

Prepared for Amanda's site on February 16, 2016.

## Journal

### One Last Entry From Our Amanda

*February 16, 2016*

10/21/15

36 days in...82 days out

82 days already? These days have flown by since I left the hospital and yes, I know I'm overdue for an update. So where to start? I'll try to pick up where I left off last time.

The first week or so of being home was rough. At one point I told Scott that I actually felt physically better when I was in the hospital than when I was home. It didn't take long for us to realize that it was due to the fact that I left the hospital with no mention of continuing steroids by the doctors and my body had gone into an adrenal shock. We were lucky enough to have a friend who is a pulmonologist who quickly recognized the issue and got me back on steroids. Of course I wanted nothing to do with steroids and wanted off as soon as possible but what I did not know was how slowly you have to wean yourself off the drug. This is actually still an issue we are trying to work through and it's been surprisingly harder than we expected. Again, this has been one of the times when I am glad that my husband's quirky nature to research things to great extent has turned out to be a blessing. Funny how that works out. But the good thing is that we are coming more and more aware of how my body reacts to things and know how to adjust when needed.

My days fly by and are typically filled with some type of medical appointment. I feel like Peter from Office Space when he says, "Bob, I have 8 different bosses right now," because I have about 8 different medical advisors that I see. I have an oncologist, a pulmonologist, a holistic doctor, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a nurse, a chiropractor, a Chinese medicine doctor and I'm looking to bring more on. Ok, not really because I can barely keep up with the ones I have so far. But I think I could squeeze in a massage therapist if I had to. All that being said, each week is full of appointments and calls that somehow turn into a full time job. But these appointments are good things. I'm gaining a lot of strength each week and can see great improvement since leaving the hospital. Muscles are slowly coming back and endurance is improving too. We recorded a few videos of my first time walking or the first time I got out of the hospital bed and those videos actually give me great encouragement. I can see how weak I was and how far I have come since then.

Some days are better than others for sure. I have had my share of high emotion melt downs when I'm just pissed that any of this is happening. Mad that I have to put my family through such a thing, mad that I am not physically able to do more (yet), mad that people I know are dying from this disease, just simply mad.

Moments when you feel like it's just not meant to be like this. I'm supposed to be running, playing with my kids, going to fall festivals, homeschooling Ellie, making deliciously sugared up desserts just for myself and not even thinking about stupid things like cancer and how to defeat it. So while I may seem super positive to you, I have my share of low moments. But like a friend told me, don't camp out there. Your energy needs to stay focused on the good and there is much good.

The thing that comes more and more apparent to us is our need to focus on God, his truth and promises. A pastor said to me recently, there is a difference in believing in God and believing God. (Come on church! – that's for you Megan). We intentionally believe God for his word. We pray scriptures that proclaim healing in my body. We take authority over the enemy who would find nothing but joy in his attempt to kill, steal and destroy. We proclaim life to every organ of my body in Jesus' name. We praise God for the day ahead of me before my feet hit the floor. I'm not saying this is easy or comes naturally, but it's a battle that we have to armor ourselves with each day. What's been really cool is to see how God continues to put the right people in our path. For example, upon leaving the hospital I was set up with home health care for physical therapy. After about two weeks, there was some kind of staffing issue that required a new company to be sent out. Next thing I know I get a call from a friend whose child attends Ellie's school to say she was assigned to me for therapy. Now I must say that we weren't close friends, more of acquaintances, but this is the same person that visited the hospital the night they put a ventilator in and prayed over me. Of course I didn't know that at the time. This is just another example of how awesome the ICS community is! So now she is my therapist and more than just physical because her heart to serve me and show me God's love goes well beyond exercise. This can not be a coincidence, it just cant. I'm so thankful for our time together, both because I get stronger and because she lifts my spirits every time.

There have been a lot of those incidents that you cant ignore. When you know God is right here with you, helping you through this time. There is tremendous comfort in knowing that.

Recently I read a bible verse in a completely different way. Psalm 23:4, the verse I had always associated with funerals. "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; you rod and staff, they comfort me." What stood out to me this time is the word 'THROUGH'. I am walking THROUGH the valley of the shadow of death. I'm not staying here, but walking THROUGH it. I like that.

So how are the kids you ask? They are great! Ellie is my tender hearted child

## Comments

I miss you beyond words. There are moments when I don't know how to move forward with you! You have been my confidant, my rock, my anchor holding me steady, my inspiration, my beautiful sister. When I feel lost without you, I look at your picture and talk to you. I look at the pictures of the kids. I remember your laugh,

your voice and your redirection to stay faithful and loving. I love you now and forever!

—Jennifer Butler, February 16, 2016

## Philippians 4:4

September 10, 2015

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, Rejoice!*

You thought previous entries were long, hope you can get through this in one sitting.

About 15 or so years ago I was at a conference with a christian nonprofit I worked for. I was in my mid twenties and not a christian yet. I arrived late, just before the keynote speaker was to be introduced. I stood outside the entry doors sneaking a peak to see what the speaker would be discussing, would this really be worth my time. An older gentleman approached me and said, You should go in, I hear the speaker is really good. At which point I attempted to back out with excuses and he said, No really, you will enjoy it, I'll even go in with you. Well I couldn't say no then. We walked in together and sat on the back row. This man has such a comforting quality about him that he was hard to say no to. I looked back to see my friends smile and wave goodbye as they exited the venue. Within minutes of us sitting they introduced the speaker. The nice older man next me leaned in to me and said, I hope you enjoy this. He stood up and took his place on stage. I sat there in shock and somewhat embarrassed that maybe I had offended him. He gave his speech and he was right, it was good. He ended it by saying, God has a plan for each us, even you Amanda. He has something big planned just for you. In a room of a couple hundred people I felt overwhelmed with what had just happened. I didn't see that man again and don't even remember his name but his actions that night had an impact on me. It's one of those memories that has always been tucked away but comes to mind often.

So it's been a year to be exact. A year since my doctor told me over the phone that it was cancer. Standing there in shock, barely able to breathe I could only say, God is Good all the time over and over again. A year later and one heck of a month behind me I can still say the same thing. It's hard to even believe a whole year has passed and what has come and gone with it. Countless treatments, medications, supplements, doctor appointments, tumors growing, tumors shrinking and research out the wazoo. But the blessings, love, prayer far surpass any of the bad. Before I get caught up in all this, let me give a breakdown of this past month. It was a doozie.

