the next step in getting him there.

7/21/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

This was our last full week at TIRR. Looking back, even at the last week, I am so thankful for God's hand and favor & for how far Heath has come here at TIRR! PT has noticed some activation in upper right leg and they have been trying to maximize that with weight bearing & other activities. Speech combined with music again today, and Heath had good success with some puzzles in OT among other exercises to bear weight & strengthen awareness of his right side.

Thank you everyone for your prayers and for those who sent timely scripture reminders to me this week. I will update more tomorrow!!

I have set the Lord continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

[Psalm 16:8](#)

We continually look to the Lord and ask for healing for Heath, confident that He who began a good work in Heath will perform it—that every step we take we take in Him and through him and for him and His glory.

7/20/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

More gains today in forming some correct sounds in Speech Therapy, seeing cognitive improvement in understanding/ answering questions with the neuropsychologist (who also said Heath said the word 'lion' in their session!), and Occupational Therapy computer games for motor planning, which he did well with, too.

I treasure your prayers for Heath & our family as he transitions to an inpatient rehab facility next week—wherever he lands it will mean a significant adjustment in the amount of time I see him throughout the day. Pray for special grace for Heath (and me) to handle this change and favor with every person handling his care & Therapy.

“In him we live and move and have our being”

7/19/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath had another great day of therapy. We're enjoying having his parents in town! Pray Heath continues to advance in mobility and cognition/speech, and remains free from infections and complications as we prepare for the next steps to come.

“O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever”

7/18/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath had more e-stim on the legs walking/stepping and on the arm bike. And he played his best



game of ping pong here yet



There are 2 rehab facilities near the Dallas area that I have talked with and Kevin Cool will tour. Please pray for the Lord's clear guidance in making this decision.

Every new 'step' for Heath is also requiring for me to trust the Lord in new and unknown territory.

I'd appreciate your prayers for me in this as well (and always for sleep/rest).

I can't say enough how much your prayers and love are treasured!

7/17/23, Monday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Heath's parents made it in for the week and the day was full—sorry for the late update!



Highlight—

Heath had more opportunity to stand and walk (with assistance, stimulation and added stability from the PT team). Every time he's able to do more and getting stronger.

Prayer



This morning the team will again reevaluate his discharge date



Evaluations & favor/acceptance to rehab facility in Dallas/Ft Worth area (2 locations will be evaluating him today)

7/16/23, Saturday/Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

The weekend was pretty quiet once again.

For this week:

🙏 Placement decisions and timing for inpatient rehab facility coming soon

🙏 1:1 assistance at night is being dropped and so a monitored camera will be in room (and Patient Care Assistants [PCA's] will be in and out to check during the night as usual). I may spend the night with Heath tonight & see how it goes.

🙏 Pray for a super week of therapy—as this may be our last week at TIRR.



7/14/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Praising God for good things this week:



Trach removed



Bladder working



More strength



Eating a regular diet and increasing appetite and fluid intake



Blood pressure is looking like it's getting back on track

Specific areas of prayer on my heart:



Next step decisions on which inpatient rehab facility in Dallas is best for Heath



Cognitive/Speech therapy is area I deeply long to see big breakthrough in.

7/13/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

8:08am They removed foley (catheter) again early this morning so please pray Heath's bladder works on its own!!!

This is a specific need for prayer today for healing.

12:39pm Prayers are being answered! Bladder worked for the first time on its own! They will continue to monitor

5:37pm Today was a big day.

Trach is out! It will take up to a couple weeks to heal.

Today was also the first time bladder has worked on its own since his stroke. So grateful for the removal of both of these things. The peg tube will be removed once it's certain Heath is taking in enough fluids. His appetite is getting a little better every day (depending on the food served)



Thank you for praying for Heath's healing, rest, and safety.  
7/12/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

I can tell Heath is getting stronger with therapy. The trach capping is going well so far –thank you for continuing to pray for this. Today he had another opportunity to play ping pong for therapeutic Rec time, to stand and “walk” with help of technology and awesome PTs, and another speech & music therapy session, as well as OT. It was a full day so pray tonight is restful and restorative. Inpatient rehab will most likely take place in Dallas because of availability. I ask for wisdom/guidance in choosing the appointed place for Heath to continue to progress!  
7/11/23, Tuesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Discharge date is now July 21 depending on if blood pressure is regulated and trach is removed and healing well. Next steps following are hopefully to be at an inpatient rehab closer to home (I hope) depending on insurance. Prayers are for medical stability and of course for the therapies he's receiving here to improve activation of right side mobility and cognitive/language. I treasure all



your prayers for these things.  
7/10/23, Monday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Zach came in today and will be here for at least the week. Heath's therapy went well today. They capped his trach this evening 🎉 so please pray this 2nd trial run is successful over the next 3 days so he can have it removed by end of week! Also continue to pray for restful sleep and favor with all the therapists & medical team. They meet tomorrow to discuss his progress and review the discharge date, etc,  
7/9/23, Sunday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Quiet Sunday.  
Blood pressure continues to be a mystery as it's been fluctuating high-normal.  
Prayers this week for:



increased strength & cognition/language improvement.



Drs to have wisdom in all medical decisions made this week.



for normal bladder function to be restored.



for Trach to be removed soon.

7/8/23, Saturday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Weekends are very low-key around here.

Thank you for keeping Heath in your prayers before the Father. Next week will bring new challenges & opportunities—pray for Heath to be rested, and mentally & physically ready for all they put before him.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” [2 Corinthians 12:9](#)

7/7/23, Friday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Good reports/answered prayers—blood pressure was back down today. ENT procedure went smooth and everything looks great with moving forward in hopes he can have trach removed



(possibly by end of next week )



Heath is on a regular diet in solids and liquids both , but still gets supplemental calories and fluid through peg tube until his appetite increases.

Continue in prayer for his healing, strength, appetite, and improved cognition/communication.

For our God is able!

7/6/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

🎉 Sierra & Savannah made it safely here this afternoon. Heath had the opportunity to “walk” around the track using the vector technology & assistance from PT team & muscle stimulation, as well as practice more standing. He also got to try out a new upright wheelchair that he can control

himself with his left leg & his hand on the wheel—he got the hang of it quickly. Speech/cognitive therapy continues to be challenging, but I know he’s giving his best in all he does.

Pray 🙏

Several procedures tomorrow—pray that he will be able to tolerate the ENT appointment with good results as well as an updated “swallow test” so that he can have more liquids.

Continue to keep the medical care & therapist team in your prayers as well!

