



Ganson Street Baptist Church <church@gansonstreet.org>

Shaw Christmas Update December 2020

2 messages

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To: Missions Committee <church@gansonstreet.org>

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12/15/20

Missions Committee

Along with most of you, we look back on 2020 with mixed emotions. This has been a year like no other. It began with a cancer diagnosis for Denise and ended with a month to rejoice in all God did over the year in our family.

The word of the year is 'unprecedented.' God always thrives in the unprecedented. Jesus's birth was unprecedented. In the midst of a night, God was there. In the midst of pain and fear, God was there. Amid the uncertainty, God was there. And not only was God there, but He was also at work.

Philippians 4:6-7 have been verses that we have turned to repeatedly this year. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of

God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Just about a year ago, Denise received her cancer diagnosis with surgery right after Christmas. The next several months, she had chemo and radiation, plus numerous blood work and periodic scans. The arrival of COVID made life both more complicated as well as uncomplicated, as we had to work from home and were unable to go out a lot.

The next event in our unprecedented year occurred when Marty had a mild stroke in March. After follow-up tests, it was determined that he had a Papillary fibroelastoma (PFE) on his aortic valve from which a tiny piece had broken and traveled to his brain. Surgery to remove the growth happened mid-May. Chemo also ended mid-May. As Marty continued to recover from surgery, Denise began radiation five days a week for five weeks. We celebrated the end by going camping for a few days. Early in the year, Denise’s scans revealed a different tumor, a neuroendocrine carcinoid tumor, non-aggressive. Again, unusual in that only 7-10% have this kind of tumor. Surgery to remove it was mid-September. Since then, we have been recuperating and thriving. All of our end-of-year tests are clear, and we are healthy and rejoicing.

A telling comment was made by a missionary who made a recent visit to the WorldVenture offices after Marty had reported on what we have been doing in 2020. They said, “It is apparent that you haven’t been sitting on your hands.” That is true. In spite of health issues and not being able to travel, we have taken this time to work on some very critical areas. Usually, we travel around 100,000 miles in the air every year. This year we haven’t been able to travel. That has meant a lot of time spend virtually interacting with people around the globe. It isn’t unusual for Marty to talk with one or two different parts of the world every day. He has also been working with a group to develop a comprehensive strategy for reaching the world. This has been exciting, and we are ready to roll this out but need to travel. Still, the strategy is in place—more on this in 2021.

So, while COVID has thrown a wrench into what we normally do, it hasn’t stopped what God is doing around the world, and what we are doing on our part to reach the world. COVID has allowed us to work in-depth on foundational issues that will allow us to springboard into 2021.

Thank you for your prayers and encouragement over this unprecedented year!

Marty and Denise
Marty & Denise Shaw

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