

12/30/2012

11:15 AM

Hello, this is Pattie writing.

We need some prayer for my new baby brother.

Linus Lazar Sleep was born at 7am today. About an hour after Linus was born he stopped breathing. We called the ambulance and he was air lifted to Springfield. Daddy was unable to accompany him so he and Sam drove to the hospital together. The latest news I heard was that he is now at the hospital with a tube down his throat to help him breathe. His heart rate has continued well, he is just having a hard time breathing on his own. We think it's due to meconium in his lungs.

Mommy is still at home, recovering from the birth. She is doing alright, but said this was her hardest birth yet. She's hoping to join Daddy and Sam at the hospital as soon as she's able.

God bless,

Pattie

9:21 PM

Hi,

Daddy and Mommy just left for the Children's hospital in St. Louis to be with Linus. It's a four hour drive and both of them have been up all day. Please pray for their safety.

Linus' breathing and heart beat are doing okay as far as I know. He was moved because the doctors thought he needed more intensive care than he could receive in Springfield. The doctors don't seem to be very optimistic about Linus' situation, considering it a miracle that he's still alive.

I have faith in our Heavenly Father that He is going to pull Linus through this. Please keep us in your prayers.

In Messiah,

Pattie

12/31/2012

10:11 AM

Hi,

Linus and my parents made it to the children's hospital in St. Louis safely last night.

Linus' breathing and heartbeat are still going pretty good this morning. Mommy said that Linus is looking better than when he was born. He was pale yesterday but is very pink now. :-) His brain seems to be fine. His lungs have been cleared out and they're pulling back on his oxygen levels to see if he can breath on his own. They think there might be a problem with his heart, but they haven't figured out what it might be. He is still on a bunch of drugs. If he stays stabilized today the hospital will start taking him off of stuff tomorrow.

Please keep us in your prayers. Thank you for all the prayers and support so far.

God bless,

Pattie

12:52 PM

Hi,

I just got off the phone with my dad. He said Linus is still stabilized, but his organs suffered a lot of trauma during birth due to lack of blood and oxygen. And it's possible that they'll be damaged more now that he is getting the oxygen. All Linus's organs need prayer, especially his brain and heart. He is on a medication to help his heart beat better. And he is on an invasive respirator.

My dad said that Linus has been stabilized through prayer and asks everyone to keep praying.
In Messiah,
Pattie

1/1/2013
10:38 AM

Good morning,

Linus is now two days old. He is still stabilized, breathing well and very pink. His brain seems to be very well, no signs of damage or seizures. The hospital is starting to take him off a few things. Today they are turning the respirator down a notch and taking him off the paralyzer med he was on. He has been on a cooling pad since he got to the hospital to help prevent brain damage and they will be taking him off of that tomorrow morning at 10:30.

We still need prayer for his organs. All his organs were traumatized from severe blood loss and lack of oxygen. His oxygen levels didn't hit 100% until 7 hours after he was born. His heart especially needs prayer, it is still working on it's own, but it's not doing as well as the hospital would like, so they have him on 3 heart meds.

He isn't peeing as much as we would like, but the hospital isn't too concerned about it yet.

Please pray for smooth transitions as they're taking Linus off the different meds and the respirator.

God bless,

Pattie

1/2/2013
10:36 AM

Good Morning,

Linus is doing very well this morning. He is still in critical condition, still maxed out on life support. He is responding well to coming off different meds.

Yesterday he was taken off the paralyzer med he was on, but he still hasn't moved. He still hasn't been peeing much to be able to get the med out of his system, but his kidneys and liver are showing signs of improvement.

He is bleeding a little bit from his stomach internally, they don't really know why, but the hospital isn't too concerned about it. He is making his own blood, but they might have to give him a little bit more since he's just a little guy.

His lungs are mostly cleared out and his respirator oxygen level is down 30% from when he arrived at the hospital and the pressure is down 3%.

Linus will come off the cooling pad today at 10:30am and start warming up. While he's warming there is a chance that he could have seizures.

The hospital did a blood test on my mom and the results came back that Linus had lost half of his blood into my mom's blood stream right before birth. The hospital doesn't know how this happened, it wasn't an abruption. But this was the cause of all these complications.

Please continue in prayer for Linus's organs, my Dad says they are on the mend. Please pray that Linus won't have any seizures. If he doesn't have any the hospital will take stuff off his head tomorrow and my parents will be able to touch his head.

Please keep my mom in your prayers as well, she hasn't been doing well physically.

God bless,

Pattie

1/3/2013

9:50 AM

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. He has been stable since about 1 or 2 pm on his birthday. That has been an unbelievable blessing and I'm sure has only been sustained by literally thousands of prayers.

Linus has been warming up. He's been on a cooling pad since his birthday. It is a 72 hour protocol and a 24 hour warm up. The full warm up ends at 10:30 today. His heart rate is back up to more normal baby heart rate. Being cool he was at about 115 and now he's about 140. He has urinated some. Not as much as they think he should.

Here are some things to pray for today:

- He has some secretion from his lungs and his lungs are more cloudy today than they were yesterday. He is highly susceptible to infection due to all the tubes and catheters going into him. We pray that God will stave off infections and completely heal his lungs.

- He's still not moving on the second day after they removed the paralytic medication. We pray that God will bring him back to life in this respect.

- His kidneys are not working well. We pray that his kidneys will completely heal.

- He has a very long road to full recovery. We pray God will continue to keep him strong and steady as he has been.

Sometime soon, I need to tell you more details about the cause of Linus' condition. I also need to tell you the AWESOME, miraculous story about Linus' rescue. I have lots of new heroes in my life!

Right now I can tell you that we have literally thousands of heroes and they are all the people around the country and now in other parts of the world that are sustaining Linus (and us) with prayer! Words just cannot describe our humbling gratitude we have for this.

1-4-2013

11:38 AM

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. As time goes on and parts of Linus continue to not function as expected, the prognosis gets worse. The doctor today told us that judging from the current clinical analysis on Linus that his brain is not functioning normally. He doesn't expect that Linus would ever come out of this to be a "normal" child. He may have such severe brain damage that he won't be able to breathe, or control other parts of his body. His heart and kidneys suffered pretty severe damage and it can be assumed that his digestive system may have also suffered severe damage. It's very possible that his kidneys and his heart may never recover from the damage. That's the clinical analysis.

The doctor is not a "bad guy". I think he truly wants to see Linus come out of this as a brilliant happy child. But he, of course, has to report what he sees clearly to us.