### [Romans 8:23-25](#)

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

7/5/23, Wednesday. Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today was a great day. Heath’s mood, attitude, and response to therapies was great. He’s eating better every day, too and taking meds with food which is also a step in the right direction. His pain has improved. We praise God for answering these prayers! I’m also so thankful for the encouraging words being sent to me almost every day! Thank you for strengthening me with your words and prayers.

🙏 Pray:

Besides good rest at night & things mentioned before, pray for ENT appointment on Friday—for Heath to tolerate the procedure and for it to reveal no abnormalities so that he will be able to have trach capped again and then removed for good next week.

Also he begins some music therapy on Friday alongside his speech therapy which I think will be great—Pray for all his therapists!

### [Isaiah 64:8](#)

Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

7/4/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Happy 4th of July!

Today Heath got to ride a stimulation bike in PT. The glute muscles were too painful when activated so pray that he’s able to tolerate those better next time as they are also important in standing. He had some speech therapy today—this is an area of specific prayer for healing miracles to happen in his comprehension & communication channels.

Right now he 'speaks' in lots of sentences and can 'sing' to a tune like amazing grace but he doesn't realize he's not saying actual words and can't be understood, and his understanding of what I'm saying or asking is inconsistent.

Pray also for favor and provision for next steps—discharge date is July 19 (it could change) and that seems way too soon for me...

May the Lord meet all of Heath's needs.

7/3/23, Monday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today Heath got to sit & stand many times with the help of neuro stimulations and his PT, Pam, and another assisting him. Occupational Therapy (OT) did similar therapy with his right arm and Speech Therapy consists of trying to find a reliable way of communicating yes/no answers as well as vocalizing. Heath has LOTS to say at times but it is 'speaking in tongues' at this point 😊

Pray for connections with cognitive & speech/motor functions as well as overall health in his body & restful sleep.

Tomorrow will be low-key because of the holiday.

Thank you always for the prayers and encouragement!!

7/2/23, Sunday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Weekends here are pretty low-key. Today Heath had PT to try to activate leg muscles and then therapeutic rec time at the ping pong table— he used to practice with his left hand so that helped! I took him outside for a bit in the morning before it got too hot. Other than that, it's been pretty uneventful.

Please pray for breakthroughs this week and all around health. Also please pray for my sleep and energy.

7/1/23, Saturday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

It took a long time and no clear words came but it really seems like this is what Heath wanted to say to me and specifically for me to post it on Facebook (of course he'd do that, right?)



—I love Alisa Stoner I am thankful for you and you have my heart. and I am going to fight strong for her and my family and everyone. Thank you for praying.

He continually took my hand to kiss it, pointed at my heart, grabbed my hand with a "strong" motion, kept going to the Facebook app and drew a heart with his finger.

This was a very emotional day for him—it's evident he is coming to a fuller realization of his inability to move his right side though he tries a lot, and the frustration of knowing what he wants to say and the inability to get the right sounds out.

Pray for Holy Spirit to comfort him, and for restful sleep.

6/30/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

I don't know what to say today. It was a very difficult day for Heath and also for me.

Highlights: He got to stand for 10 minutes with the help of a vector machine and had speech therapy and got a nice massage in OT. But, today he has been experiencing significant restlessness, as well as pain and discomfort from needed procedures. Doctors and team are evaluating if the mix of meds he's gone off of, and others that have been added are the cause, or if it's other factors (like some procedures).

Please pray for wisdom for team here as well as for all the therapists to discern what is helpful for Heath to improve cognition, speech, and overall physical health.

I'd appreciate prayers for me and my children too. This leg of the journey has been most trying for me as it's requiring more of me in every way.

6/29/23, Thursday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Today we saw some good things happening but new areas of prayer are highlighted as well:

1. Bladder function to resume
2. Pain management of right knee. CT scan revealed heterotopic ossification (boney growth in soft tissue) happening by his right knee and it is causing significant pain.

Thankful that's Zach & Sierra and made it safely here around lunch and joined in for his speech and occupational therapy sessions today.

Thank you all for standing firmly in prayer with us and for our whole family.

UPDATE from Alisa @ 5PM: Heath is experiencing significant pain right now so I'd appreciate your prayers for him now so he can be able to eat dinner and be at peace for the night.

6/28/23, Wednesday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

Today was host to a lot of victories! Heath had a lot of firsts:

1. First taste of real food: mashed potatoes and pudding were at the top of the list!
2. Able to throw a ball and catch a ball outside!
3. Began making a joyful noise (although we cannot make out what he is trying to communicate, he is aggressively trying to talk)

A lot to rejoice over today! However, we need prayer warriors to step in over the next several weeks. Here's where we are heading:

1. Heath needs a cognitive breakthrough! He is having to relearn all forms of communication: speech, hand eye coordination and mobility.



2. We need his body to function on its own in several areas: specifically in the areas of restroom privileges and the right side to wake up on its own, and be fully responsive.

3. Strength for Alisa – this is one strong woman! This has been a rollercoaster of emotions and deep empathic feelings for Heath. She needs Divine rest and wisdom. If you have any words of encouragement for her, humorous memes or calls/texts that are meant for support or laughter – all are welcome!

4. Traveling mercies for their amazing family as they come this week to fully support and engage with their dad's healing process!

We are so grateful for each of you! Many of you have been through something tragic/long suffering process! We covet all your prayers and support. We do not take you for granted. Gratitude is the fuel of our souls! Thank you!

6/27/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

To be honest, a lot of growth but a lot of struggle today. He wants to be further along but the process is laborious and tiresome. If you have been praying, thank you it is showing greatly! So much of this journey is public but in private the soul is anguished for full recovery and restoration. Heath is a fighter. Heath is a conqueror. He is a champion.

Tonight, through struggle and tears we claim victory in every step we are walking! Tomorrow we will provide specifics of the challenges and victories we are facing! But please tonight, lift up this precious family through their tears, grief, laughter and desire to be made completely whole!

Prayer requests:

–For clear diagnosis & pain management of right knee so rehab is easier for him

–Swallow test is tomorrow, pray that is successful

–pray for the PT, OT, and speech therapists to all have discernment & wisdom from above when it comes to helping Heath recover!

6/26/23, Monday. Evening Update from Kevin Cool at TIRR

Today was Heath's most active day yet! His day started at 9am with PT. During that session, with the help of automated equipment he was able to be strapped in securely and stand! He practiced moving his neck and head back to a full upright position.

Immediately following PT, he had speech therapy. We practiced answering basic questions and commands with the help of cue cards and audio devices. He is trying diligently to communicate and accurately answer all questions.

During his occupational therapy session- we worked on stimulating the muscles in his arms and triceps.

The day was full of mixed emotions but overall Heath is in good spirits!

