



Sept-Oct 2018

Dear Prayer Partners,

***“For as the heaven is high about the earth,  
so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.” Psalm 103:11***

We never cease to marvel over the love and mercy of our Lord! How insignificant are we and our works compared to His great love and power! Yet He chooses to love us faithfully, and use us in spite of our shortcomings. We were reminded recently of a chorus we used a couple of years ago in VBS. “Wide, wide as the ocean, High as the Heavens above, Deep, deep as the deepest sea is my Savior’s love. I, though so unworthy, still I’m a child of His care. For His love teaches me that His love reaches me EVERYWHERE!”

### Trials

September was a trying month for us in several ways. Dr. appointments, tests, etc. made up a large part of our days. Then on Sept. 19, Sue had shoulder surgery to repair a torn rotator cuff and reattach the biceps in her right shoulder. More Dr. appointments following and added therapy increased our load.

One of our families who had been coming faithfully for several weeks stopped attending our church. No definitive answer was given, but it sure added to our discouragement.

We also learned that another faithful couple, whom we have really bonded with and has been so faithful and helpful, informed us that they were going to be gone for most of the winter months! When a church only has 5 families, and two drop out, it tends to be discouraging. But we knew one would be back in the Spring, or before, and we know God has it all in His control.

During this time, we began to experience some serious car problems as well. We were able to get it fixed, but the cost was significant.

Sue was unable to teach piano for several weeks, and also lost a couple of students during this time. This also was discouraging as it decreased income. Other income also decreased, so all together,

discouragement was inevitable. But as David did in Scripture, we encouraged ourselves in God’s Word.

### Tokens

God always has a way of showing us HIS goodness and love instead of rebuking us harshly for our lack of faith. At times, He uses others to come to our aid. After Sue’s surgery, Mike really pitched in to fix meals, care for Sue, do many household duties that she could not do, etc. What a joy it was to be reminded by the Lord that He provides a way to get through these trials, and having a loving husband was one of those tokens of good! The day of Sue’s first therapy, we returned to find that one of our dear ladies from church came and cleaned our house! Another dear lady came with food! And our neighbor, whom we’ve been praying for, came to sit with Sue on that first Sunday so Mike could continue with church ministry. God worked it all out!

Another token of His goodness was that Bob & Joyce Landis came for a visit! They had meetings in the West, and arranged to visit our small work too. It all happened that first weekend after the surgery, which really boosted our spirits! Praise the Lord! Another friend came through for a visit during that time as well! God is so good!

With so many added expenses, we were trusting that God would guide us to know just how to take care of these needs - medical, car repairs, other extras as well. God had already planned to lay it on someone's heart to send a huge unexpected gift, which helped very much to cover these needs. When we discovered this, Mike and I couldn't help but sing the song, "Wide, wide as the ocean". When we sang the line, "I, though so unworthy, still I'm a child of His care . . ." We both teared up, because we had felt so much this way. So many problems sometimes keep us from performing our simple, tasks we need to do. It's easy to feel we are so unworthy to serve - and we ARE! But God's love reaches us EVERYWHERE - as the song states!

### Triumphs

The Lord has allowed Sue to be able to play for church, at least well enough to help the people sing. Little by little, with much prayer from so many, therapy, and healing, we have begun to function again. Sue recently had a ladies Bible Study, which she hasn't had for a while. Mike has been able to help with preaching on a Sunday night in the nearby mission church for Native Americans. God has continued to give opportunities to minister through counseling, teaching, and music.

The Lord recently gave us another HUGE blessing and encouragement. Some of you may remember a dear retired couple who worked with us the first year and half we came to Arizona. Ron and Diana Love were such a blessing especially during the time when Mike had his heart attack. They served faithfully until Ron developed some physical difficulties and they returned to NC to get the medical help he needed. Two weeks ago they surprised us by showing up at our midweek service. We had it in our home, and what joy we shared that evening as we learned that Ron and Diana are here for a number of months to help in the work in Rimrock as well as the Indian mission church nearby, Living Waters Baptist Church. We often help with that church as well. God is so good to bring folks our way at this particular time. Pray that He will show us in what ways they can be used of the Lord to serve here.

### Praises and Prayer

- Praise the Lord for successful surgery on Sue's shoulder.
- Praise for joy and sweet fellowship in our church services.
- Praise for extra financial gifts to help with additional unexpected expense
- Continue to pray for neighbor, Carol. She comes to Ladies Bible Study, and asks prayer that she'll come to church, but so far does not come. She claims to be saved, but church attendance is not a priority.
- Pray for continued healing of Sue's shoulder. The therapist says it could be 8 months to a year before it is completely healed.

We praise the Lord and **thank you** for your faithfulness in prayer and financial support for the work here in the West. We are truly laborers together with God!



In His service,

### **Mike & Sue Smith**

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**TRI-CITY BAPTIST CHURCH, FOREST CITY, NC**

***“Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God ...”***

**I Corinthians 3:8,9**