We know there is a Higher power at work and we continue to trust that the Lord can heal that He knows best and that He can do all things.

Please join us in prayer that God will heal his brain and that God will heal his heart and that God will heal his kidneys.

Today he is starting to move some. He is kicking his feet and moving his hands a little. He is urinating, but not enough. He is very swollen with water retention.

I won't try to tell you that Joy and I are not discouraged right now. We still have faith that God will heal him. We have faith that God will give us courage and know that his plan for Linus is the best plan.

1/5/2013

3:19 AM

Shabbat Shalom. Friday afternoon at about four o'clock, as I sat alone with Linus in the hospital room holding his little hand, praying with him, encouraging him and quietly crying, I could feel the Sabbath approaching. Even in such an unlikely place, I felt the warm glow and joy of the Sabbath. Such a special Holiday for our family as we celebrate and rest with the Lord every week starting at sunset on Friday night. Before I left him to go be with my wife resting in a room a mile and a half away, I gave him his Sabbath blessing. For the first time in his life, his mother's womb was not between my hand and his head as I gave him his blessing. Alone in a hospital room, just Linus and me and God. I began "Lord bless this boy like Ephraim and Manasseh. Give him a double portion and a double portion of healing...". In the early hours of Sabbath, at about 8pm Friday night, as the nurse was tending to him, Linus opened his eyes and took a look around for the first time since his birthday.

It was a bittersweet time as I gave all but one of my children their Sabbath blessings over a speaker phone. They were unable to feel that powerful touch of their Daddy's hand on their head as I blessed them. Afterward, Joy and I Blessed each other and laid our hearts out to each other and to God, in an incredible time of prayer. The kingdom of God is full of paradox. We are slaves, yet with incredible freedom. We are made of worthless dirt, specks of dust, yet we are of untold value. As Paul says we can clearly see the invisible God (through His creation, like Linus). Here we are in an anguish and utter despair as we watch our son lying helpless in a hospital room. Yet we are receiving incredible blessings and seeing miracles like we've never seen before.

Yesterday I gave you the doctor's opinions. Today, I'll give you my opinion. Linus is a "strong willed" child. What he's survived through so far is very much a miracle. God has the power to heal him completely. Where he is now and all his progress is supported by thousands and thousands of prayers. God listens to and answers effective prayers. We don't know what God's will is in all this, but Joy and I want to take what he gives us no matter what it is. God is able to completely restore Linus, there is no doubt about that.

Status:

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. He is now rapidly coming off some of the life support that he has been on since he's been here. He is off of all the heart medications. He's on one medication to raise his blood pressure to put pressure on his kidneys so that they will possibly work better. They are steadily bringing the oxygen levels down on the respirator. He's at about 50% and dropping at 1% an hour. All his vital signs and blood oxygen levels are very good. He's urinating fairly well at this time. He is starting to breath over the respirator which is a VERY good sign. He opened his eyes at least once today and is starting to move more everyday. Since he has tubes down his throat and trachea, he is on lots of

sedative so that he doesn't hurt himself. So he can't be expected to do much movement. We are thrilled with his progress and we thank you all for all your prayers and support. We are thanking God constantly. We ask you to join us in prayer for complete healing for Linus' kidneys and all his damaged organs.

11:11 AM

Just spoke with Jerry. He is at Linus' side and Linus is doing about the same. His urine output is about half of what it needs to be. We appreciate your prayers so much! From our understanding, his kidneys are towards the top of the list of needing healing at this time. Would you please join us in praying for complete healing of his kidneys?

Many, many thanks!

Joy (I am at the Ronald McDonald house getting much needed rest and healing.)

1/6/2013

8:04 AM

Why is Linus in critical condition at the Children's Hospital? The simple answer to this question is "We don't know". When we arrived at Children's Hospital in St. Louis, **Joy was asked to take a blood test to see if any of Linus's blood in Joy's blood. The test was positive and based on the blood sample, it was calculated that he lost at least half of his entire blood supply, through the placenta into Joy's bloodstream. All we know is that it was lost before he was born (probably shortly before he was born) and that it was lost very quickly. The doctors indicated that this was not really an extremely rare thing to happen, and no one really knows why it happens** (speaking in worldly terms).

Status:

Linus is still in critical condition, but stable. Today Linus is one week old. It seems like a lot longer to us. His kidneys seem to be healing and last night he put out a lot more urine than ever before. This, of course, is your prayers answered! He is extremely swollen and needs to get rid of a lot of fluid before he will be able to breath efficiently on his own. He's moving around more everyday. He's looking around more, however he's so swollen it looks like it's difficult for him to open his eyes. He's breathing over the respirator quite a bit now, except when he sleeping. He's coming off all the life support as quickly as he will let them take it off. He slowly went down from 80% to 36% oxygen before his blood oxygen started to drop slightly, so they kept him at about 40% overnight.

The miracle that he has made it this far is incredible. God is healing him and all of your prayers are effective! He still has a long way to go and we would be grateful for all your prayers for continued healing. God knows what needs to be healed, so we don't feel like we need to tell what to pray for specifically. Probably all his organs were damaged during the trauma and the shock he suffered. So join us in praying for healing for all of his organs. His brain, his heart and his digestive system are still big unknowns to the doctors as to long term problems he might have. But the Lord knows and continues His plans. Praise Him. We trust in the Lord Almighty and not in doctors prognoses, so please pray for healing for Linus as the Lord leads you.

Joy is still not doing all that well, but she is better today than she was yesterday. She needs prayers for healing as well.

Thank you all for your prayers for Linus and our family. We are so grateful to you all! We pray that God will speak through us as we type these status notes. We are humbled and submitted to His will.

Love,
Jerry and Joy

1/7/2013

7:30 AM

Status:

Linus is still in critical condition, but stable. His kidneys are working great now and the swelling will go down in a couple of days, the Lord willing. He's still on a very smooth and slow course of recovery. He's moving around quite a bit and opens his eyes and looks around quite a bit. We are giving lots of offerings of thanksgiving as well as prayers for continued healing. Psalms 116 vs 12-19

¹² How can I repay *ADONAI*
for all his generous dealings with me?

¹³ I will raise the cup of salvation
and call on the name of *ADONAI*.

¹⁴ I will pay my vows to *ADONAI*
in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵ From *ADONAI*'s point of view,
the death of those faithful to him is costly.

¹⁶ Oh, *ADONAI*! I am your slave;
I am your slave, the son of your slave-girl;
you have removed my fetters.