Please pray for:

– Communication and speech to progress forward

– pain and discomfort to be alleviated in all his extremities

-rest for Alisa and Heath. This is a long journey and they both need strength.

Also, pray for successful swallow & airway test so he can make progress toward removing trach.

6/25/23, Sunday. Evening Update from Alisa at TIRR

Thanking the Lord that Sierra and I had a great night of sleep and Sierra drove safely home today for work the next few days.

Heath, however, has been either drowsy or in pain most of the day today. He participated in PT this morning, but it was fairly low-key because of his pain & sleepiness. He will be evaluated for possible reasons for pain (kidney stones, gout, bed sore, swelling in trachea, etc)



Pray for Drs to find the exact problem of pain and correct treatment if needed.



Pray for protection & healing over his body –that he will sleep peacefully tonight and be ready and able to participate in his first big day of therapy tomorrow.

6/24/23, Saturday. Morning Update from Alisa at TIRR, Houston.

Pray for Heath:

To be honest the first night was ROUGH—for Heath & for both Sierra & I who were his ‘sitters’ watching over him. But this morning is much better with all the therapy teams interacting with him for evaluations.

Monday will begin the goal setting and official start to the regular rehab schedule.



Pray over this transition for him and control and peace over the impulsiveness that has gotten the best of him at times (pulling at important cords & things)—and for big gains in cognitive, motor and speech.

Finally pray for the abiding peace and grace of Christ over all of us!

6/23/23, Friday. Update 11:30am.

They are planning on transporting Heath via ambulance to the TIRR facility in the next hour...Alisa and Sierra will then go home and pack up quickly and head down there. Pray that they are able to remember and pack everything that they might need, that they find the facility and get settled



quickly, and that Alisa/Sierra would have favor with the staff so that they can both stay in the room and not forced to get a hotel if they don't want to.

Please Pray for the rest of the crew (Zach, Savannah) at home, and for the kids as they travel back-and-forth to Houston, balancing jobs, school and other responsibilities.

6/22/23, Thursday. Evening Update from Alisa.

Good things!



Heath will be heading to TIRR in Houston (likely within the next 24 hours!). This is one



of top in nation for brain injury rehab.



His trach is capped!



I watched him mouth the words of the song "Graves Into Gardens" tonight as he was listening/resting—"There's nothing better than you...you're the only one who can" He didn't sing it with his voice but I could read his lips.

Pray for



The emotional & physical pain Heath is experiencing to be comforted & healed.



Transition for our family at this time.



Heath to meet and exceed goals set for him by rehab in the days/weeks to come.

[2 Corinthians 12:9-10](#)

"When I am weak, then I am strong!"

6/21/23, Wednesday. Evening Update from Alisa.



Praise report y'all

Rehab is just days around the corner!

I sat in a meeting about a month ago where the medical opinion was that Heath would not be able to participate in a rehabilitation program due to the severity of the stroke, and a nursing home would be the next step for him. Now here we are! The Lord has brought him far and his story is still being written—there are many pages to go and we are ready for the next chapter!

Pending insurance authorization, Heath will be admitted to TIRR in Houston as early as this Friday or next week.



Continued prayers for Heath's healing in every way, and also for our family as we navigate this next stage. I will go with Heath to Houston for this season, and the children will likely commute at different times during the week depending on their schedules. I'll be sending out more updates as we learn more details.

6/21/23, Wednesday. Morning Update from Alisa.



Zach gets home from Amsterdam this afternoon!!

thank you all for keeping our children in your prayers!

6/20/23, Tuesday. Evening Update from Alisa.

Prayer Update Tuesday:



Placement approval for Heath's rehab.



Right side mobility



Cognition & communication—and the emotions of frustration/sadness that accompany is inability to do so successfully right now.

[Romans 5:3-5](#) And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup> and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup>

and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

6/19/23, Monday. Afternoon Update from Alisa.

Heath is progressing step by step & care team here says he is ready for the next stage of rehab, so please pray for favor & provision for all we need in God's perfect timing.

Heath's pain and discomfort is primarily from a Urinary Tract Infection. Please pray for healing as well as both peace & strength in his physical body and for fresh hope and comfort of Holy Spirit to fill his heart ❤️

Thank you!

---

I should include some 'thanks' from this morning too: Heath did a great job holding himself up when PT sat him on the side of the bed, and they stood him up again and he did a good job pushing up in his left leg, AND he is more consistent in turning to right side to find people talking to

him—all these things were great today



6/18/23, Sunday. Father's Day Update from Alisa

Well yesterday was a great day all around, but the night was restless and Heath began pulling at all the things attached to him and trying to 'get out'. This morning it was obvious he was in pain somewhere and hurting. They gave him a dose of pain/anxiety medicine and so he will be sleepy today I'm sure. Please pray for the needed rest to be healing to his body and for tomorrow to be another alert & 'milestone' day.

Sierra & Savannah are bringing him cards and balloons when they get here, so also pray he is encouraged by how loved and celebrated he is.

"The Joy of the Lord is our Strength"

And Happy Father's Day to all you Dads out there! Thank you for all the ways you love and serve your families ❤️

6/17/23, Saturday. Afternoon Update from Alisa

Praising God for Heath humming a little bit on command today so we could hear him! He tried to respond to one of his parent's questions on the phone, too, though it wasn't coherent. Heath knew that, and when we asked him to respond more times, he gave us some looks as if so 'Sorry, but you know I would if I could'.

This is a hope-filled step and I'm confident he'll make more progress in days and weeks ahead!

6/16/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa

Heath had a good day—no fever, alert and more 'himself' today!

Dr. did feel the need to put him on another antibiotic based on a culture—unfortunately, antibiotics have undesirable side-effects on digestive system, so please pray for healing and protection during this round.

Also, would especially like prayer this weekend for 'next steps', and the Lord's provision & timing for all that Heath needs!

Thank you all for your support & love!

6/15/23, Thursday. Update from Alisa

Heath was able to follow some commands a little better with the speech therapist today but as of yet, no attempt to talk. PT 'stood him up' a few times this morning to activate response in right side but nothing yet. He is still quite drowsy today and has a low fever, but they are going to remove one of the 'calming' medicines they gave him the past few nights which I believe is making him less alert.

Thank you for your support, love, and prayers.

Be joyful in hope; patient in affliction; faithful in prayer. [Romans 12:12](#)

6/14/23, Wednesday. Morning update from Alisa

Heath running a fever this morning...please pray it resolves quickly, and that they discern the



cause (ideally, I'd really like for him to not need more antibiotics )

6/13/23, Tuesday. Evening update from Alisa

Today was a full day—many visitors and lots of awake times and more obvious communications. Praising God for continued healing and small progress each day. Today they set up the trach to a more natural breathing flow and the ability to speak when he chooses.