Back in the summer I started a targeted therapy drug that my body did not react well to. I quickly started having pain in my chest and shortness of breath. Dr changed me to a new chemo a few weeks later and at that

point my shortness of breath required me to be on oxygen at home. I had one treatment on July 23rd and within a couple of days my breathing had gotten to the point of going to the emergency room. This is where my memory starts to get foggy. I can only remember bits and pieces but my family filled me in once I was able to understand. I remember the Dr telling me I needed to wear a special face mask to help me breathe. The mask felt like you were sky diving as your lips and cheeks were blowing all around out of control. I'm not sure how this helps you breathe as I felt like it was suffocating me. They allowed me to wear a more friendly version for a short period. After the performed at CTA scan they identified "infiltrates" unrelated to cancer that were inhibiting air exchange. Apparently this is not terribly unusual for this chemo but this case was very severe. Not sure if you have noticed but I tend to fall in the "rare" category when during this journey. I'm perfectly fine with being normal but that hasn't been the case. So they immediately admitted to ICU that Sunday evening. I stayed in ICU for 2 days then downgraded to Oncology floor only to have an emergency transfer early in the morning on Wednesday 7/29. There no rooms available in ICU so had to go to CVICU (cardiovascular ICU, basically a post-surgery recovery). That day was a tough day, air exchange worsened and ultimately Scott was faced with the decision to intubate that evening. The intubation lasted through Sunday morning August 2nd. Little did I know that I had many family and friends in the waiting room pouring their hearts out in prayer for me. Scott and a close friend even prayed through the night, reading scripture and standing firm on God's word. I remained in CV ICU till Wednesday when a nicer and more comfortable / newer room was available. This was the ICU I liked the best if there is such a thing. The level of care and love those nurses give you is higher. I remember waking enough to know there was a tube down my throat and I couldn't talk. It was pleasant to say the least. I lost all sense of time. When a new nurse came in to introduce me I remember reaching out to hold their hand. It felt like the only way I could say, I need you, please don't leave. It was tough when you get a new nurse cause you felt like they finally get you and then they had to go home. Go figure. Seems like they would be willing to work around the clock for little ole me right? Sadly no. Most of the time I was so heavily medicated that I couldn't open my eyes but I could hear things and sometimes real and sometimes not. I remember hearing the doctor tell the nurse to remove my ventilator before the end of week. It seemed like days went by before they did it and when the time came for them to do it I was overly anxious. They would start and my numbers would drop so I would have to wait another 30 minutes. This went on for hours it felt. Finally they did it. I cant even describe it to you, really uncomfortable feeling yet relief that it was out. The nurse wanted me to say my name which I could barley get out as a faint whisper. I continued to labor with breathing and the nurse told Scott on Thursday night that I was headed toward getting a tube again / including a tracheotomy (which includes a feeding tube). This is the last thing he or I wanted. Scott stayed with me that night and prayed over me. That night the respiratory team took my arterial blood oxygen and it had come up from 60ish % earlier to 100%! Praise God! Like I said, I dont remember much of the first two weeks but I do remember Scott reading scriptures and praying in my ears. I also remember him opening my eyes and smiling at me with his beautiful smile. The next day was a brand new day and I began to improve from there. The following day was Saturday and her nurse entertained my request to have the kids and family in for a luncheon. The nurse shared Amanda's request with the day nurse, Catherine, who was just coming on. It did wonders for my heart to see my kids again yet at the same time I couldn't talk and my energy was low. So it was hard for me to have them see me that way, and it reminded me of how far I still needed to go. A couple of days later they put me on a TPA (nutritional assistance bag) and I hit a stride from there. In the process of having a ventilator, it damaged my vocal cords leaving one side paralyzed. So a whisper was really all I had. The ENT told us it could take 6-9 months to regain my voice. What?! That doesn't even sound right. This is just one of the many many moments where God has showed me that his timing is quite different from theirs. I started

speech, physical and occupational therapy pretty soon after. It was exhausting to talk and frustrating when you can't communicate. Luckily by that point we had created some good hand signs and wrote notes a lot to communicate. I was improving so out of ICU I went back to the oncology unit on 8/12. It was kinda of scary to leave because I had relationships with these nurses who knew how I liked my pillows situated around me. I mean, come on, pillow placement is important. But it was a good sign that I was going to a floor where I didn't need so much attention. So I thanked God for that. It doesn't take long to lose all your muscle. And realizing you need help for every single thing from sitting up, to walking, to washing your face, using the bathroom, anything you can imagine is quite humbling and frustrating. My physical therapists were great. There was a team of two that usually worked with me. Both named Amanda. So the 3 Amanda's were a good team. One of them is a trained dancer and I told her how I used to go salsa dancing so one day she broke out some salsa music and made me do the moves. Not that pretty but it made it fun. My room was decorated with family pictures, pictures the kids drew for me, prayer boards from Ellie's school, and more. We had moved in and the nurses all commented on how comfy our room was. I put some bible verses on the outside of the door remind me and let others know that this battle is not my own. God is with me and walking every step along the way. I was getting better and talk of discharge started happening. That's when the fevers started. I was beyond frustrated at that point. I just wanted to be home with my family but as soon I felt well, I would get a fever and the doctors wanted to keep me there even though they couldn't identify what was causing the fever. Patience was getting tough for me but I knew I needed to just trust that God's timing would be right and I would get home soon. I wanted to get out in a month, it ended up being 36 days. When the day came, I just cried as I got dressed to leave, cried on the way home, cried because I was finally coming home to my family and even though the road ahead is still long, I would be with them again.

Returning home hasn't been a breeze by any means. It is really hard not being able to do anything for the kids and I think it's been hard for them to adjust to me being back home. Luckily that hasn't taken them very long and they notice when I improve which is fun to have my own mini cheerleaders. It was amazing to see how much they had grown and matured in a matter of 36 days. I had visits with them but being there all day I could see how quickly my babies grew while I was away. So it's good to be home and watch them grow a little slower.

I continue to get stronger, my voice improves every day which thrills me to no end. My physical therapist nearly puts me in a coma after each visit but that's a good thing. I need to be pushed, I want to get back to where I was before. I want to have the strength to pick up Hosanna, sit on the floor and play batman with Sam or practice ballet with Ellie. I know that day will come soon. While some days are not great, and my energy is gone, I am so beyond blessed to be where I am right now. Being in the hospital for 36 days when you wake often at night (still trying to figure out why they need to take a blood sample at 4am), you have a lot of time to talk to God. Most of the time I just found myself surrendering to him, admitting there was no way I was getting through this without him. Other times I just praised Him for how far he had brought me and how thankful I was for each new improvement I made. Cause you see, I never thought I would be someone that would be on a ventilator, in ICU or spending 36 days in a hospital. That happens to someone who is really sick. I never expected me to be that person. I probably will never know how it felt for my Scott, my mom and dad, or other family and friends that visited me during my early ICU days. To see me in such a way. And they have told me but I'm sure some was held back. The good news is that I don't plan on ever going back.

I wouldn't have gotten through this past month had it not been for the help from my parents. They came down for my chemo treatment and unbeknownst to them, they were here to stay for awhile. From taking care of the kids, to doing laundry, making lunches, covering hospital shifts, you name it they did it. One of them was always at the hospital. Maybe that seems like overkill but when you cant do anything for yourself, it gave me so much comfort having them there. They never complained even after my 757th request of the day. They never talked about being tired. They slept overnight in uncomfortable recliners just so I wasn't alone. They truly exemplified what a parent's love looks like. Selfless, untiring, encouraging and strength. I love you both so much and I beyond thankful for what you have done and continue to do. A bonus to it all was the amount of quality one on one time together that we never had before.