¹⁷ I will offer a sacrifice of thanks to you
and will call on the name of *ADONAI*.

¹⁸ I will pay my vows to *ADONAI*
in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹ in the courtyards of *ADONAI*'s house,
there in your very heart, Yerushalayim.

Halleluyah!

January 8

7:42 AM

This is a week of new beginnings for Linus. The start of the week (Sunday) was his eighth day. In scripture the number eight symbolizes new beginnings. This would have been the day he would have been circumcised. A sign of the covenant of a new beginning between God and man that we believe is fulfilled by our "Cup of Salvation" manifested in Yeshua of Nazareth (Jesus) the Messiah. The physical will have to wait; we know our hearts are circumcised for the Lord. The end of this week is also a new beginning as it is a new moon and the start of a new month in God's calendar, Shevat. Each month beginning new with much darkness and slowly bringing forth great light in the night sky at mid month. Another good time to reflect on the salvation provided to us through the Messiah Yeshua and the goodness and mercy of God! Hallelujah!

Status:

Linus is still in critical condition, but remains stable with all of the prayer support he is receiving. Yesterday, for the first time he got some nourishment other than the dextrose he has been receiving. He's now receiving an intravenous mix called "Total Parental Nourishment". It has protein and fats and electrolytes. This should be a very good thing for him. It will help him have a more regulated system and possibly speed up the reduction of his swelling. He may be able to start taking Mommy's milk today or tomorrow (through a tube into his stomach for a while). He continues to slowly come off the life support. He's alert now and you can tell when he's awake and when he's sleeping, even though he's still getting a lot of sedatives. He gets easily agitated by all the care that the nurses give him, as could be expected, in my opinion. The poor little guy has to go through a lot of manipulation on his road to recovery.

From our point of view, we would like to see him continue to wean off of the equipment he's on so that he needs as little drug intervention as possible, tolerate the milk when he gets it, continue to urinate at a good rate.

We'd love for you to join us in prayer. We really appreciate receiving your emailed prayers. Thank you ALL for your fervent prayers! They help sustain us. Here are the list of common things that we pray for at this time:

spiritual protection for Linus, us, and family at home

protection for him and us from viruses and other nasty stuff floating around the hospital

physical protection from possible harmful side-effects of drugs/interventions

Divine wisdom of the medical staff attending Linus

continued healing of his whole mind and body

As an ending note: I referred to our Messiah as Yeshua, which is the modern Hebrew name for him, meaning "Salvation" in the language. Half my friends call him Jesus, half my friends call him Yeshua. The other half call him some form of a Hebrew name with "Yah" in there somewhere and the other small half of my friends are Jewish and probably don't care what I call him. I pray that we won't get hung up on names, and come together as a people who all love and worship the same God Almighty! Amen.

PS - I'm not so good at math.

January 9

Our very special boy, Linus

I always start the status report of Linus with the statement: Linus is in critical condition, but stable. And today I will start the same way. Yesterday morning as Joy and I were standing near Linus holding his hand, Doctor Phil, the attending physician for Linus's transfer flight from Springfield Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) to the St Louis Children's Hospital NICU, came in to visit Linus. I was excited to see him. I introduced him to Joy and we were able to talk and visit for a while. During the course of the

conversation, I asked him if he had been on any rescues lately. He said, "Yes, but not like his. He was a very sick little boy". We've heard that phrase several times from the doctors during Linus's stay here: "He's a very sick boy". He had the distinction of being on the top tier, the most critically sick baby in the entire NICU, and it's a big NICU here. He has been stable since he's been here, but he has been, and still is, teetering on the edge of "anything goes, life threatening situations" at every moment. But, yet he just stays so incredibly stable and has been since the late afternoon of his birthday. Sustained by the hand of God and thousands of people praying thousands and thousands of prayers. We know he's teetering on the edge, but we also know of the mighty God that we serve and we have faith in Him! The miracles that have gotten him to where he is, are ALL from the hand of God.

Status:

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. He's still coming down to lower settings on the ventilator. He has received more platelets over the last couple of days, so perhaps something inside of him is needing those for healing. He has to have extra sedation occasionally, since he wants to breath on his own and that makes the ventilator less effective. He's always been such a fighter and it's sad to see him trying to do the right thing (breathing); but given the place he's at now, he has to be sedated to allow the machine to work best.

Please join us as we pray for healing for Linus. We pray that he can take Mommy's milk for nourishment soon and that his entire digestive system will work and process the food properly. We pray that his swelling continues to go down so that he will be able to breath better, that his CO2 levels will remain low, in the 60's or lower and that his blood pressure remains low, with the mean also being in the low 60's or lower. Thank you so much for all your prayers, they mean so much to us. We are humbled. Please feel free to send us an email if you like. We like receiving the emails. We may not be able to answer, but we are built up by your encouragement!

Jerry & Joy

PS - Joy is feeling much better lately. We know last week was mostly adrenaline. Please continue to pray for physical strength for both of us as fatigue begins to come into play.

January 10

7:36 AM

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. He's doing a great job "coming down off the ventilator" as they say around here. He's slowly coming down on the settings on his oscillating ventilator and they are talking about taking him off of it today and putting him on the more conventional breathing ventilator. Instead of 600 breaths per minute it breathes at his normal breathing rate. His kidneys are working well. His swelling is coming down slowly. He sleeps and is awake about the normal amounts for a baby his age. He's handling being awake a little better maybe. They didn't have to give him any extra sedation last night to calm him down when he was awake. I don't think there was any blood in his stool yesterday, which means he may get Mommy's milk today. He's responsive when he's awake. His pupils are very responsive, he's responsive to touch and his reflexes are good. I really don't think I could send you a better report. Come bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord!!!

Joy and Jerry are weary. We are sustained by the Lord Almighty and all your wonderful uplifting prayers. But the God-given "Mommy and Daddy" inside of us often send us into fits of weeping and sadness. We want so badly to pick him up and have Mommy nurse him and we want to take him home

to the rest of his family. Our little baby boy is lying helplessly with no clothes (just a diaper) and no blanket. His stomach is empty and he can't eat (though his Daddy feeds him the Bread of Life daily ~Joy). He can't cry and he can't really move around much. He's got all kinds of tubes and sensors into him and all over his body. He's extremely uncomfortable and often agitated by this whole situation that he's he's found himself in. He's most likely in some pain, as sick as he is, even though they say the sedatives help with that.