Pray for relief from discomfort.

Pray for Heath to speak.

Pray for encouragement & hope and dependence on God's grace & power as he becomes more aware of his current lack of independence and the frustration that brings with it.



2 Corinthians 1:3-11 🙏

6/12/23, Monday. Evening update from Kevin Cool...

Today was another encouraging day for Heath as he continues to show strong signs of cognitive progression and movement. He is improving strongly with intentional eye contact and lifting his head to make adjustments etc. At one point today he overheard a friend on the phone and began imitating him in a “fun but mocking” way as is in line with his humor and personality! 😄

Let’s continue to pray for his continued improvements in:

-sleeping all the way through the night with no pain or coughing spells.

– pressure injuries to heal quickly

-wisdom on next steps for rehab

6/12/23, Monday. Morning update from Alisa...

As you continue to join us praying for wisdom in family decisions and the best continuation of care and therapy for Heath in the weeks ahead, please also pray for:



Big progress in cognition and mobility



Immune system and protection from infections or any complications that might require more meds/antibiotics/treatments.



My children:

Zach graduates DTS Friday and is staying a few extra days to return June 21st.

Sierra has a tough science course online this month, and is working more.

Savannah will be starting her first job any day.

6/11/23, Sunday. Evening update from Alisa...

Please pray for Heath to rest at night again. He had a restless night and the evening has been similar. Please pray nurses will be discerning and attentive and that Heath will rest–body, soul and mind.

6/10/23, Saturday. Evening update from Alisa...

Weekends are a different pace—much quieter, not many people. Maybe that's why he's a little drowsier today. Still a good day with some sweet interactions and a little turning of eyes, head—mostly just to midline today rather than all the way to the right, but we'll keep working on it! Continued prayers for timing, placement, and favor for further rehab, for right side, and the healing/protection of Heath's entire body.

6/9/23, Friday. Morning update from Alisa...

Praising God that the health care team here is pleased with Heath's progress and referrals are being made for specialized rehab. Please pray that Heath will be approved for all he needs to progress and the Lord will order his steps and guide our family in decisions that will need to be made in upcoming days/weeks as we continue to pray and trust the Lord for healing.

Pray also for progress to be made with trach and complete healing of sore on lower back.

6/8/23, Thursday. Morning update from Alisa...

...There may be another progress update or prayer request later but here are some things on my mind to pray about:

🙏 Lungs/tracheostomy—pray for total healing of irritation and bleeding & Drs wisdom/skill.

🙏 Next steps—Heath will not be here at Christus indefinitely so please pray for next steps. Pray that Heath has favor and is provided with every opportunity he needs to further his healing!

🙏 Pray for mobility & cognitive improvements!

Also, I think Heath is encouraged by visitors so don't hesitate to reach out to me if you want to stop by.

6/7/23, Wednesday. Morning update from Alisa...

Heath didn't sleep much last night and has been restless and his BP has been higher as a result...It seems to me he may be in discomfort and pain—agitated—please pray whatever he is feeling would be healed and Drs have wisdom and discernment in all treatment today. And that



Heath would be able to rest when needed.

9:15am Quick answer to prayer! I read scriptures to him for awhile and after doctor/nurses made their rounds he is resting...they'll move him and come through again before long and wake him up



but thanks for praying for peace for him

6/6/23, Tuesday. Evening update from Alisa...

I saw some encouraging signs when PT came by this morning. Keep praying!

They are doing a small wound care procedure tomorrow (for bed sore), pray it helps speed the healing process.

Pray for Heath to continue to have peace and joy and know deep inside that he is not alone and there is hope! He's in good hands at all times.

6/5/23, Monday. Morning update from Alisa...

🙏 Lungs not out of the clear quite yet—they are going to continue medicine for 3 more days for some bleeding. Pray that the irritated area clears up.

🙏 PT came to evaluate today and Heath followed some commands (or tried); some were delayed, and some not consistent, or he was not able to do. Pray that his strength and ability to understand AND do increases day by day.

[Philippians 2:13](#) For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

6/4/23, Sunday. Evening update from Alisa...

Another quiet day. This afternoon he was much more alert and moving his left side quite a bit. Continue praying for Heath to move and track his eyes and head toward the right side past the midline, and continue praying for his right side to 'wake up'.

6/3/23, Saturday. Evening Update from Alisa...

Today Heath had smiles for visitors and the nurses and held out his hand for the aid who checks blood sugar levels.

I am thankful that though the days are long and often monotonous and quiet, there is peace and joy in seeing these simple things. I am content with 'today' and praying and waiting for more good things 'tomorrow'.

Psalm 131

Lord, my heart is not proud, nor my eyes arrogant; Nor do I involve myself in great matters, Or in things too difficult for me. I have certainly soothed and quieted my soul; Like a weaned child resting against his mother, My soul within me is like a weaned child.

Israel, wait for the Lord from this time on and forever.

6/2/23, Friday. Evening Update from Alisa...

Seems like 'active' days are sometimes followed by sleepy days. Today is another fairly sleepy one...resting to get ready for the next step.

Thanks:

Heath is still smiling and peaceful with all the staff and visitors. (They like him of course!)

He was trying to "get up" with the left side of his body so a little more movement is happening there.

Also, thankful the antibiotics are working on lungs and Dr is not concerned.

Prayers:

Pray specifically for the right side of his body (left brain) to begin to activate. He is not moving on

that side or turning his eyes or head toward his right side. Continue praying for mobility, cognitive understanding, and ability to follow commands.

Thank you all for your faithfulness in praying for my Love and my family.



**6/1/23, Thu** – Evening Update by Kevin Cool

What another encouraging day with Heath! He continues to try to move his hands and trying to respond on command.

He is smiling more and more and can see the tenacity to fight in his eyes! We continue to thank our God for the positive signs Heath is displaying on a daily basis!

Things to pray:

1. That joy rules Heath's heart as he continues to improve.
2. His body to regulate normally without the seizure medicine.
3. When he is resting, he fully rests to regain his strength.
4. During PT, his right side begins to respond with proper movement.

**5/31/23, Wed** – Afternoon update by Alisa

Great things today so far—He followed some of the PT commands and also tried to say something to one of our friends who was visiting (because of trach Heath can't use his voice but he moved his lips and tongue like he was trying to say something to them) :). First time we've seen that. We praise the Lord for these good things!!!

He followed some commands and He doesn't have strength to follow all of them, but there were many times they could tell he was trying.