Scott has been my rock. Juggling work, the kids, schedules, coming to see me, and so much more. "For better or for worse, in sickness and in health", he has officially marked this off the checklist. I thank God every day for a Godly man who faced down this giant with the full armor of God. He never ceased praying and believing in my complete total healing. He never stops encouraging me to do the same. His faith has been transformed through this and his love for the Lord is beautiful. AndThe love he has shown me is truly unconditional. It's something I could only thank God for giving me.

Scott's parents, John and Barbara, have been amazing as well. I have always felt blessed to have in-laws that care so much and want to help and be available they way they do. It truly was a team effort to keep the home running while I was sick. They stepped right in and have helped so much this past month. So many sacrifices have been made to help us get through this time and we couldn't have done this without them. Thank you is so simple but I hope you know how much I appreciate what you have done.

Lastly, to my family and friends that traveled near and far to see me, help me, pray for me, encourage me, make me laugh, feed my family, take my kids for the afternoon, homeschool Ellie, simply love me and my family...thank you. So thankful for extra time with my sister, Jennifer, my amazing niece Sidney, my Aunt Karen and Uncle Dale. Thankful for visits from church members, pastors I love, Transformers and others that just wanted to share God's love with me. Thankful for the team I work for that treat me like family, co-workers that visited and a company that has seen me through these spells and supported me along the way. Thankful for prayers from people across the country that have never met me. So thankful for your donations that have made my adjustment home easier. Ughh, there are just so many people that I wish I could name them all! This past year has been tough but I have seen amazing beauty and love that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Your prayers and support truly carried me through this. My mother, grandmother and mother in law would really like a thank you card sent to each of you. We actually have a running list. Can I go on the record now and just tell you how thankful I am for what you have done? I hope to thank you each personally one day but a card may take awhile. Sorry Grandmother, I know was raised better. :)

One year behind me. Many more to come. God is good all the time and that will not change. There is always a reason for praise and thanksgiving. He is always with us.

Game on!  
AJ/Amanda

## Comments

Friday evening, November 6, at Maitland Presbyterian Church, 341 N Orlando Ave from 6:30-8:30pm....this will be a time to share stories, and visit with family & friends.?

The celebration of life service for Amanda Jenkins Broughton will be on Saturday, November 7, at Northland, a Church Distributed at 10am in the main sanctuary. 530 Dogtrack Rd, Longwood FL 32750.

Scott would love to encourage anyone whose life has been touched by Amanda to join us?

—*Louis Chaves, November 4, 2015*

Amanda & Scott ~ You both are an inspiration to us all, your Love & commitment to each other is truly a gift from God. Our prayers will continue until your completely healed. God Bless you & your precious Family! ??

—*Karen Knox, September 17, 2015*

Wow so much has happened, so thankful this is past you. Tom was asking about you the other day and I said I hadn't heard anything so didn't know much. Prayers continue for your healing and please remember I'm just down the street also.

—*Meg Folsom, September 12, 2015*

Amanda-

Your poise, passion, strength and unwavering faith is phenomenal! You are a beautiful angel inside and out. Thank you for using your voice to praise God and put glory in a tough situation! I look up to you. I'm proud to know you and the family you come from. I'm continuing to pray that God's will is known for you and that we keep witnessing miracles. You are also a ROCK for the rest of us. Sending love and more prayers!

(Kristen, Meredith's friend)

—*Kristen Kirk, September 10, 2015*

I have tears of joy reading this Amanda. We are thankful for you being home and doing much better. Your sweet Ellie came running up to me today at school at lunchtime and hugged me forever. She said you are doing good. She also has the light of The Lord in her, as you do. I pray for you so much and ask The Lord to strengthen you and fill you with His power and hope. And of course for healing! I hope to see you very soon, and see your beautiful smiling face, full of God's Glory! Love you!

Julie & Ray

—Julie Spencer, September 10, 2015

I'm so happy to hear you are home with your family. It's been many years since we've seen each other, but I think about you more than you'll ever know. Many positive thoughts and prayers being sent your way.

—Jill Oakes, September 10, 2015

Powerful! Inspiring! So glad your home. We are in constant prayer for you and the family! Love you girl ...keep rocking...keep believing .... keep smiling. GOD IS WITH YOU!

—Louis Bell, September 10, 2015

So grateful you are home and improving every day...we continue to hold you in love and prayer.

—Joan Rost and Joan Pendergast, September 10, 2015

So happy to hear you are doing better! You are such a strong and amazing woman who is loved by many. We continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers!! Blessings to you and your family

—Kathy Corrigan, September 10, 2015

Beautifully written Amanda. Your spirit and faith renews me. Praying for you.

—Randall Henke, September 10, 2015

You are my inspiration I am so moved and yet rejoicing that the Lord hears you and Scott what a rock to have what a blessing to call you my friend. Your Faith has made mine even stronger and I will hold you in my prayers until and after we laugh again. Love you my sweet friend. Game on!

—Eva Demas, September 10, 2015

Wow. I cried, I laughed, I sobbed, I thanked God. . . I am so grateful to God for you. I am so grateful for a wonderful God who is in control of everything. We will continue to petition the Lord for your health and the unity of your family. You are a blessing, Amanda.

—Dawn Ortiz, September 10, 2015

My prayers are always with you. You have such a strong support group. I gave gotten updates from your mom when she can. You have the strongest help of all, God! I know things will continue to get better. With love and prayers.

—Jeanne Marett, September 10, 2015



Wow!

Amanda, I wish I had known you better when I knew you...if that makes sense.

I without a doubt can here the sweet voice of Jesus in your words. As He speaks to you while writing these posts, He is speaking to everyone that reads them. Your journey is a true testament to His grace and love. Keep strong. Your walk with the Lord is beautiful.

—*Beth Reynolds Stevens, September 10, 2015*

I'm not sure that anyone can truly understand how amazing my niece is! I continue to be inspired by you, proud of you and thankful to my sister for giving me two beautiful nieces. Dale and I love you bunches!!!

—*Karen Stephens, September 10, 2015*

Thanks so much for this wonderful update, AJ. We are thrilled that you are well enough to be writing this letter from your own home, surrounded by your own beautiful family. We continue to pray for your healing and strength. Your faith and determination are an inspiration to us all. Please know that you are much loved by many people near & far.

—*Barbara Brady, September 10, 2015*

I'm thankful that you're getting better every day. I'm thankful for the time I got to spend with you last month in ICU. I know that sounds weird but it was good to be able to lay my eyes on you and spend time with you. It's hard to be far away from a loved one when they're sick. I pray for your healing and I think of you everyday. I love you. Keep improving!

