

Dearest Family and Friends, First of all thank you for your prayers during this time. We need them! Please pass along this e-mail to all family members and friends. I do not have my computer with all my e-mail addresses/contacts, and my laptop recently died taking everything with it. I apologize for the delay in communication. However, until now I have not had enough time or information to be able to adequately update you on the situation. The last 48 hours have been CRAZY!

We just arrived in the States a few weeks ago, and IT WAS NONE TOO SOON!

This past Friday, Ruth had pre-term labor (7 weeks early) and the baby was breached and in distress, resulting in an emergency c-section. It was very hard on both Baby and Mom. I regret that I was unable to be with Ruth. I was helping my Mother with some work on her home in Reno, Nevada. Although I was planning on returning to be with Ruth and the kids on Monday after preaching in a church on Sunday, we were caught totally by surprise. There was no warning signs or indication whatsoever before Friday to suggest she would go into early labor. And when it happened, there was no time even for phone calls. I immediately left for Washington with my Mom- a 12 hour drive. (There were no flights that would get me here any sooner).

Joshua was care flighted from Kennewick to Richland (15 miles) because of the better Neonatal Intensive Care Unit available at the hospital there. Interestingly enough this is the hospital where I was born 35 years ago.

Baby Joshua is doing OKAY, all things considered. As with all preemies, he is having his ups and downs. He has difficulty breathing (Respiratory Distress Syndrome) which is common with all babies at this stage of development. Also, he was bruised over much of his body as the doctors tried to get him out as quickly as possible. The nurses said it will be a "roller coaster ride", but his chances for survival are better than 90%.

This morning he was put on a ventilator with a tube down his throat to help his lungs, because his little body was working too hard to breath. Now he is doing better, but we have to wait and see how long he will be on the breathing tube. There are lots of other little details, some good, some not so much. I won't try to explain them all at this time.

Just PLEASE pray that God will give the doctors wisdom and HEAL this baby. We don't want a repeat of what happened with Jonathan. Although the initial circumstances are almost identical, (sudden laboor, baby born 2 months early) we have MUCH more going for us this time around. We are surrounded by family, IN THE STATES, in an EXCELLENT hospital, latest equipment, insurance coverage, SPEAKING ENGLISH, and instead of being allowed to see the baby just two hours a day, like it was in Mexico, here we can be with the baby all day EXCEPT for two hours while the nurses change shifts and do reports. This is a blessing to us. Also, Joshua was a TAD BIT farther along in his gestational development in the womb than Jonathan was (by about five days, but that is a gain. He weighed 8 ounces more than Jonathan did).

Ruth is "fine". She is tired, and her body aches. She is better today than yesterday, when she felt like she had been hit by a truck and EVERY part of her ached terribly. She is taking medicine for pain and it is helping a lot. Her incision is already beginning to heal. The doctor released her earlier than the normal 48 hours, because of her good progress. She insists on going out to see the baby and also to see the rest of our "tribe" which my brother and his wife and my mother are so graciously watching during these last couple days. Last night, with less than 36 hours since surgery and giving birth she wanted to go to Walmart to pick up a few important things. I reluctantly agreed because it was "on the way" back from

seeing Joshua.

All I can say is- Praise the Lord for the wonderful little "Grandma Go-Karts" they have there! You should have seen her! (I will send a picture) It was hilarious. We both nearly busted a stitch laughing our heads off as she put-putted around the store. A much needed moment of smiling!

Most of all pray for our spirits. We are doing our best to stay positive. Obviously we are having "ups and downs". This is VERY emotional for both of us, especially Ruth. It is easy to question God and ourselves with "what if's", and to meditate on how we will react if God takes this child. The devil wants to capitalize on that. We have been through this once before with Jonathan, and he died, so obviously we are scared to death history will repeat itself. We can't imagine losing another child, after we have tried so hard to do God's will. We are both fighting to guard our hearts. We know there are others who have suffered through much worse, and we know God is good and His will is perfect. For now we are "tranquilos". I was encouraged to read Psalm 86 during my devotions this morning.

So far so good.

I will do my best to keep you posted.

Sincerely,

Steve



Ruth's Go Kart