**5/30/23, Tue** – Afternoon update by Alisa

Good things:

Dear friends near and far who have come to visit us.

Today Heath moving more (still just on the left) but definitely moving more muscles in legs and arms and trying to straighten himself more and move with intention. It's still not 'on command' but believing we'll get there step by step

A person stopped me in the hall to ask to pray for Heath and was very encouraging. He happens to be a pastor in a nearby town.



**Prayer:**

Heath has an Irritating cough and is also being treated with some antibiotics for his lungs, after culture shows some things growing.

Tomorrow they will reduce the anti-seizure medicine a bit. Pray the results are positive (intentional movement, not erratic).

**5/29/23, Mon** – Afternoon update by Alisa

I also eagerly desire to see (and for the Drs to see! ) improvement in hopes for rehab—which means foremost consistency in his response to commands/voluntary mobility. He moves to relieve discomfort, scratch his face or nose, etc., but he is not consistent in lifting, resisting, squeezing or moving to commands. Please pray for this to happen soon, and for Heath to have favor with Doctors when it comes to our time here. I trust the Lord’s timing and know patience is necessary. I just want so very much for the Drs to see and to share the hope I have for him.

**5/29/23, Mon** – Morning update by Alisa

Can continue to pray for some minor irritation in lungs to heal and continue to have no infection or complications. Thank you!

**5/28/23, SUN** – Evening update by Kevin Cool, Heath’s “brother”

Heath had an eventful weekend with family and friends, he spent much of the weekend awake with eyes open and smiles. We continue to worship around him and we can see his facial expressions change when one of his favorites come on the speaker.

Today he was ready for much needed rest. Please continue to pray for his cognitive abilities to improve and for peace and comfort to be on him as he attempts to do some of the normal functions he used to.

Know this, Heath is a fighter and he will continue to improve each week with your continued prayers and strength of our Heavenly Father.

**5/27/23, SAT – LATE IN THE EVE**



\*This is a collage I, Alisa, made in 2016 at CCF, inspired by these verses [2 Corinthians 4:7-10](#) But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

Frailty, weakness, suffering (earthen vessels)—these are true, especially now. But then so is hope, light, and life (the power of Holy Spirit).

Today brought some glimmers of light & life—I hope to share more specifics in the days ahead as we continue to love and comfort and pray and worship in the hospital room.

#### **5/26/23, FRI – 6:30 PM**

Heath had an awake day today. Lots of moving his left arm and hand up and around like he's trying things out again—and some movements in left leg too. Lots of opened eyes and smiles (especially when the guys visit—you know who you all are!). Temp and BP have been great 👍. They will slowly reduce the seizure medicine over the next weeks. Continue to pray for cognitive function and mobility.

#### **5/24/23, WED – 9 PM**

Blood pressure was great all day, and no fever during the day either. There was some intentional movement with his left arm and hand trying to relieve discomfort. That is a good sign, and we want more of that intentionality and even more—responses to commands. There seems to be some responsive squeezes with his hand, but it is still inconsistent at this point. His friend Ryan came to see him today and he smiled so big his teeth showed! It's a lopsided smile, but we LOVE to see it.

I was impressed today to ask the Lord to provide for all that Heath needs in the days ahead. Please join me in also asking the Lord to provide the strength, the understanding, the care, the resources, the favor, the therapies or whatever it is that he needs in the days ahead!

And thank you to everyone praying for peace for me.

It was also good for me to visit the CCF youth group tonight for 'senior graduation' night. I miss everyone and I know Heath does as well.

## **5/23/23, TUE – 8 PM**

Today marks 1 month.

### **THANKSGIVINGS**

- \*friends and family near and far for all rallying to support us in every conceivable way
- \*the army of 'prayer warriors' and 'persistent widows' continually knocking and seeking and asking the Lord for healing for Heath and strength for our family.
- \*Drs. and Christus health care team who are attentive and kind and skilled in what they do.
- \*"baby steps" of opening eyes and smiles and movements.
- \*Reduced fevers, controlled blood pressure, and no persistent infections.
- \*sustaining grace and peace of Christ carrying us daily
- \*God's perfect love and trustworthy hands.

### **PRAYERS**

- \*spiked a fever last night, pray that doesn't continue
- \*bed sore, pray that it heals and doesn't get worse.
- \*Timeline to 'new baseline function' is unknown and Drs since the beginning have had little expectations due to the severity of Heath's hemorrhage. The baby steps we are seeing are expected but beyond that, it is unknown (according to Drs). So join us in asking God for greater expectations. Continue praying for healing, for voluntary mobility, for cognitive function—and for God to be glorified above all—Heath's story isn't over—our story isn't over.
- \*Pray for our children and for renewed faith and trust every day

[Ephesians 3:20-21](#) – Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

## **5/22/23, MON – 4 PM**

Saw some encouraging things today—Heath lifting his left arm more and moving left hand and even a few squeezes on command. Also (and the Doctor agrees) that his eyes have been more focused and open and tracking us more. One of the most beautiful moments to me this weekend was when Savannah came to the hospital in her cap & gown and his look of pride and big smile as he focused on her was obvious to all of us in the room. Also today, the PT said that he could feel the right side was also attempting to ‘fire’ after time in the neuro chair. These are ‘Baby steps’ and we’re encouraged by all of them. Continue praying for awakening of muscles—both the left and the right ‘paralyzed’ side—sustained alertness, and ability to respond to verbal commands. Thank you all!

### **5/22/23, MON – 8 AM**

One specific thing to **pray** for besides healing in brain, is for continued progress with the tracheostomy. Right now he is breathing on his own, no ventilator. He has humidified O2 blowing through trach to help keep adequate O2 saturation in his body. We eventually want the amount to decrease and his body to adjust to the air in the room. It will be a progression of adjustments. Also there is some blood in the suction that is probably from minor irritation but please pray it’s nothing worse and that his lungs are protected and get stronger.

### **5/21/23, SUN – 8:30 AM**

From Alisa.. I wanted to share this written from my Dad — and extend it to everyone who has been so generous in every thinkable way and especially in prayer.

Thank you all for your thoughtful gifts. It is amazing how much love has been sent to Heath and my daughter Alisa and family. Your love and gifts have been relentless. We are amazed at everybody’s response. Thank you for your expression of love at this time. Your love is giving her the strength necessary to not only get through this hard time but to actually triumph in it due to your expressions of love. You are responsible for upholding her through this hard time.

Words can not express my thankfulness to you all.

With deepest gratitude!  
Chris, Wendy, Alisa and family.