—*Amy Mason, September 10, 2015*

Praying for your miraculous cure daily. So glad you're home surrounded by loved ones. Thank you for this amazing journal entry. Continue to trust in God. He has a great plan for you. Am inspired by your courage, and unconditional faith. My love to you, and your family.

—*Nancy Ranson, September 10, 2015*

Always praying sweet lady

—*lea martin, September 10, 2015*

Love your positive outlook! It is a great example to follow. Daily prayers for you and your family always.

—*Yaiza Ramos, September 10, 2015*

Sending so much love to you and your family Amanda!!!

—*Joslin Fritz, September 10, 2015*

Nonstop thinking and wishing for you guys!! xoxo

—*Nick, Jenna and Baby DeAngelis, September 10, 2015*

I love that you manage to keep your wit and sense of humor, Amanda. Your strength is so inspiring! Praying for you.

—*Jackie Miller, September 10, 2015*

Darling Amanda: Thank you so much for the comprehensive update for those of us who could not be with/near you during these challenging times. You are my hero, baby girl. Strong, tough, sweet (like a coconut!) and adorable! Western North Carolina is praying for your perfect health. I am so grateful to your wonderful, exceptional family and friends! A.J.'s Warriors! We love you, Angel Baby!

Aunt Laura

—*Laura D Kranz, September 10, 2015*

AJ!!!! You are such an amazing, beautiful, faithful, loving, thoughtful, joyous, and inspiring woman, daughter, wife, and especially mother, and I am so very thankful to be able to call you friend! What a beautiful post you've written about everything you've been going through this past year, and especially this extremely difficult summer! Of course, all of your posts are inspiring! You're a really talented and gifted writer! You have a way with words that seems to make all of us feel better about what's going on with you when it should really be the other way around! We're supposed to be making YOU feel better!

Speaking of that, I am so very sorry that I have not been a better friend and survivor sister to you this past year. I am truly sorry for that, AJ, and I hope you can forgive me. I do want you to know that you are always in my daily thoughts and prayers, however! And that will never change! I also know that you have not had a lack of friends, family, loved ones, supporters, prayer partners, cheerleaders, etc., which includes my husband who is also your dear friend, Jason! We both think of you guys and pray for you all the time. I'm still so thankful that we were introduced by Jason, and I love that we have so many things in common (including our exact birthdays!)! Haha! However, cancer was one thing we could have done without, don't you think?! We didn't need to be alike in that way! Hahaha! But here we are ~ bonded in yet another way ~ survivor sisters!

Speaking of bonds and friendships, YOU ~ AJ ~ have one of the biggest support networks I've ever seen, and I'm so happy for you for that! It's definitely a testament to who you are that you have all of these people surrounding you with love and with prayers! You are so inspiring, and I continue to learn so much from you, especially in regards to your unwavering and astounding FAITH! I also know that you're constantly touching many lives in positive ways, and you may never even know how many and how much peoples' lives have been changed for the better because of YOU!

Well, I didn't mean to write you a book! Oops! Haha! I guess I just had a lot to say, and I was long overdue in

saying them to you! Please know that Jason and I are ALWAYS here for you and Scott and for your precious kids in any way you all need!

Love, hugs, laughter, and joy!  
Karson

—*Karson Beaty, September 10, 2015*

Goodness, AJ!! May it continue to surround, support, encourage, provide and comfort you and all around you! There really is an amazing grace to enable you to endure all that you've been through, particularly this most recent section of your journey. It takes enormous strength and fortitude to push through what stifles most people. Your fight, your perseverance, your dedication, and above all, your Faith, is inspirational and enviable. Keep up the phenomenal work, keep pushing, and please keep amazing us!!!

—*Andrew Betts, September 10, 2015*

You are so loved and we are so grateful Kristin brought you into our lives. Stay strong, keep fighting and we'll continue praying! Sleep well tonight sweet AJ knowing that God's got this and you are loved.

—*Elizabeth Boyd, September 10, 2015*

## Matthew 14:29-31

*June 10, 2015*

29 “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

Hi Everybody!

Summer is in full swing here in Florida. We kinda get a head start on the rest of the you with the heat. But it is nice not to have to rush each morning with getting kids ready for school and out the door. There is something extra luxurious about not having to set your alarm clock. Once you have kids it is something you only experience on the weekends, holidays, summer days and eventually...retirement. So I savor each one as they come available. :) It's been sometime since my last post. Things here have been going great. Ellie graduated from Kindergarten. It was so precious to see her on stage with her proud smile from ear to ear. As a part time

homeschool mom, I have had the honor to watch Ellie grow this year. From learning to read on her own to counting money and memorizing bible verses. I absolutely love her school and feel blessed to be in that community! She has also grown quite fond of thrill seeking adventures like roller coasters and water slides. No fear at all. Sam on the other hand prefers to stay as close to the ground as possible. He celebrated his 4th birthday last month and is very proud of his grand old age. He has always been my sweet boy but he has turned up the affection to a new level. He tells me (or his daddy, or grandparents, or the nanny) he loves them about 257x a day and that is no exaggeration. It is beyond endearing and works well towards getting what he wants. Ha! He also has become a passionate singer that belts out the best of Veggie Tales or one of his favorites, Counting Stars (In our house A.K.A. "Baby I been") by OneRepublic. And we cant forget about Hosanna. Mainly because she would not allow it otherwise! Hosanna had about 3 months after birth of being our calm, quiet baby. Since then she has been very vocal about her likes and dislikes and has no problem getting your attention to let you know. She keeps right up with her older siblings and often runs the show. She is incredibly cute and has a great sense of humor for her small two years of age. Scott remains my rock and my CEO - Chief Encouragement Officer. He knows exactly the words of truth and encouragement I need at the moment I need them. He has also maintained his quirky, playful personality that keeps me and the kids smiling. I cant thank God enough for giving me Scott. Truly. So all in all, life is good.No, it's beyond good. We are very blessed!

I recently had new scans and met with my doctor on Monday for the results. A little back story to refresh your memory. The trial drug we are on, Nivolumab, is designed to engage my immune system so that it will fight for itself. My doctor explained that patients typically show a false progression on the first scan after starting the drug. This is due to inflammation of the tumors that are under attack. The hope is by the second scan the tumors will have reduced in size. We knew this going in and based on how I was feeling, we had great expectations on the results. The dr. explained that indeed the tumors had grown and a few new spots were noted. He explained that this could be a false progression as expected or not. He recommended we start a new drug specific to cell mutation, RET. As of last week the drug company released information concerning a study conducted for lung cancer patients showing great success in reduction of tumors. The tricky part will be getting our insurance company to approve the drug. This could take 2-4 weeks. In the meantime we will continue on the current trial and have scans again in 4 weeks to have a clearer view on whether it was a true or false progression. We walked away with mixed feelings from the appointment but our hope is not wavered.

