

Smith Soundings February 2009

What a busy month we have had! So much has happened since we wrote you last, we can hardly do God justice by trying to fit it all in a one-page (-ish) update, but we will try!

We last wrote you on January 15th with the update that I (Elizabeth) had to go on complete bedrest for the remainder of my pregnancy with our second baby boy. On January 16th, I had a routine doctor's appointment that turned into something much more. After doing an ultrasound, the doctor decided to admit me to the hospital because it looked as if I was going into labor prematurely. It was decided that I should go to Iowa Methodist Hospital in Des Moines because of their excellent Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Once I got to Des Moines, I began to settle down. Eventually the contractions stopped and I was able to stabilize. I stayed that way for three weeks! Our God is so good! After three weeks in the hospital, I was released back home to continue my bedrest, and that is where I am today. For almost five weeks now, He has kept me at the same exact spot that I was upon admission to the hospital! We are now 29 weeks along in the pregnancy, and that is something only God can do! He has brought us to this point, and we have hope and confidence that the Lord will allow us to have a safe and healthy delivery at the end of all this!

We feel like we have experienced a lifetime of emotions in the last month. The Lord has brought us through so much in our lives, and this was just another opportunity for us to see Him work and to glorify His name. During our time in the hospital we had many, many opportunities to share about our missionary work. We learned that it was printed in my chart that we are missionaries, so we had Christian nurses and doctors come into our room just to talk to us about what our mission work is exactly. We also had opportunities to share with those who do not know the Lord. My ambulance driver was very impressed that I was a missionary and said, "Wow! I've never met a missionary in real life before!" ☺ He then went on to tell all my nurses to treat Andy and me right because we are "good people—better than all of us!" Had I not been contracting and experiencing such stressful conditions, it would have been nice to sit down with all of the nurses and the ambulance driver and tell them that we are no better than any of them; we are Saved by God's Grace! (Titus 3:5-6).

Well, that has been our month in a nutshell. We continue to see doctors each week and everything is still going well. My doctor has put me on complete bedrest until I am 34 weeks (March 25th). After that point, I can begin to walk a little more and do some more activity. If I were to deliver at 34 weeks, the doctor wouldn't worry about me or the baby, so that is why they are letting me start to get up again at that point.

Andy continues to do our deputation meetings on the weekends. We did have to cancel one meeting in Dike, IA because I was being admitted to the hospital. We will get that rescheduled later this year hopefully, but otherwise Andy has been able to keep all of our meetings so far. It is difficult for both of us when he has to present alone, but God has been merciful and allowed him to do well on his own. The people of the churches are also understanding and compassionate to our current situation.

Our monthly financial support currently sits at 68.5%! We praise the Lord for this increase. There have been some churches that we had hoped would take us on for support this year, but that has not worked out at this time. We continue to ask your prayers over our financial need. We have learned many lessons about trusting in God's timing. So, please pray with us that we will reach our financial need in exactly God's timing and that we would not be discouraged in the meantime.

Please pray for our upcoming meetings:

February 22nd: Prairie Flower Baptist Church; Washington, IA

March 1st: Faith Baptist Church; Iowa City, IA

March 15th: Ferguson Christian Bible Church; Ferguson, IA

March 22nd: Cornerstone Baptist Church; Montevideo, MN

March 29th: CBM church plant site in Danville, IA

(That ends our pre-field schedule until June. We have allowed some time off in order to welcome our new son into our home).

Please pray for these prayer requests:

- Elizabeth on bedrest. Every day the baby stays put is a blessing. Pray that she will make it to 34 weeks (March 25th)!
- Andy doing presentations alone. Ask God to give him the right words to say and clarity of thought in order to do the whole presentation by himself.
- Safety on the road for Andy.
- Our financial support. Please ask the Lord to continue to bless our financial need in order that we might serve Him as builders full-time soon!
- Pray for our past meetings. We would hope that the congregations would remember us in prayer and consider how God might use their church specifically to help us on our way.

Thank you so much for your prayers, especially this last month. We all are so dependent on God for anything and everything! Some of you may already be checking my blog regularly, but if you are interested in getting more frequent updates about our pregnancy and ministry, or if you would like to read what has been posted over the last month, please feel free to visit:

<http://blog.andyandelizabethsmith.com>. There you will find my blog, which I update frequently.

By God's grace,
Andy & Elizabeth Smith