### **5/20/23, SAT – 8:30 AM**

Today our youngest graduates and the ceremony is at 2pm, so we will be with Heath in the hospital only in the morning. Please pray for our Savannah today—an extra-large dose of the tangible love of God—and joy and peace for our family in the midst of the sadness, and continued healing for Heath

[Romans 12:12](#) Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

**5/19/23, FRI – 4:30 PM**

Thankful for reduction in fevers at night and continued stability of vitals and for more times that Heath has his eyes open and moving a little bit more; although at this point, it still seems mostly spontaneous instead of on command. Also, thankful that today we got moved across the hall into a larger room that better accommodates our family and there's more windows.

[Psalm 29:11](#) the Lord will help give strength to his people. He blesses his people with peace.

**5/18/23, THU – 4 PM**

Not much change to report. **Continued prayers** for Heath to be alert & responsive and follow commands for PT and health team. PT is doing something a little different every day to try to activate things—today they sat him up on the side of the bed, tomorrow they will do the upright neuro chair again. The main person besides each of us that Heath opens his eyes and gives a smile to is the respiratory therapist —almost every time she comes in and says his name —so that's been fun to see. We are grateful for the daily sustaining grace and strength of God so evident in the midst of what we're in.

Today, I'd like to especially express thanks and admiration for the team of men at our church who are serving us by spending nights with Heath so we can be in our beds to sleep at night! And to all the women at church who are organizing Savannah's graduation party for us! Words just can't express enough how thankful we are to have you all in our lives. 💖

**5/17/23, WED – 1 PM**

The MRI & EEG both showed good reports that he is not having any seizures and that there is not more bleeding happening that would need to be treated. They do show the damage to regions in left hemisphere, but we're thankful there's nothing else that's been left untreated since the initial trauma.

We are thankful that Heath is opening his eyes more often and responding with some smiles and squeezes and turning his head to our voice sometimes. PT had him upright in the neuro chair today for stimulation and it did appear he was more alert and trying to move his arms and hands and head.

**PRAY:** Our biggest prayer request right now— besides continued healing & protection from infections—is that he would actively respond to commands from us and from the health team, to move his body when asked. This is so that he will be able to participate in rehab. Also pray for his nervous system to regulate body temperature better, as he still has fevers that come and go.

Thank you all so much for standing in prayer with us!

**5/16/23, TUE – 12 PM**

I walked in this morning and as I talked to Heath he opened his eyes to me and gave a little smile. (Pray he will do that when the Dr is around next time ) He will have an EEG today to look at brain activity and to make sure there is nothing ‘seizing’ inside that we can’t see. Continued prayers as always .

**5/15/23, MON – 3 PM**

Heath had an MRI this morning and we will talk to Dr later today or tomorrow if there is anything to report.

Good news: Heath looked at us today and turned his head toward us several times during PT and after—and seemed to try to smile, too. Pastor David came and said, “Heath I’m here to pray for you!” And he opened both his eyes again. Also—all cultures came back clear of infection, too.

**PRAY:** Continue to pray for healing and alertness and ability to respond to commands with his body.

**5/14/23, SUN – 2:15 PM**

MRI was backed up today. So, MRI will be tomorrow (most likely).

Good news is they wheeled the ventilator out of the room since he’s not needed it for 5 days and nights now. His trach has humidified oxygen blowing through the t-bar. That’s it.

**5/14/23, SUN – 11 AM**

Heath will have an MRI today. Thank you for your continued prayers.

My meditation this morning: [James 5:11](#), “See, we count as blessed those who have endured. You have heard of Job’s endurance and have seen the outcome that the Lord brought about—the Lord is compassionate and merciful.”

**5/13/23, SAT – 10:30 AM**

Heath has been running fevers (mostly at night) and they think it’s central nervous fever due to the stroke, but they are doing a bunch of lab work today to make sure there’s not something else. Please pray over this as his blood pressure raises and he’s even less responsive while feverish. Continue praying for healing, protection, and connections restored!

Also to clarify—Heath is not on any sedation medications. He is not being kept asleep by Drs. We are waiting for him to heal and for the Lord to wake him up.

Please know that I love you all and read every comment, card, and prayer—oh, how your words have strengthened me. In time I will thank each and every one of you individually for every card and note and gift and prayer. You mean the world to us and words are just not adequate for all you've given to support our family and all the prayers you've brought to the Father for Heath. We keep asking and keep seeking and keep knocking. We will be like the parable of the persistent widow in [Luke 18:1](#) “Now Jesus was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart. 🙏

#### **5/12/23, FRI – 7:30 PM**

Update on the kids: Sierra made it through finals with high grades, got 100% on her last speech and has 4.0 her first year at TJC! She has to finish her math course over the summer and has a couple more summer classes that will start in June. Savannah graduates in 1 week, then she hopes to get a part time job over the summer. Zach heads back to North Africa/Amsterdam tomorrow to finish his last month of YWAM DTS. Please continue lifting them up in prayer and that they keep their focus and hope in the Lord. 🙏

#### **5/12/23, FRI – 2 PM**

Heath continues to maintain good vitals and breathing. We continue to wait and trust the Lord. When PT came to move him today he opened his eyes and looked at me and stared and winced because of the stiffness. Keep praying for healing deep inside and for him wake up for better reasons than pain or discomfort, although I still take that as a good sign.

His parents arrived safely and are at the hospital with us now.

As always, words can't express the depth of thanks for all your kind words, cards, and especially your prayers for Heath and us every day.

#### **5/11/23, THU – 3:30 PM**

Heath doing same today—good with all the med changes and with the vent not on. We are moving limbs and joints from time to time so that he stays more flexible. So now we continue praying for healing and waiting for the Lord to wake him up.

#### **5/10/23, WED – 12 PM**

Heath is doing ok right now. They took him off of the IV blood pressure drip (again) and are sticking with the other meds, so pray he's able to do good with those again and be off the IV drip

all the time. Heavy pain meds are on as-needed basis, too. Breathing going good, too. Physical Therapy came in to move his limbs and he grimaced, so he can feel what's going on.

Along with prayer of protection from infections, Pray continued healing and connections be restored and that he will eventually awake and be able to follow commands. We trust the Lord with all these things—our help comes from the Lord, maker of heaven and earth.

**5/8/23, MON – 6 PM**

THANKFUL for:

Blood pressure being overall stable day & night and treated well by medications.

Handling vent great—breathing mostly on his own right now

No heavy sedation meds today or heavy narcotic drugs; and what they do still give, they will continue to reduce.

Heath's eyes did open briefly and his head turned slightly (I couldn't tell if he could actually 'see' us though). I could tell he tried to move his left arm. Also squeezed my hands under discomfort of procedure they have to do to clear lungs of fluid.

The battle in prayer is fiercely on!