Regardless of what the report or doctor says, we stand on God's truth. I am healed and it will not be taken from me. This will be a time in my life when I need to be a water walker (Thank you Bethany for the word). I cannot let the shaky water beneath my feet take my eyes off Jesus. I will continue to walk towards him, fully trusting, fully knowing, fully believing. Scott and I spent a lot of time in prayer last night and while I have had many many many people pray over me these past 9 months, I am declaring June 9th, 2015 to be the day I was fully healed and restored. And I do not doubt that the devil will try to distract me from my healing. Maybe a pain here or a cough there will try to tell me it isn't so and to look away from Jesus and down at the water. That is when I will clearly state that NO, on June 9th, 2015, we stood in agreement over my healing and it is done.

So step off with your schemes to steal, kill and destroy because it is not happening here! Scott reminded me simply that this is just a walk in patience and peace. The water may be choppy but my sight is clear.

Thank you all for your continued encouragement, prayers, support and love. We thrive off of it!

Game on!

AJ/Amanda

Prayer Requests:

-Scans in 4 weeks will confirm false progression

-We will stand firm in our hope and remain positive with our attitudes.

## Comments

You are awesome!! I love your amazing example of true faith! Praying for you! Hugs!

—Tami Nickerson, July 22, 2015

I am praying for you!

—Lorri Lawler, June 16, 2015

We love you Amanda. You are a constant reminder of God's love and power. We are here in SC, but are holding you in our thoughts and prayers.

—Christie Klessens, June 15, 2015

You are such an inspiration, sweet girl. Holding you in my heart & soul in perfect health & splendid love.

—LD Kranz, June 11, 2015

Yes we claim your day also. June 9 th .. With eyes fixed on Jesus!!

—Rena Burtrum, June 11, 2015

Always there in thoughts and prayers for you and family.

—Dana Drake, June 10, 2015

You are one amazing mama! Keep on keepin on! This will all be a distant memory soon enough. :) XOXOXO

—Rebecca Benjamin, June 10, 2015

I love that...."water walker"! Yes, claim the healing and stand on the promise!! Love you all!

—Cindy Thurman, June 10, 2015

Amanda, we continue to pray for your strength and healing. You are an inspiration!! Thank you for the update.

Love, Fernando and Johnna

—Johnna Juarez, June 10, 2015

Praying girlie!! Continue to stay strong:))!!

—Candace Stanaland, June 10, 2015

Love and prayers for you!

—Jackie Miller, June 10, 2015

good for you happy for the updates

—Meg Folsom, June 10, 2015

Amanda,

You are such an inspiration! Love you.

—Colleen Allen, June 10, 2015

This is awesome, Amanda. We will keep praying and claiming your health with you. Thank you again, for sharing your life with us.

—Dawn Ortiz, June 10, 2015

AJ, I continue to pray or should I say confess with you that you're healing has taken place.

You are so loved by your DADDY and I am amazed how God is using you to inspire so many with your positive attitude. Love you

—Diane Lego, June 10, 2015

Hi Amanda. I have not meet you, but feel like I have known you for quite some time. I am close friends with your aunt Karen. My dad was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma a couple of months before your diagnosis. It is incredibly unlifting to read your updates and is always a reminder that we must never, ever lose our faith and hope during the rough times. Thank you for that. Also, I am sure that you have researched all of the drug

treatments available. At my dad's last appointment, his oncologist told him about a drug, Opdivo, which was approved by the FDA in March to treat metastatic squamous non small cell lung cancer. He said that the Opdivo trials have yielded amazing results with adenocarcinoma. He feels that the FDA will approve it soon for treatment of other lung cancers, including adenocarcinoma. I know so many people dealing with cancer right now and I always try to share any "doctor" information with them. You are in my prayers always.

—Teresa Hancock, June 10, 2015

My heart is with you and had been from the beginning of your journey...I think about you so much. Girl...you are amazing..

I love your positive attitude .....Take one day at a time like I did...God took that step with me every day., and still does...Look at me today..fourteen months since I went into remission...should not be here today...but here I am..I never ever gave up ..tough battle..but the devil didn't win by trying to put negative thoughts in my mind...I know that every day is a fight..never let your guard down...stay strong..You are going to win this!!!!!!  
I love you my Friend ????????????

—Flo Dudley, June 10, 2015

Praying for you sweet Amanda! Lifting you up daily. Thanks for the update.

—Kate Hughes, June 10, 2015

Stay strong - you are healed !

—Kathy Corrigan, June 10, 2015

Stay looking towards him...He is our light. Always and forever. Your family is in my prayers as always...love you guys!

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, June 10, 2015

## Hebrews 10:25

May 5, 2015

*And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.*

Good morning yall! I come to you this morning a tad more refreshed after our 11 hour drive home from SC on Sunday. Do you by chance have a child that asks the same question at least 27 times in a sweet yet whiny voice over and over again? And then do you have another child that likes to drop her water bottle and then cry that she can't reach it until you give it to her, upon which she drops it again? Well imagine those two in a car with you for 11 hours and you get the picture of what the drive was like. Actually, it wasn't all bad. The good news is that they seem to get better as they get older. So maybe a couple of years from now we can drive cross country with no problem. Ha! I had a wonderful time being home with family and friends this past week. It's never enough time to see all the people you want to see and do all you want to do. But it is so awesome to see how much my kids love their cousins. Sam and his cousin Mason are the same age and they are finally at that age where they really enjoy being together and just being loud boys. I could just sit and watch them play and crack up over how silly they are together. Ellie and Hosanna adore/obsess over cousin Sidney. They latch on to her and don't let go until the jaws of life are brought out. And even though they may be shy around other relatives they don't see as much, they always talk about them after we leave. As soon as we hit our neighborhood streets, they all started crying and asking to go back right now. Amazing how quickly they forgot how long it took to get to that point! Special times spent with dear friends, outings with my Aunt and celebrating my grandmother's 80th birthday made for a great trip home. I returned home to a clean, de-cluttered house and for those 25 secs, it was amazing! :)