Oh, please, don't think I'm saying we are ungrateful. We are so very happy that God has given us this beautiful child. We are so joyful about his excellent rescue and recovery. We are continually amazed at how far the Lord has brought us! Are we complaining? No, we just wanted to share some of our inner feelings with you all. Are we impatient? pretty much, but we will wait on the Lord to do His perfect will.

Please join us in prayer for his continued improvement. Praying for his nurses and doctors. We thank you so, so much for your prayers and support.

Love,
Jerry and Joy

January 11

7:49

Linus is in critical condition, but stable. Yesterday he switched ventilators. Off of the oscillator type and on to a breathing type. The switchover went extremely well (better than the doctors expected). He was able to start out on some fairly low settings. He is SO much more peaceful and restful on the new ventilator. It's so much quieter in his room now. He just looks so much better now that he's not vibrating at 600 breaths per minute and is now breathing at 40 or 50 breaths per minute, as he normally would. His urine output is still very good. All his vital signs are good. He's really doing fantastic right now. All to the glory of our almighty God!

Joy's Journal:

Yesterday was a "big day" for little Linus. Not only did he switch ventilators, but the physical therapists came by for an evaluation. He does have some limited range of motion (as would be expected) from lying still for so long. Jerry and I will receive training on how to exercise his limbs a little to help loosen him up. He slept most of the afternoon. I think it was so quiet and peaceful, he was finally able to get some good rest. Halleluyah! It's difficult at times to get so excited about things and then see numbers fluctuate from what we would ideally want them to be. It seems like each phase has new expectations and we just have to be more flexible and patient. We constantly pray for Divine wisdom for the doctors. We are trusting that every decision they make is of the Lord.

One of the biggest hopes over the next few days is that the weather will hold and we'll be able to see the other children on Sunday. My mother is planning to drive them up while the traffic isn't so bad, but if there is snow/ice that visit will be postponed. We miss the children so much. It's been almost 2 weeks since we've been home.

Thank you so much for all your prayers for Linus and us. We have NO DOUBT that he and we are sustained by your many prayers! Please join us in praying for his continuing recovery. We pray for peace for us as the do an MRI on his head to check for signs of brain damage (they can do this scan now

that he's on the new ventilator). We pray for our safe travels for our family so that we can all be together for a short time in the near future.



12:17 PM

Wonderful news! We may get to hold Linus in a little while.

January 12

Shabbat Shalom (A day of restful Peace)

On our January 8th status I spoke of Linus's 8th day and a new week of new beginnings. What a new week it has been. Linus is alive and well! Praise the Almighty Lord for the change in Linus between last Shabbat and this! The swelling is down on his face, his arms and hands are moving around and he's holding them more like a baby should. He's looking at us a lot more with those beautiful BLUE eyes (those of you who know us know that most of our children have brown eyes).

And what a different Shabbat it has been from our last. We still had the somewhat sad, yet, fun and exciting time of giving blessings to our eight children at home (and Granny and Grandma) over the speaker phone. As our Shabbat began, Joy and I got to hold little Linus for the first time since his birthday. We will be holding him now as much as we can as he progresses on his recovery. We bought a small bottle of grape juice and some "pretzel rolls" that actually look and taste somewhat like challah and Joy and I got to bless the wine and bread last night.

Linus is stable and is continuing to recover nicely. He's so much more peaceful now on the new quiet ventilator that he is on. He's still retaining fluid, but it is getting better slowly. The RN (Monica) that watched the MRI said his head looks coned (misshapen) on the outside, but you could see his perfectly round little skull in the scan under all the fluid he's retaining. Here are some of the ways that we are thanking God today:

- Linus's MRI report came in today. According to the report his brain is normal! What a miracle!
- Today he starts tube feeding of Mommy's milk. Very slow at first (1mL every 6 hours), but what a blessing.
- He's peeing a lot, so the water retention continues to reduce.
- He was weaned off some pressure on the ventilator and some of the sedatives

Tidbits (just some fun/interesting things since we've been here):

Many of you know that Linus was slow to urinate in the beginning. When he finally started to go (A LOT), one of our favorite nurses, Shannon, said, "He's going too much. We're going to have to give him some more fluids... he's an overachiever!" Shannon is the third child of 11 and her father is one of nine. She was the nurse that helped check Linus in when he arrived in St. Louis.

"It's been a while, huh, Brian?" - another favorite nurse, Monica, to Dr. Hackett as we were going down to get Linus's MRI scan. Dr. Hackett is the lead doctor in the NICU and is Linus's "top level" of the hospital care. We were greatly blessed to have him as part of the team to get Linus down to 1st floor to get the MRI and he stayed to watch the scan. The nurse was replying to Dr. Hackett's question, "Do I have to remove any metal I'm wearing?" (The answer to this question is "yes".)

The trip from Linus's room to the MRI room and back was a big production. It took Linus on his bed on wheels, his "tree" of IV meds and fluids, his ventilator and his monitoring station. All that and 6 attendants and Joy and I. It's a good thing they have big staff elevators! When the elevator came to our floor they kicked everyone off so we could have the elevator. That was awesome.

A Respiratory staff member had to be in Linus's parade to get the MRI. His name was Harley Brett (first and middle name). Harley looks like a "Harley", but goes by Brett... he drives a pick-up and his wife's name is Loretta Lynn!

Linus's middle name is Lazar. Jerry picked it a few months before Linus was born. This is the Yiddish form of Eliezar (which means "God is my helper"... or "God gets me out of tough spots!") Lazar is also a shortened form of Lazarus. Our family's personal Bible reading for December 30th, 2012 (Linus's birthday) was John 11 & 12. Since our hospital stay, this passage has been a continual encouragement to me (Joy) and many times all I can pray is "Lord, the one you love is sick."

We are very thankful for every person providing care to Linus and we are extremely thankful for YOU ALL providing prayer covering over our family.



January 13

Linus's Status:

Linus continues to do very well. He's slowly and steadily going to lighter settings on the ventilator. His swelling is slowly coming down and he's urinating at a good rate. His high urine output is mostly on his own, but they have given him diuretics to help him along. But he hasn't had any since Friday and he's

still looking good. Here's the main focus for our prayers for Linus today:

- We are still praying for continued protection for him from spiritual attacks from the enemy, protection from infections, pneumonia, adverse side-effects from medications, and unexpected complications of all kinds.
- He didn't digest the first serving of milk they gave him yesterday. They emptied his stomach and tried some fresh milk at 6 am this morning. We are praying that his stomach and digestive system will "wake up" and start working today.
- We are praying that he continues to pee a lot and that his swelling will continue to go down. He won't be able to go to much lower settings on the ventilator until he loses some of the tightness in his torso caused by the swelling. The tightness in his chest from the retained fluids restricts some of the room he needs for lung expansion.
- His blood pressure is a bit high. We're not sure how to pray about this. That can be normal with all of the fluid, or caused by different problems (possibly with his kidneys).
- He's been on IVs through his umbilical cord since his birthday. He needs to have that IV location changed, probably today. We are praying that the IV switchover goes well.