Please PRAY:

Pneumonia that is being treated with antibiotics.

Blood pressure is currently high, pray that it comes back down and stabilizes.

Healing of brain trauma & ability to respond to commands.

Continued protection from other infections.

Healing and rest and peace.

**5/8/23, MON – 9 AM**

They have been adjusting meds and vent settings to wean Heath off of sedation and to progress with the ventilator. Lowering of the sedation meds yesterday caused a bit of agitation with his breathing, however, so they didn't make adjustments to vent. Please pray for the medical team to



have wisdom for all settings and that Heath would respond to them better today. Also, it looks like he will have an MRI (first one) and/or another CT scan today so pray over that as well.

💖 Today is our 24th anniversary 💖

### **5/7/23, SUN – 10:30 AM**

Overall same report—will continue to have slow adjustments made. Pray especially over the process of lowering ventilator settings and medications that he will adjust well and infections/pneumonia will not become a problem.

### **5/6/23, SAT – 9 AM**

Heath had another calm night and continues to do well on his medication adjustments and lowering settings on the ventilator so far, so I praise God for these things. Lord heal and give peace.

Alisa continues ... Today our niece, Aleigha, gets married to Jason 3pm EST!

Right now they are putting the trach/vent to 'T-bar' for hopefully a couple hours, which is a good step so pray it all goes well.

They will slowly lower sedation/pain medications and vent settings—It is a balance between vent and sedation and blood pressure so will be a gradual process day by day adjusting things depending on how his body handles it.

### **5/5/23, FRI – 9:30 AM**

Heath had an overall peaceful night and looks like today will be the same. He is doing well with adjustments they made on ventilator (they will change settings day by day to eventually wean him off it). He's also handling adjustments in medications so far. Still keeping him calm so he doesn't storm dangerously high. Rest and time. I can wait for what is best for him and trusting the Lord in his perfect time Heath will awaken and progress more.

### **5/4/23, THU – 4:30 PM**

They are getting Heath settled in the new room.

From Alisa...Not much to report today. I would call it a 'stable rest day' if I could name it. They have him on blood pressure medications that have seemed to stop the storms, but he is not weaned from sedation yet either. Please pray over next steps as they wean him off of these things that his body will respond well to this and move toward healing and awakening.

Thank you for your love and continuing prayers!

We are believing God to be glorified in and through this as He heals Heath day by day

**5/4/23, THU – 9:30 AM**

Heath had an overall peaceful night and looks like today will be the same. He is doing well with adjustments they made on ventilator (they will change settings day by day to eventually wean him off it). He's also handling adjustments in medications so far. Still keeping him calm so he doesn't storm dangerously high. Rest and time. I can wait for what is best for him and trusting the Lord in his perfect time Heath will awaken and progress more.

**5/3/23, WED – 4:30 PM**

They are getting settled in the new room.

From Alisa...Not much to report today. I would call it a 'stable rest day' if I could name it. They have him on blood pressure medications that have seemed to stop the storms, but he is not weaned from sedation yet either. Please pray over next steps as they wean him off of these things that his body will respond well to this and move toward healing and awakening.

Thank you for your love and continuing prayers!

We are believing God to be glorified in and through this as He heals Heath day by day

**5/3/23, WED – 10:30 AM**

Heath had a better night with blood pressure and into morning until about 9:15a. They were able to keep him off a lot of things and lower sedation. However, it appears the lowering of sedation caused him to spike dangerously high again, so they upped the sedation a bit and administering some medications to calm the storm. They said he's very sensitive to stimulus.

They are preparing the room for the feeding tube (PEG) insertion surgery which will be done this morning.

Pray for surgery to go smoothly. Pray for his body to handle lowering of sedation without dangerous storms.

**5/2/23, TUE – 12 PM**

Looks like today or tomorrow they will move Heath to the long term acute care here at Christus. Need to hold off on people bringing things until we get settled in another place.

## **5/2/23, TUE – 9 AM**

Nurse said it was a rough night. But, thankfully they got his blood pressure down and he is calm now.

While Heath was being given a breathing treatment this morning and coughing, he squeezed Alisa's hand several times with his right hand. We take that as a good sign for better things coming

Dr. Applebaum trauma surgeon came by and said hoping to do Tracheostomy today—this morning or afternoon. Please pray for this procedure to be performed at just the right time and no complications.

## **5/1/23, MON – 10 PM**

Alisa talked to a surgeon around 6:30pm tonight and he said they may be able to perform the tracheostomy tomorrow at the earliest, or Wednesday. Most likely the feeding tube (called a "PEG") will be done another time, as she hasn't talked to the GI Dr yet. There is one team for the trach surgery and a different GI team for the PEG. Please pray for timing to be God's perfect timing and for Heath's best healing.

His blood pressure remained lower and less frequent storms than before— but can't say it's "all better" yet.

Please continue to pray over blood pressure, as well as protection over his entire body and the healing of his brain.

## **5/1/23, MON – 12:30 PM**

We are so grateful that overall Heath did better through the night last night than previous ones; and this morning overall has been good, too.

He did have another dangerous spike in blood pressure (212) early this morning, but it appears that he's heading in the right direction. Please continue praying and targeting these sympathetic storms of blood pressure, breathing and heart rate. We need them to be brought under control.

Jesus, Calm these Storms.

The disciples called out to Jesus during a perilous storm: "...who is this man?" they asked each other. "When he gives a command, even the wind and waves obey him." ([Luke 8:24,25](#))

## **4/30/23, SUN – 12 PM**

We are encouraged by some improvement in Heath's kidney numbers. 😊

Please continue prayer for Heath and these "sympathetic storms" when his blood pressure, breathing, and heart rate increase.

These storms are what we need to see improvement in to move forward with removing sedation and other things. Pray the Drs are able in the wisdom of God to figure out the right balance of medications and that Heath will favorably respond to them today, always in the direction of healing.

#### **4/29/23, SAT – 11:35 AM**

TARGET BLOOD PRESSURE: Alisa asked to emphasize the need for prayers to relieve the intensity of the blood pressure (BP) storms. Please focus prayers on Heath's blood pressure. It is a serious need.

#### **4/29/23, SAT – 11:30 AM**

Rough night, Good morning.

The nights have been difficult with Heath's blood pressure, and last night was no exception. His blood pressure climbed gradually, then launched to a high of 220, which is critically High. Normal range should be around 120.

The discussion with the neurosurgeon this morning gave a little more light and color to previous discussions.

We asked the surgeon directly about an area of concern, related to Heath's memory. The doctor said Heath is likely to have no memory of the incident. BUT, Heath has a good chance of recognizing Alisa and the faces of his children. He even has a good chance of having life memories intact! Pray, pray, pray that would be the case!