Health wise all is well in this body of mine. I have had 3 rounds of Nivolumab, the immunotherapy drug. So far so good. No side effects to speak of which I am very thankful for. It will be another 4 weeks before we have any scans. I have nothing but great expectations because I consider myself already healed. I think that comment might make a few of you uncomfortable. That's ok because sometimes I can tell and feel uncomfortable myself just to say it around you. A friend told me the other day of her mom's journey with cancer and how she was holding the reality card while her mom held the hope card. I thought about that later...how many friends, family, strangers in my life are holding the "reality card" for me and how many hold the "hope card"? How many people are cheering me on but kinda expecting it not to work out? Don't get me wrong, I didn't spend a ton of time thinking about this and I wouldn't be hurt if you were on the reality side. I mean, let's be honest, while I don't follow statistics, I know they are not good. But statistics have never mattered to me. When God created me he didn't consider me **1** in **12,114** high school players that would be drafted to the WNBA (I wasn't by the way, just using a random statistic to make a point). He created me and said, You, my daughter, are one of a kind. No other has been like you before or will ever be again. So how do I use this knowledge of God's design for my uniqueness to live out my life to the full intention he created for me alone? During a devotion time with some amazing ladies recently, we discussed the parable of talents and how God has given each of us talents. It was an awesome exercise to think and openly discuss the talents we have that we have invested and the talents that we have hidden away because it was either too hard or too uncomfortable to use them. The devotion ended with, "How are you going to invest your talent and watch it grow this year?" Needless to say it was a room full of tearful women with me leading the tear parade. But man, what an impact this devotion had on me. How often have I pushed down any 'talent' because I wasn't comfortable letting it be seen. I mean, what would people think or say? So silly. I would want my children to be fearful of such a thing and neither does our father want us to be. Like never before in my life, I have cherished moments like these, surrounded by other Christians, all encouraging each other to grow in our faith and step out of our comfort zone into God's full favor. I want to encourage you to stay connected through church or small group or what have you. There is power in community. My hunger to know God's word more clearly and see it fully manifest in



my life grows more each day. I cant say I would have gotten to this point without a little push. I am thankful for where I am now and the impact it has had in my life from every inch and every corner. With each problem comes a promise and a provision (Quoting Graham Cooke). I continue to be excited over where this path will lead me because I know in my knower that it will be good.

Much love to you all and much appreciation for your walk with me through this journey!

Big shout out to my sis on her birthday today! Wish I was there to have a mango margarita with you! Love you!

Game on!  
Amanda/AJ

Prayer requests:

- That I will continue to grow stronger and stronger as my immune system stands strong.
- That Michael's (a cousin) body will continue to heal and line up with the word of God in Jesus name.
- That God will give me the boldness to speak and words that will offer encouragement and hope to other cancer patients in my life.

## Comments

Thank you for sharing and for your encouragement :) xoxo

—Peggy Clare, May 17, 2015

I've got the faith and believe cards! We've "got you". Thank you for all you are doing for us. Love ya! Xoxo

—ellen clayton, May 8, 2015

Hope card here!!! Loved spending time with you and "my" precious children this past weekend!

—Karen Stephens, May 7, 2015

I am holding the hope card AJ. and it is funny you should mention that. There is a girl in our office in her 30's that has cervical cancer and it has spread to other parts of her body and I have been hearing alot of hope and reality comments. I work harder on the HOPE for her and tell her that as well because you are right. you are one of a kind and every single person going thru some form of this monster deserves nothing but HOPE!! I'm praying for you girl.

—Cathy Nolan, May 6, 2015

Cheering you on!!

—Candace Stanaland, May 6, 2015

Hope Card! ...as you lead the way and teach us with each step you take. Thank you for sharing your amazing gifts. We love you.

—Barbara Broughton, May 6, 2015

Healed card! Had so much fun with you in town love all our time shared never ever a dull moment with you. Love you

—Eva Demas, May 5, 2015

Girl! I got your HOPE card!!!!

—Vanessa Talley, May 5, 2015

HOPE CARD:) xoxo

—Elizabeth Chaves, May 5, 2015

I stand with you on the hope side. I know what the Word says and I just believe with you.  
XOXO

—Diane Lego, May 5, 2015

You're amazing. I look forward to your updates thanks for keeping us in the loop.

—Meg Folsom, May 5, 2015

I thank God every day for healing you, and I pray that He will continue to heal you until you recover completely from the cancer that has afflicted you. I have faith that day will come.

God loves you and so do I.

—Nancy Ranson, May 5, 2015

You are so amazing Amanda!!! I love the gifts the Lord is refining in you and the strength in which you are sharing them with others! Let the Spirit continue to flow from you in this powerful way and I thank Him for the refreshment He gives you with others who speak boldly into the beautiful woman God created uniquely in His

image!! I love you!

—Cindy Thurman, May 5, 2015

Beautiful! So glad you had a good visit in SC. We continue to pray for you everyday. Hope to see you in a couple weeks. Love you!

Mere

—Meredith Wilson, May 5, 2015

Thanks so much for sharing your journey with us all. We continue to share in your hopefulness and look forward to seeing you in August!!

—Barbara Brady, May 5, 2015

Amanda, glad you had such a wonderful trip!! Cole does the same thing every time we visit family....lots of crying and screaming "go back now!". So hard to leave. Thanks for sharing your hope with us. We are full of hope and confidence in your healing, and in our Amazing God.

—Julie Spencer, May 5, 2015

Beautiful! You are a blessing!!

—Jackie Fobbs, May 5, 2015

Love you!

—Jennifer Butler, May 5, 2015

You are a blessing .. God is good ?

—lea martin, May 5, 2015

## Romans 8:37

April 7, 2015

*No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.*

Hi yall! I'm channeling my southern charm for you this morning. Thought I'd take a quick minute to update you on the latest and greatest. As I mentioned in my last journal update, we were considering a new trial drug, Nivolumab, which is an immunotherapy drug. Immunotherapy is a buzz word in the cancer community now a days. And for good reasons indeed! Immunotherapy comes in many different forms but essentially they all do the same thing. In one way or another, they are designed to give your immune system the kick it needs to start defeating the cancer within your body. Many of you probably saw the 60 minutes show last week concerning Immunotherapy and how researchers at Duke are using viruses like the cold virus, measles, and polio to eradicate cancer. Looks like Duke has more going on than just basketball. :) But back to the show, it was really fascinating. It appears the paradigm has shifted when it comes to cancer treatment and that's an awesome thing! All that said, we decided to give this trial a go. While the response percentage is low, those who do respond have had great success. But I still have my secret weapon in my back pocket that has already proven it's success, God. Maybe that sounded a bit cheesy. That's alright. As I have said before, I have complete confidence in my healing. While I walk out this journey towards restoration, I am learning what path God wants us to take and how to trust Him completely along the way. Not an easy task but one well worth aiming for.

On a side note, Ellie's school has asked me to speak at the final community meeting in May. Writing is one thing. I can hide behind the screen and backspace when needed. Public speaking is a whole other world. I am praying over what to say and that God will give me the wisdom, courage and confidence to execute a speech without turning into a blubbery rambling mess. If you would pray for that as well I would really appreciate it!

Love you all and thank you for your continued prayers and support!  
Amanda

Game On!!

## Comments

I think that you are doing GREAT!

—Robert Broughton, April 21, 2015

I was just reading Isaiah 40:28+ and it was speaking to me to pray on you too! That's so ironic, someone is trying to tell us something.

You are so funny, who wouldn't want to hear you speak? God will guide your pen, just speak it from the heart!

—Carla Hall, April 14, 2015

That's awesome you'll do great speaking. Just do it like you write from the heart and who care if you blubber. When I spoke for LLS I would tear up mentioning the kids but that's to be expected. Thanks for the updates,

your on my mind a lot.