Most of all we want to continue to give many, many thanks to our Heavenly Father. Each blessing and miracle that have sustained him just leave us breathless and humbled. We say it over and over again, but we are so very grateful for all the many, many prayers that you have earnestly prayed for Linus and his family.

The longer we hang around the hospital, the more our hearts go out for the other parents and patients here. There is so much suffering and many people who don't have Hope or know the God of All Comfort. Please pray with us that they would be brought close to God through their circumstances... and that we, too, would be brought even closer to Him.

With much love and gratitude,
Jerry, Joy and Linus in St. Louie

Please keep Jerry in your prayers. He fell this morning and hurt his back, neck, wrist and arm. Thankfully, it wasn't any worse and he's feeling better as the morning goes on.

January 14

Joy's Journal:

The hardest part of the day is when we leave the hospital and go back to the Ronald McDonald House. Even though Jerry and I are together, it's a little lonely without the children. Another difficult time is when I go down the hall from Linus's room to pump milk for him. I miss the bonding time of nursing: holding him close, looking in his eyes, nourishing him. I want my son in my arms.

Yesterday, Linus continued to receive 1mL of my milk every 6 hours through a feeding tube in his nose. I mentioned that it was a little sad that he didn't even get a chance to taste it. The nurse suggested I put a drop or two on his tongue. He started to smack his lips and he gave us a smile when I asked him if he liked it. He's been smiling at me the past couple days. It makes me a little loopy... okay, more loopy than usual. ;o)

Status & prayer requests:

Linus continues to do well. Jerry and I each held him for over an hour yesterday. His fluid is going down very slowly and his breathing is improving. As the swelling on his chest and stomach decreases, his breathing will get even better, so he needs to keep eliminating at a good rate. He needs to digest the milk he is receiving before they'll increase the amount or frequency of feeding (found out this morning that he'll get milk every 3 hours). We thank you for your prayers on these matters. We thank the Lord for His continued Goodness to us. We know He will faithfully carry us through the coming days. We know He will meet each need and comfort our hurts.

Today, the children will drive up with the Grandmas. Please pray for their safety. Pray that our time together will be blessed... we could pray that God would lengthen the day as He did for Joshua when the Israelites battled the Amorites. :o) This will be the first time we've been together since last year (December 30th).

Much love,
Jerry, Joy & Linus

Jerry's feeling well this morning. Only his lower back is bothering him just a little.

January 15

Joy's Journal:

Jerry and the children are on their way to Ava this morning. Our family got to spend some good time together yesterday afternoon and last night. The children got to see Linus sleeping.

So, I'm here at the hospital with my mom. We got some very good news this morning. Linus's catheter came out and we're hoping his ventilator tube will come out of his mouth in just a little while. If his "gasses" look good at noon, they'll take it out. They were also able to run a good pic line and so the IVs are no longer running through his belly button. He had some blood in his stomach and they had quit giving him Mommy's milk, but they're going to continue it again at 3mL every 3 hours. Halleluyah! Linus has lost more fluid weight and is down to 10 lbs. 11 oz. Our nurse said, "Usually, we don't like for NICU babies to lose weight, but in his case, it's a good thing." So, the swelling HAS gone down!

Our prayers today: Thank you, Lord!!! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!!! We're also praying for safe travels for Jerry and the children.

Thank you all for your prayers! We appreciate you so much!

January 16

Joy's Journal:

I'm here at the hospital with Linus. Mom is headed back to Ava and Jerry will drive back up this afternoon. Linus had an okay night. His heart rate and temperature went up ever-so-slightly last night after we left. They gave him an extra dose of sedatives, but didn't give him Tylenol. He did better through the night and is resting comfortably this morning. Looking at his monitor, his heart rate is 155, breaths per minute 86, and oxygen saturation is at 95 – good numbers! Almost all of his swelling is gone. With all of his lines out, he's looking more like a real baby (o: They want us to do "kangaroo care" today (skin to skin – mommy and Linus). I'm looking forward to that. It may even give me an opportunity to try to nurse him (not for nutrition yet, only for an introduction... "Linus, meet Mommy..." ha, ha).

One of the things that tugs and his Mommy's heart is that he trembles occasionally. Dr. Hacket explained this morning that it could be caused by the sedatives and could take a couple weeks to resolve after he's off of them... or it could be caused by minor brain damage of the area that controls his motor skills. We'll only find out with time... but we are continuing to trust the Lord. "The Lord sits enthroned, King forever!" Psalm 29

Today I will pray for Linus's continued healing, for safe travels for my mom and Jerry (and Granny, who will be going home for some rest for a few days), for Divine wisdom for the doctors and nurses, and, of course, thanksgiving to the Lord for His faithful goodness to me and my family. Oh, and also for His blessing on all of the people around the world praying for Linus. We are so thankful for you!

Love,

Joy, Jerry and Linus

January 17

Linus had a little setback last night. He was working pretty hard breathing after they took his breathing tube out Tuesday. So they had to put his breathing tube back in this morning at about 6am. He's had a temperature (a little on the high side) so he's on an antibiotic again and they are testing for infections. He is continuing to take mother's milk and increasing on that today. He is, as the doctor said, having "a day of rest" today, so he'll probably be just hanging out resting after a hard day yesterday.

We are praying today that the Lord will continue to protect Linus from Infections, all viruses and bacteria and any evil things. We are praying that his healing continues and we will continue to be faithful and remain in His will. Every day we see how fragile he is, even though he is such a tough guy.

Love,

Jerry, Joy and Linus in St Louis Children's Hospital

January 17

11 AM

The Lord is truly teaching us to rely on Him moment by moment. Our nurse, Mary, just came in to let us know that they'll be doing an ultrasound on Linus's heart to assess whether it's enlarged due to pulmonary hypertension (if I understand correctly, his heart having to work extra hard to pump blood to his lungs).

"Lord, the one you love is sick."