PRAY: Continue to pray for healing and a decrease in these blood pressure 'storms' and wisdom for Drs/nurses in this regard.

#### **4/28/23, FRI – 5 PM**

We've had a couple nice changes in the last couple days, including being able to touch Heath while we are talking to and praying for him. Yesterday they said we are also able to massage, and gently move his joints for him, to help encourage circulation and reduce swelling in the extremities.

Sierra was able to deliver her speech in a private room at the hospital yesterday. Even with unfamiliar surroundings and supremely challenging circumstances, she remained composed and is

confident she got the needed score. She was also granted favor with some teachers who offered her an option for an 'incomplete', thus allowing her make up class requirements this summer.

Blood pressure continues to reach very high levels when they move him or do the sedation removal procedures. Please pray for him and those difficult times.

#### **4/28/23, FRI – 12 PM**

Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning. [Psalms 30:5b](#)

Even the smallest light can chase out the darkness . Today we are finding great strength and encouragement from some glimmers of light.

Early this morning, Sierra was comforting and rubbing Heath's hand and she felt two, solid squeezes when they were doing a test removal of him from sedation. They were not the kind that you would question whether it actually happened or not. They were two, clearly discernable squeezes....from his right hand.

That was a source of significant encouragement because the right is the paralyzed side. So we have now had some form of squeeze from both left and right hands!

Pray specifically for Heath's blood pressure to be ok as they continue trying to adjust sedation and eventually get him off of it—he will need to be less agitated, with blood pressure not rising to dangerous levels, in order to progress; and to eventually (hopefully) get off of a ventilator someday.

Also need wisdom on when or if the tracheostomy should be scheduled. We are seeking clarification on clear benefits and risks for his case.

#### **4/27/23, THU – 6:30PM**

We're very thankful for the capable and God-honoring medical staff called to be present to serve Heath at this time.. They have done a great job trying to pinpoint exactly where Heath is in his journey, from the human perspective, and to offer the best of their understanding that medical knowledge is ready to offer..

God is now perfectly poised to receive the glory that only He deserves, for the work ahead that only He can do. Man has effectively been eliminated from the competition for taking the credit of any future hope or healing in Heath's life.

The trauma that he's experienced was in his dominant (left) side of his brain, which houses key areas like comprehension, talking, walking, and swallowing to name a few.

The path seen from their medical perspective is long and arduous, with numerous and very real threats and perils along the way.

However in the same breath, the doctor said that his 25 years of critical care experience has humbled him and that all the things they do to make things better is only 10% of it– the rest is in God’s hands. He was very generous in his use of the phrases “I don’t know,” and “only time will tell.”

God is the only one who has a say in Heath’s future. Everyone agrees that God could not have crafted a better challenge; perfectly tailored to Heath’s voracious appetite to take on a challenge, crush goals, surpass expectations and eventually end up with a crown so big that it makes a loud, resounding clanking sound when he throws it down at the feet of the lamb.

**4/26/23, WED – 4PM**

We will take encouragement where we can get it. Today, as Heath’s mom, Marilyn, stood at Heath’s bed and held his hand, she felt what she said were “kind of strong” squeezes. Whether they were voluntary or involuntary muscle responses cannot be known, but we are taking it to be a blessing.

Kidney specialist said they saw no additional negative changes in the kidney function. The absence of bad news is good.



We have been able to use some generous snack provisions for our new Dr/Nurse bribery ministry. A nice basket stuffed with a variety of chocolates and sweets are now in Heath’s room. They are labelled for Drs, nurses and staff to help themselves. Friends well experienced in hospitals say they have seen that it encourages them to visit often. 😊 And, they also brought a slew of additional snacks for our newly birthed waiting room welcome wagon ministry that Kevin Cool

started. It's opened people up, brought little smiles to their worried faces and has allowed several to accept offers of prayer.

These families would not have these blessings and needed ministry in Jesus's name if Heath weren't here.

#### **4/26/23, WED – 10:20 AM**

The report this morning was good.

The surgeon said that he was pleased with the CAT scan that he was looking at from today. It verified that the procedures that they have done were needed and accomplished what they wanted it to accomplish. The air pockets in the brain that resulted from the draining of fluids look to be subsiding. That is a positive sign and important for the brain swelling reduction.

They have also removed the physical drain from his brain because it also has served its purpose.

When they temporarily remove the sedation, it causes what they called an irritation response. Body realizes there is a foreign object in the throat, etc., and it elevates his blood pressure and other levels. To alleviate that irritation, they plan to relocate the breathing tube to a tracheotomy connection.

When asked what we should pray for, the doctor said that there are areas of the brain that are damaged; pray that the brain would begin reforming new connections to compensate for any injured areas/functions, particularly mobility and cognitive areas.

Also for today, Sierra has her biggest group speech for her class, and will have finals in the next two weeks. Savannah may also have a senior thesis to present in the next week or so before school ends. Also, be praying in the weeks ahead that Heath would begin breathing on his own.

Finally, the first words in Alisa's journal, that she started when they first got here was..."**Our story is not over.**"

#### **4/25/23, TUE**

4/25, 10 AM – They temporarily removed him from sedation to test or observe for any function or reaction. Checking kidney function today.

4/25: Zach arrived from an outreach in Egypt. Arrived today through Dubai.



4/25, 3 PM – from Alisa: Heath needs continued prayer for healing of injury in his brain as well as protection over kidneys and all vital organs—specifically for now that he would maintain a good blood pressure range and low cranial pressure—Those things have risen when taken off sedation so keeping him sedated for most part.

Thank you all! Through your prayers I'm able to stay in the moment and hopeful and we are well. And I know God is working in his body in ways that we can't see... yet. Love you all and thank you for everything.

4/24/23, MON

At around 11am 4/23, surgeons performed surgery to remove the hemorrhaged blood from around Heath's brain. The surgeons reported that the procedure was successful. That is, they were did what was needed and it went well. They did a post op CT scan which will help them evaluate the next steps.

4/24 – Parents arrived. Drove from Michigan.





L-to-R: Rob Nunziato, Bill Stoner (Heath's Dad), Kevin Cool (Heath's great friend), Marilyn Stoner (Heath's Mom).

**4/23/23, SUN**

At around 2:00 pm 4/23 Heath Stoner suffered a major hemorrhagic stroke. He was taken to Christus hospital in Tyler. Doctors were able to control the hemorrhaging. He is in serious but stable condition. The doctors expect damage but don't know the extent. PLEASE PRAY for God's miraculous power in his physical body and wisdom and skill for the doctors.