—Meg Folsom, April 8, 2015

So good to hear from you. Just be your sweet self at Ellie's school. You are a natural. No doubt you will charm the class with your radiant smile & sparkling eyes that overflow with love and joy. I know Ellie is so proud of you, as we all are, Beloved. You are a constant inspiration. MUCH love. Aunt Laura????

—LD Kranz, April 8, 2015

So glad you are feeling better. Pray does amazing things. I am sure God will give you the words to say as you give your speech at school. Praying this new treatment works miracles in your life.

—Sandra Duncan, April 7, 2015

Amanda - the lady who was the feature of the 60 minutes segment was our own Greg Justice's wife, Nancy who has had remarkable results. I pray that this treatment may work for you as well!!

—Linda Hufty, April 7, 2015

Was praying for you recently, Amanda, and Isaiah 40:31 came to mind. Keep the faith, Amanda. The Lord will renew your strength. You will recover.

God loves you and so do I.

—Nancy Ranson, April 7, 2015

Go girl, you can do this.

—Diane Lego, April 7, 2015

You got this !

—Kathy Corrigan, April 7, 2015

In the mighty name of Jesus, may He speak words of encouragement and hope through you! May you have an overwhelming peace and calm and joy about speaking. You can do this through Christ our Lord!! Many will be touched by your words Amanda. Love you and always praying for you! Xo

—Allison Vollenweider and family, April 7, 2015

I certainly will pray for you for your school speech ..I am the same way..Also I am Praying for your complete healing...It has been one year on 3/25/15 since I had my 48th round of Chemo...Just goes to show you how great

God is...He kept me here for a reason, because I shouldn't be ...So with that said...no manner what...Never give up...You have a lot of spunk like me...I can hear it in your voice that you are very strong...and with your attitude , you are going to beat this ...I love you my Friend and think and Pray for you always..????????????????

—Flo Dudley, April 7, 2015

Hi AJ- It's Mary from Habijax AmeriCorps:) I have been praying for you and following all your posts. I want to let you know that we live 10 minutes from Duke Hospital (and have for almost 11 years). I would love to do anything to help you if your treatment is in Durham. I know the area well and we have multiple friends who work at the hospital. Email me! taylor.mary@gmail.com

—Mary Taylor, April 7, 2015

Praying for you ....

—lea martin, April 7, 2015

you go girl! with that attitude you can conquer anything!! praying for you.

—Cathy Nolan, April 7, 2015

You can do this!!

—Patty Franklin, April 7, 2015

## Matthew 8:17

March 12, 2015

*This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illness and bore our disease."*

March is here and the hot weather has arrived here in Florida. As Ellie told someone today, "FINALLY, I can wear something other than long sleeves shirts and pants!" That one long month of winter was more than she could handle. Ha! I cant help but agree with her. Eventhough I grew up in SC, my blood now requires FL heat. Plus being outside is the one thing that always works when my kids are at their wits end. Put them outside and it's like I pushed their reset button. So yay for warm weather!

Its been 6 months now that I have been writing this journal. When I think of my life 6.5 months ago, it seems

like a lifetime away from today. It has been amazing to see God's hand through it all. I've gotten to a point now where I pause at what I would have previously considered a coincidence to try to figure out why God orchestrated that moment. And if you haven't done that before I encourage you to. It's pretty cool feeling to reflect on God's hand in the simple coming and goings of your day. So much has changed in our household these past 6 months. My diet, for starters, is crazy different, my prayer life is night and day to before, our faith in His promises and truths is tremendously larger, my children have grown 6 months older which is a whole heck of a lot when you consider Hosanna (which by the way will be turning 2 next week!!!!), our marriage is substantially stronger, new friendships created and old ones grown stronger. I imagine if you read over that past sentence you would say, "Heck, I want that!" You would pause...only then to be reminded of how we got there.

If we could only circumvent the whole cancer gig and still get the same results. Hmmm. Even with all that said, every once in awhile the voice creeps in my head that points out other people around you, at the store or the park, playing with their kids. The voice likes to dig at me a little, "Hey look at that family over there. Just enjoying life with no worry in the world. Don't you wish you could go back to when life was easy like that?" The voice is a real jerk. I know he's trying to bring me down and make me feel sorry for myself. Cause in reality I don't know what life is like for anyone out there and I certainly can't say their life is easy compared to mine. I have no idea. Everyone has their own struggles and pain. And like I said before, so so so so much good has come out of this that would have taken years to create otherwise. So I have to tell that stupid voice to zip it up! I'm not in the mood to listen to his comparisons anymore. I actually talk to myself a lot. We all do. But now it's with a purpose. I talk to my body, I tell it how perfectly crafted it is and how healthy and strong each organ and cell are within my body. I talk to the intruders and demand they leave in Jesus' name. When a random pain or cough arise, I speak to it or laugh at it. It will not distract me from my healing. It may sound silly to you but it's just part of my personal protocol that I believe it works.

I've heard people say before that it's not a matter of IF your faith will be tested but When. Well this has certainly been a test for us. I am so thankful that I have my faith and for the army of believers that stand shoulder to shoulder with us as we battle together. I can't imagine going through this without that foundation and support. Without that, where do you find your hope? Cause let's be real here, in the realm of cancer, there isn't a lot of hope floating around. Oh, that reminds me...when someone tells you that they or someone they love has cancer, try your best not to follow it up with a Debbie Downer cancer story. "Oh, my Aunt had lung cancer for 5 years. Yeah. She's gone now." Geeeeeezzzzz. I mean I'm sorry to hear about your Aunt and all but I pretty full right now of sad stories right now. And it doesn't take those kind of stories anyways, I can just look around and see what effect it has. So here is your tip from one cancer patient, please only share your uplifting powerful miraculous God moving stories with other cancer patients. Spread a little hope. :) Ok. Glad I got that out. And speaking of support, I am always in awe of how supportive my parents can be. There can't be more two more selfless people out there than them. They are workers, come from a long line of hard workers as a matter of fact. If there is a job that needs to be done, they will do it. They spent the last two weeks sleeping on my couch just to be here to help us. I don't know anyone over their 30's that will sleep on a couch that long and not complain about it. They are just happy to be able to help and to love on the grandkids. I mentioned wanting a raised garden and 3 days later it's built and planted. And it's pretty dang cool if you ask me! I think they may have a business on their hands if any of you SC peeps want to pay top dollar for one. :) Thank you Mama and Daddy for all you do to help us! We love you!

Today a big day here as my short term disability ended yesterday. Yep, you got it. Back to work I go. I praise

God that I am even at a point that I could consider working. I praise God for putting me at a company that would allow me this time away with full benefits and pay. There was a time in my life when I was anti-"The Man" but let me tell you, after working for "The Man" through 3 pregnancies and now this, I feel awfully blessed to be with this company. And I definitely praise God for putting me with a team that honors Him in all they do both professionally and personally, and has treated me like their own family through this. So with all that said, it's easy to consider going back to work. I am still a tad nervous though. I haven't worked in 6 months and the idea of juggling appointments, protocols, family life and work life is intimidating. My team has agreed to let me come back slowly just to see how I can handle it. 10/hrs a week until I can add on more. It will probably do me good to be back doing something I love doing that isn't 100% related to my needs. Does that make sense? Anywho, I'm looking forward to today!