Joy, Jerry and Linus in His hands

January 18

After observing Linus for 20 days, I think we can safely say that Linus really doesn't like hospitals. He gets agitated at the nurses many times with a high heart rate and blood pressure. The pleading look in his eyes seem to say (to me anyway) "take me home!". His temperature is up a bit (spiked at 101.4 last night), which seems to cause some concern here, but for some reason hasn't caused us to be too concerned. The results on his heart scan show that he does have pulmonary hypertension. His lungs have a lot of "secretion", which is probably caused by irritation from the breathing tube.

We continue to pray for his and our protection from sickness, infections, exhaustion and evil. And we continue to pray for healing to his body. And we continue to pray thanksgiving to our wonderful Almighty Lord!!! Amen!

Joy's Journal (from last night)

Earlier today, when the nurse told us Linus would be getting an ultrasound for his heart, following the ventilator set-back, I felt so disappointed. And I felt like saying, "I don't want to play this anymore. I want to pack up my things and my baby and I want to go home now." Am I selfish? Is the Lord displeased with my complaining? Then, tonight, I ran across the following verse.

I complain and groan morning, noon, and night, and He hears my voice.
Psalms 55:17

That was me – complaining and groaning. I love the Hebrew meaning of this word “groan”. It's the word "hawmaw". According to Strong, it's a primitive root that means “to *make a loud sound* (like English “hum”); by implication to *be in great commotion or tumult, to rage, war, moan, clamor*: - clamorous, concourse, cry aloud, be disquieted, loud, mourn, be moved, make a noise, rage, roar, sound, be troubled, make in tumult, tumultuous, be in an uproar”. Halleluyah! He has not forgotten me. Here are some more passages that comforted me tonight.

We do not know what to do, but we look to You.
2 Chronicles 20:12

The LORD is the One who will go before you. He will be with you;
He will not leave you or forsake you.
Do not be afraid or discouraged.
Deuteronomy 31:8

We wait for Yahweh; He is our help and shield.
For our hearts rejoice in Him because we trust in His holy name.
May Your faithful love rest on us, Yahweh, for we put our hope in You.
Psalms 33:20-22

For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart. No creature is hidden from Him, but all things are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give an account. Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens – Jesus the Son of God – let us hold fast to the confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tested in every way as we are, yet without sin. **Therefore let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us at the proper time.** Hebrews 4:12-16

“For the mountains may leave and the hills be removed, but my grace will never leave you, and my covenant of peace will not be removed,” says Adonai, **who has compassion on you.**
Isaiah 54:10

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalms 147:3

Linus's and my prayer this morning was "Whatever happens, Lord, don't leave us! We'll take whatever you send us, as long as You are with us."

Listen, Adonai, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.
Preserve my life, for I am faithful; save Your servant,
who puts his trust in You because You are my God.
Take pity on me, Adonai, for I cry to You all day.
Fill Your servant's heart with joy, for to You, Adonai, I lift my heart.
Adonai, You are kind and forgiving, full of grace toward all who call on You.
Listen, Adonai, to my prayer; pay attention to my pleading cry.
On the day of my trouble I am calling on You, for You will answer me.
There is none like You among the gods, Adonai; no deeds compare with Yours.
All the nations You have made will come and bow before You, Adonai; they will honor Your name.
For You are great, and You do wonders; You alone are God.
Adonai, teach me Your way, so that I can live by Your truth;
make me single-hearted, so that I can fear Your name.
I will thank You, Adonai my God, with my whole heart; and I will glorify Your name forever.
For Your grace toward me is so great! You have rescued me from the lowest part of Sh'ol.
God, arrogant men are rising against me, a gang of brutes is seeking my life,
and to You they pay no attention.
But You, Adonai, are a merciful, compassionate God, slow to anger and rich in grace and truth.
Turn to me, and show me Your favor; strengthen Your servant, save Your slave-girl's [daughter].
Give me a sign of Your favor, so that those who hate me will see it and be ashamed,
because You, Adonai, have helped and comforted me.

Psalms 86

I love You, LORD, my strength.

Psalms 18:1

Shout for joy, you heavens! Earth, rejoice!
Mountains break into joyful shouts!
For the LORD has comforted His people,
and will have compassion on His afflicted ones.
Zion says, "The LORD has abandoned me;
The Lord has forgotten me!"
"Can a woman forget her nursing child,
or lack compassion for the child of her womb?
Even if these forget, **yet I will not forget you.**
Look, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;
your walls are continually before Me."

Isaiah 49:13-16

Tonight, I even thought, "Lord, how could you let this innocent baby suffer so much?" I thought of all

of the children at the hospital and the families here at the Ronald McDonald House. And I prayed, "Forgive me, Lord! Please, forgive me." His Goodness, I know, is incomprehensible!

With Love,
Jerry, Joy and Linus

January 19

Today is our third Shabbat in St Louis. Now we have a clear understanding of the importance of family and home on Shabbat. It just not the same away from most of the family and home. The staff just made their rounds and the doctor said Linus should have "a day of rest and then tomorrow"...'Bam', we'll get him going. So Linus is having a relaxing Shabbat and spending some time in Mommy's arms. The plan is that he will be extubated (again) tomorrow. Please join us in fervent prayer that this will be the end of breathing tubes for Linus. We are praying that the tube will come out and he will make a smooth transition. His mother's milk intake (through feeding tube) is increasing daily (now increasing 3ml every 6 hours). If all goes well with feeding, soon he won't need the IV any more! All is going well with him. He's digesting well and doing all the things he needs to be doing. We are offering thanksgiving as our sacrifice to God! Ps50:14

Be exalted, God, above heaven!
May your glory be over all the earth!

"Whoever offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice honors me;
and to him who goes the right way
I will show the salvation of God" Tehillim 50:23



January 20

Just a quick note today. We are praying for a good outcome of taking the breathing tube out today. Also we are praying a lot that he will learn how to eat so we can get home and also not have to tube feed at home. Joy and I are praying for each others' health. We are wearing down some and probably easy targets for illness. Thanks so much for all your prayers!

How precious God is Your grace!

We take refuge in the shadow of Your wings
we feast on the rich bounty of Your house
and You have us drink from the stream of Your delights
For with You is the fountain of life;
in Your light we see light.
(our prayer from Ps 36) Amen

With much Love,
Jerry, Joy and Linus in St Louis

January 21

Linus is doing very well. He is off the breathing tube! He's still on a ventilator with some tubes into his nose. The volume of his Mommy's milk tube feedings are increasing. His organs continue to show signs of healing. We continue to pray for his healing and protection against any kind of setbacks. I was able to hold him for quite a while yesterday. I looks like Joy will be holding him a lot today hopefully.

