

George Family **VISHAYSHUM**

E-MAIL UPDATE – March 2019

“... Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; ‘Yea’, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them.” Revelation 14:13

Dear Praying Friends,

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all our praying friends and supporting churches for your messages of condolence and encouragement through phone calls, e-mails and letters to our family on the occasion of Sophie's father's death. Although many knew that Pastor Mathew Thomas passed into glory December 24, 2018, many do not know the course of events that led to his passing away.

Dad was last admitted into the hospital mid November 2018 with a fever and chest infection. We requested palliative care treating only the infection with necessary antibiotics. In the course of the admission, the doctors suggested placing a nasogastric feeding tube to alleviate any chance of aspiration when Dad was fed. Within a week we were discharged, but we were never able to remove the tube again. Once we came home, we decided that we wouldn't take Dad back to the hospital but with God's grace, if he became ill again, we would do all we could to treat him at home. Within two weeks of discharge, another infection flared up. With the help Dr. Joel, a believer from Calvary Baptist Church, Aluva, and two nurses (Shosha and Steffy) from our Fellowship Baptist Church, we were able to care for Dad at home in a mini ICU environment. The only struggle we incurred was obtaining some medications on time because the prescribed IV antibiotic injections required were only dispensed to hospital settings. We were; however, able to obtain the hydration fluids, such as normal saline and dextrose easily, as well as portable oxygen unit and even a suction machine later.

After treatment began, we were able to see positive changes and he seemed to be doing better; however, Dad's systems began shutting down one at a time. Sodium, Potassium, Creatinine levels all began to fluctuate. By Mid-December, even if his heart was beating hard and fast for weeks to come, changes in urine output in regards to color and amount was noticeable, as well as a change in his breathing pattern. Throughout all this, he remained alert and never lost consciousness at any time. He just wasn't able to communicate since his speech was lost in 2015. By the time Jonathan arrived December 15, we weren't sure if Dad would make it to see Joanna a week later. Over time, we slowly decreased the amount and portion of feedings to alleviate any abdominal distress, and decreased the amount of hydration fluids as we noticed swelling in the hands and feet.

Several dates remained in our minds as we kept watch over Dad's condition, Joanna's arrival on Saturday the 22nd, Sunday morning service and that evening 23rd night an evangelistic Christmas program, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day still to come, the children's first wedding anniversary the 28th, and our 25th anniversary the 30th. The great legacy our parents left us is that both had surrendered their lives to ministry and have always told us that if anything should ever happen to either one of them, ministry goes on and all else will be put on standby. As end of the year programs continued, we were questioned from all sides, will this be cancelled? Will that be cancelled? Our reply was, God will give us the grace to continue everything as planned because of our parents' last wishes. So, Joanna arrived December 22 early morning and saw Dad, December 23rd Sunday morning services continued and the long awaited church Christmas evangelistic program December 23rd evening was a blessing.

Next day 24th was Christmas Eve morning. We didn't do any decorating this year as in previous years, but waited for Jonathan to come home for him to put up the small tree upstairs, and left the downstairs empty. Knowing this will be Dad's last Christmas with us, Sophie placed a miniature tree next to his bed that morning only, as well as sang and played Christmas carols to him. As she was as being at Dad's bedside, Sumi, her sister, Face Timed a call from the Phoenix airport as she was waiting with her family to board a flight into Denver to spend Christmas with her in-laws.

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Sophie and Sumi reminisced with Dad their first Christmas memory coming into America January 1974 and experiencing Christmas as children. In search of a tree, in the middle of January on a cold snowy day, Denver, Colorado, they wandered from department store to department store, losing all hope as they left each store disappointed. At last, in a K Mart store, a young man who saw the faces of these little girls said he would check out the stock room, lo and behold, he came out with the most gigantic, most beautiful brown box they had ever seen. That box held the very last Christmas tree in the entire store and most likely in all of Denver.

Within half hour of that FaceTime call, Sophie called Sumi back as she was boarding to give news that God came and took Dad home. At 9:55, December 24, Dad was worshipping in the presence of the Lord.

***Jesus saw he was getting tired and a cure was not to be.
So he put his arms around him and whispered “Son, Come with Me.”
With tear-filled eyes we watched him as he began to fade away.
Although we loved him deeply, we could not make him stay.***

***A golden heart stopped beating. Hard-working hands put to rest.
Jesus broke our hearts to prove to us He only takes the best.
Though it seems that he went alone, a part of us is gone.
A part of him still remains, And forever will thrive in our hearts.***

***He left us precious memories. His love will be our guide.
He is now at home with his Savior, ever resting by His side.
One day we shall see him and forever we shall be, Together with our Savior for all eternity.***

May we close with praises and prayer requests. ***Praise the Lord for Pastor Steve Gee of Nebraska and Evangelist Ken Lynch of South Carolina who were able to be with us a week in January for evangelistic meetings held in Fellowship Baptist in Puthencruz.*** These men ministered to us in Word and music, pray for the follow up that continues even after the Word has been sown. ***Evangelistic outreaches continued throughout February in a three-night program in Valamboor, Immanuel Baptist church, pray for fruit in this area. Praise the Lord for baptisms of two individuals in Bethel Baptist Church in Koni,, Mr.Aipankuttan and a young man named Sachin. Pray for these believers as they grow in the Lord. Please continue to pray for the Bihar ministry.*** Pastor Jacob Mani is facing persecution as he led a village man to the Lord and is being threatened not to enter that area in the future. ***Continue to pray for Mr. Johnny***, the radiation treatment administered after the chemotherapy was a palliative regimen. Due to his still not being able to swallow, a PEG tube was inserted. Pray for grace and strength for him and his family. ***Pray for the work in Elavamthitta, Hebron Baptist Church;*** we are having difficulty with an insubordinate pastor and family, and we are asking God for wisdom about how to manage that church plant work. All is to be done with peace for the sake of His name and ministry. ***VBS is being planned in different church plants for the month of April, pray for the planning and organization.*** We will be taking a short two-month trip into the United States in May to renew Santhosh's permanent resident visa. This ten-year granted visa will be expiring this June; ***please pray he will receive the new visa without delay.***

***Serving Him with you,
Santhosh, Sophie, and Jonathan George***