I talked about telling Linus' rescue story several weeks ago. I'll send that out soon. I would like to offer our thanks and eternal gratefulness now to some of the people involved with that rescue:

- The Good Hope Fire Dept. Richard, Nancy, Matthias and some others were there, I'm sorry I don't remember everyone.
- The Cox EMT folks from Ava, I don't remember any of their names.
- The Air Lift Crew from Cox South in Springfield, that took Linus from Good Hope to Springfield. I wasn't there, so I don't know who they are.
- The NICU staff at Cox South in Springfield. Dr Hilmo, Laura, the RN and many other RNs and Techs that were there. They did ALL the right things at all the right times.
- My oldest son, Sam for being there for me all day at the NICU in Springfield on Linus' birthday.
- My oldest daughter, Pattie who made many calls and sent many emails for prayer and updates.
- The Transfer Team from St Louis Children's Hospital. Dr Phil Levy and the RNs, Jeff and Ashley. What a magnificent job they did getting him stabilized for the transfer and keeping him stable till he got here. It took hours, but they certainly got it right!
- All the Doctors and Nurses and staff here at Children's Hospital. Unless you've been at a place like this, you can't believe the treatment Linus and his family get.
- Most of all, our thanks to all of you who prayed for Linus and his family!

With Love from St Louis,
Jerry, Joy and Linus

January 22

Linus continues to improve. He is truly a blessing from God. He is off oxygen. The ventilator is just helping keep the air pressure in his lungs up. They will most likely be reducing that pressure slowly today. If things go well, by the end of the day he will be up to full feedings of Mommy's milk (through

tube) and he will be off the IV nutrition. We just experienced such a joyful time as, for the first time ever, Linus began nursing at Mommy's breast (during his tube feeding). Halleluyah!

In many ways he still has a long ways to go. Lots of physical therapy, lots of work to teach him how to eat. Lots of other therapy and testing. Lots of time holding him. And lots of waiting. We continue to pray for his protection from any set backs and from evil things. We are praying for endurance and stamina for Linus and all of our family. Sam and Pattie, our oldest children, at home, running the home and running most of the family business. For us as we spend so much time away from most of our family. Of course we are praying for fast recovery and to bring him home soon, in the Lord's timing.

You who live in the shelter of 'Elyon,
who spend your nights in the shadow of Shaddai,
who say to Adonai, "My refuge! My fortress!
My God, in whom I trust!"
he will rescue you from the trap of the hunter
and from the plague of calamities;
he will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his truth is a shield and protection.

Thank you so much for all your prayers!

Love,
Jerry & Joy and all the Sleep family



January 23

Blessed be Adonai! Every day he bears our burden, does God, our salvation. (Selah)
Psalms 68:19

Linus is 24 days old. Today is Linus' second day without any narcotics. He started receiving full feedings of Mommy's milk last night, 84 oz every 3 hours, so he is no longer getting any IV nutrition. Barring any setbacks, they will remove his PIC line (IV) tomorrow! He'll continue to go lower on the vent settings and if he does well, he will be off the vent tomorrow and just on a little forced air in his nose. According to the doctor, his lungs are sounding clear now. He seems to be interested in breast

feeding, so that is going very well. I don't know if we could send a better status report at this stage of his recovery. All your prayers are SO effective. We know the hand of the Lord is on Linus! We continue to pray many thanksgivings and for his continuing healing and protection.



January 24

The IV line into Linus was just removed! Thank the Lord! And Linus is now breathing humidified room air! The ventilator is no longer breathing for him, it's just a steady flow now. If he continues on as he has, the pressure settings will be low enough tonight that he can start feeding by mouth. Last night the doctors thought they heard some arrhythmia in his heartbeat. They ordered an EKG and the results will be in this afternoon. He's moving around, and is being moved around a lot more now. He seems to be doing well with his physical range of motion, etc. He's acting like a normal three week old baby, as far as we can tell. We are praying for his continued healing and for his protection.

Today is our number-two son's (Jack's) 9th birthday. We are sad that we can't all be together for his birthday. We miss being together as a family SO MUCH!

Updates and corrections to previous status reports:

Yesterday we said he was eating 84 oz per feeding. Uh...that should have been 84ml or about 3 oz. Thanks to Pattie for pointing out the error.

We failed to thank some people involved with the rescue. The Goodhope Fire Dept responders that we missed were Daxton and John. We think the Cox EMT's were Joseph and Rick. Also, we want to thank others that helped at the house on that day. Linda Chase came to stay with Joy and was helpful during the immediate postpartum period. Granny (Jerry's mom) got there later that day when Linda had to leave. The Penn family provided a HUGE meal for the family. Again, we want to thank all of the prayer warriors that stood in the gap for us.



January 25

Linus's EKG from yesterday looks normal. We're so thankful that his heart and all his organs seem to be working very well. The nurse told us this morning that his liver had been slightly enlarged and low, but it's shrinking and moving into place. His spleen had also been slightly enlarged, but the Lord has healed that as well.

Today's plan for Linus: go a little lower on the airflow he's receiving through the nose prongs so that he can nurse more today. It's difficult for babies to figure out how to nurse when air is being forced into their noses, BUT he's doing well and stays at the breast longer each feeding. If you are able, we would like to ask you to join us in prayer around the hours of 9, 12, 3, and 6 (Central Time) that Linus would latch on and eat well. We're having the difficulty with him latching on (he gets a bit distracted, or wants to "visit" instead of getting down to the business of eating). Linus's (and Mommy's) mealtime prayer: "Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King over everything! You bring forth milk from Mommy!" We're sure this isn't a "traditional" prayer, but it's very heartfelt!

There is a large staff here at Children's Hospital, with lots of different jobs to do. There's a person that checks the equipment in each room every day. When she came in a couple days ago to check Linus's equipment (everything gets scanned), she said, "Oh! There's nothing to check." That was pretty exciting... to think how far he's come in such a short time. Many of the nurses that have been here since the beginning are impressed with his improvement. The first two pictures were taken January 3rd and we couldn't even get all of his equipment in one shot. The last picture was taken this morning, just a gauge to control airflow and a humidifier. Halleluyah! Thank You, Lord!!!



Blessed is the Lord!
His Works are mighty!



January 26

Linus had a great night. He's sleeping a lot as you would expect from a baby his age. He's nursing at each feeding and then receives whatever is leftover by feeding tube. He is still a little hesitant to latch on, but that's typical with the nasal tube.

We're a little late today with the update because we were giving Linus a bath :o) He has been getting a bath during the night shift, but hadn't gotten one in a couple days and then he spit up a little this morning, so he was "ready" for one. Afterward, he and Jerry had a little chat with Linus doing lots of cooing. We also were excited to go over the check-off list for Linus's discharge procedure. The nurse explained all of the things we would need to do before Linus will be discharged, such as, attend a CPR class and pass the car seat test (Linus will have to sit in his car seat for 2 hours straight while his breathing will be monitored). It will still be a while before he's discharged, but it is good to see things moving in that direction.

We continue to pray for him to learn to get a full meal directly from Mommy.

Love,
Joy, Jerry and Linus

January 27

Linus is doing great today. Yesterday, like the rest of his family, he had a day of rest. The ventilator settings were not turned down. He did some feeding with Mommy and slept a lot. He likes to try to pull the tubes out of his nose and kick the monitor off his foot. Given what he's been through, it would be presumptuous to believe he won't have any long-term problems. But, at this time, I would say there doesn't appear to be a single thing wrong with him. He looks and acts like any healthy four-week-old baby I've seen. We thank God continually for His Good Works!

Joy and I are entering into a new difficult phase now (for us, not Linus). Linus is starting to learn how to get his milk directly from Mommy. To keep things moving in that direction, we have decided that Joy will need to be at the hospital for all of his feedings. This means that Joy will need to be at the hospital day and night until Linus is discharged. To complicate matters, one of the rules in keeping our \$5-per-night accommodations is that the room must be occupied by a member of Linus's family every night. Given the fact that Linus's hospital room only has one recliner, I guess that's not so bad that I have to go back to the Ronald McDonald House, but Joy and I don't like to be apart from each other, if we can help it.

For the past week or so, Linus has been receiving medication to help with muscle and joint tightness. This morning we asked the doctor if he could be taken off of this to see if progress was made due to the medicine or if it's just time and healing (or, as we believe, prayer). The doctor agreed. So today we are praying that Linus's muscles and joints would continue to improve and heal; that he wouldn't have any tightness without the medication. Also, today's plan is to go down to the last step (before coming off) of airflow support. Thank you so much for your continued prayers! We continue to ask the Lord to bless you all.

Much love,
Jerry, Joy and Linus

A cheerful glance brings joy to the heart, and good news invigorates the bones. ~Proverbs 15:30

January 28

Linus had a good day yesterday and passed the car seat test last night. Yesterday morning as they were going lower on the nasal cannula settings, Linus looked so good that the doctor said we would just leave it out to see how he did. He did very well and Linus hasn't had anything taped to his face since yesterday morning. Even the nasal feeding tube was removed, so he has been nursing exclusively for a whole day. We are experiencing some difficulty with nursing. He has been latching on fine, but not nursing very long before he either falls asleep or just thinks he's "done". He lost weight yesterday and we need him to gain before we can take him home. Since we don't want to bottle feed him, they have discussed putting the feeding tube back in which we don't want either, but it's better than a bottle. Please join us in praying that he is voracious at feeding from Mommy and that he gains weight and can go home with us very soon.

Much love,
Jerry, Joy and Linus

January 29

Linus is doing very well. He gained 50grams yesterday. Unfortunately, he still hasn't made much, if any visible progress on feeding directly from Mommy. He's all done with "labs", so they probably won't draw any more blood from him or do any more testing of any sort. He's done everything to meet the requirements to be discharged, except to be thriving on mouth feeding. Please join us in prayer that Linus will learn to breast feed so that we can take him home. We are so thankful that he's latching on, he just to stay latched on.

The BIG event today is that all the family will be visiting us!

With lots of Love,
Jerry, Joy and Linus

You took me from the womb, making me secure while at my mother's breast.
I was given over to You at birth, You have been my God from my mother's womb. Psalms 22:9-10

January 30

Linus continues learning how to eat. He seems to be slowly getting the hang of it. He seems very healthy and mostly happy. The Doctor said "We're done with him, he just needs to learn how to eat and gain some weight and he can go home." Our hope is that our family will all be together this coming Shabbat.

We were discussing how we feel about all the people who are receiving these emails and praying for Linus and us everyday. Joy mentioned the story of the four men who lowered their paralytic friend down through the roof to be healed by Yeshua (Mark 2 or Luke 5). You all have been like these four men, bringing Linus before the Master for healing. Luke 5:20:

*When Yeshua saw **their** trust, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." (emphasis mine).*

He saw **your** trust, all of you who have held Linus up in prayer. He healed the paralytic (and Linus) and then Luke 5:26 says it best:

*Then everyone was astounded, and they were **giving glory to God**. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today!"*

Truly, we have seen a great miracle with Linus! We give all the glory to God!
Jerry, Joy and Linus, upheld by your prayers, in St. Louis

January 31

Linus is doing very well today. He may be learning to nurse slowly, but he hasn't made much progress in the last couple of days and has lost some weight. Joy is very tired and is feeling frustrated and discouraged. Please pray for Joy to have strength and stamina and encouragement. Please pray for Linus to learn to nurse well soon.

Thank you for all your prayers and emails.

Love,

Jerry, Joy and Linus

Sustain me as You promised, and I will live; do not let me be ashamed of my hope. Sustain me so that I can be safe and always be concerned about Your statutes.

Psalms 119:116-117

Joy's Journal: January 31, 2013

While I was pregnant with Linus, Jerry and I were going to marriage counseling. One of the things we learned is to speak to each others' hearts. I sometimes have conversations with people in my mind (don't you do that?) and the one I imagined having with Jerry this morning went something like this:

Joy: I'm frustrated and disappointed.

Jerry: Don't be frustrated and disappointed.

Joy: No, I need to heart talk.

Jerry: Okay... you're feeling frustrated and disappointed?

Joy: Yes. I'm trying to feed this baby and I feel like I'm doing everything wrong.

Jerry: You're trying to feed Linus and you feel like you're doing everything wrong?

Joy: Yes... I feel like a failure!

Jerry: You feel like you're a failure?

Joy: Yes! (*Breaks down in tears*) (except that part wasn't imagined)

Well, Jerry came in and read that over my shoulder, so we finished the conversation in real life. I would share the conversation with you, but some things are intimate and best left unsaid. I will tell you that before we were done talking I felt understood and cared for... and, as usual, he had me laughing.

Three things are beyond me; four I can't understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship at sea, and the way of a man with a young woman. ~ Proverbs 30:18-19

(I especially like the part about a "young" woman ;o)