I'm still doing really well. I had scans last week and got mixed results. The scan noted tumors in my lungs had decreased since January 58% in one and 37% in another! PRAISE GOD! The mixed part is that my liver tumors had increased in size, ranging from 12%-32%. We still PRAISE GOD! Cause ultimately we know that I am healed. He alone bore our sicknesses and paid the price for our sins. If I believe in God, believe in Jesus and believe in His Word, then I obviously believe that His word is true and just as real today as it was 2015 years ago. We have a lot of theories on why we think the liver tumors could have appeared larger on the scan, I went go into detail on that now. The doctor didn't have much to say about it other than my organs respond differently. He did recommend a new trial that has showed a lot of potential. It's offered by Bristol-Myers and is one of the new exciting PD-1 drugs. This type of treatment is immunotherapy. So where chemotherapy poisons your body to kill the cancer, immunotherapy is designed to super boost your immune so it will kill the cancer. This is a very attractive option to us. We have not yet made the decision on this but plan to very soon. We just want to research it a little bit more.

Thank you all so much for your continued prayers, cards, texts, meals, high fives and chest bumps. They keep us smiling and moving forward in the direction we need to go. All Glory to Him alone!

With much love,  
AJ/Amanda

Game on!

## Comments

Many prayers going up for you in SC!

—Sandy Nason, March 19, 2015



Keep your faith strong. Trust God, keep going, and you'll get there. Praying for you daily, Amanda. Enjoy NSB.

Much love,

—Nancy Ranson, March 15, 2015

Glad to see YOU are doing well and going back to work. you will be back in the swing of things there before you know it!! You inspire my faith! Happy spring :0)

—Cathy Nolan, March 13, 2015

You go girl!! I love how you are pressing into God and his faithfulness . I continue to pray for you and your family . You are a remarkable inspiration to so many

—Kelle Zizmer, March 12, 2015

You are amazing. Sending much love!  
The Demuths.

—karen demuth, March 12, 2015

I hope that your first day back at work went smoothly. I know that your team loves you and will make your transition easier for you. It was probably a wonderful feeling to be at your desk knowing that The Lord has cured you through HIS love and your faith. God bless you and your beautiful family.

—Nydia Chaves, March 12, 2015

Amanda, your posts are like a cup of cold water on a hot Florida day! How refreshing and hopeful. Thank you for taking the time to share and maybe after spring break Ellie would like to come do school one day with Cole again. Prayers and love from all the Spencers.

—Julie Spencer, March 12, 2015

Love you friend!

—Grace Whitlow, March 12, 2015

Amanda, I have a front row seat- and you are incredible! Daily I see your smile and the twinkle in your eyes. I do a "double take" so often in amazement. You, your sharing and example... are a gift to all of us reflecting the power of prayer. With love & always praying for you.

—Barbara Broughton, March 12, 2015

Thank you for sharing, Amanda! Praising God for your continued healing, your faithfulness and strength. Love, hugs and prayers.

—Sarah Orr, March 12, 2015

Thank you, Amanda, for sharing your journey again. It has been refreshing to my soul to hear the Lord's work. I will continue to pray for you and your family. I hope your witness at work will bring many to the Lord.

—Dawn Ortiz, March 12, 2015

your posts are really helping me right now.the hope message is important and I need to listen to it even though it is hard to do.congratulations on going back to work what a positive step forward that is for you

—Judy Judge, March 12, 2015

I am always so impressed and inspired by you Amanda! Praying for all of you as you go back to work.

—Jen Palmer, March 12, 2015

... But for, His Grace. With love and prayers- I stand in the gap for you and your beautiful family, for your wholeness and well being in every area of your life.

—Anita Turner Bell, March 12, 2015

YOU are amazing! I love your faith!! Even through the storms of life, walking beaide the Lord is the best place to be. I am so thankful for your healing! And you have encouraged me today. Thank you.

I love you Amanda!!!

(Big hugs!!!!)

—jennifer winch, March 12, 2015

We continue to pray for you and wrap you in God's strength and love! Your life and story are certainly a gift to all of us. Thank you for always sharing so fully the ups and downs. Continue to be a warrior! In kindness and love,

Kristen (Tallahassee)

—Kristen Kirk, March 12, 2015

Glory be to God!! I am glad to hear you are doing better and returning to work. I pray God continue to bless you and your family.

—Alicia Smith, March 12, 2015

You are amazing!! Good luck in transitioning back into work mode:~:) PRAYING...

—Candace Stanaland, March 12, 2015

You know that a book with the inspiration and incredible teaching you could provide for others in the battle would be an incredible encouragement for so many... just sayin'! Still praying this through with you and love seeing the power of our Lord in action! xoxo

—Cindy Thurman, March 12, 2015

You rock and I love you!!!

—Nicole McMurray, March 12, 2015

Praying for you often!

—Rebeccal Lang, March 12, 2015

You are amazing, you and your family are in my thoughts and prayers... ????

—lea martin, March 12, 2015

## Isaiah 54:17

February 13, 2015

*No weapon that is formed against you will prosper*

Here I am! It's me, the one that said i would get better at communicating but instead I have gotten worse. Sorry about that. The good news is that I have been feeling so good, that enjoying the normalcy of life gets in the way of writing. However, that being said, I think God has been pushing me to write lately. In 4 different prayer gatherings with different people that did not know me this past week, they all said that God was telling them something to do with me and writing and that I should keep doing it. Wow, the first time someone said that I thought, hmmm...that's cool. The second and third time was moving. Then by the fourth time I was like, "Ok, I get it. I'll write already." So here I sit at Starbucks savoring the smell of coffee since I'm not enjoying the taste of it. I'll start by filling you in on my detox healing retreat.

The spa was a quaint beachfront cottage in New Smyrna. No internet, no cable, no phones, just the soothing

sound of the ocean. As soon as you walked in, you felt like you had entered a sanctuary, so peaceful and calm. There were two other girls there during my stay. One who had survived cancer 6x but now has many many issues due to side effects from her treatment. The other was a pastor's wife who came just to recharge and get focused on her health again. It was quite cold and windy but sunny enough to lay out with blankets and soak up some rays. In the morning we would do a devotion and pray together. Throughout the day we drank 4-6 fresh pressed veggie juices. And they were the real deal, no fruit added. Oddly enough I grew to like them. Lunch and dinner was vegan with a heavy portion of raw vegetables. No sugars, no oils, no dairy, no processed food, no gluten. It was definitely the cleanest I have ever eaten. We exercised lightly 2-3x each day, mainly on a rebounder (trampoline). We spent time in the sauna each day and rested in the sun as much as possible. At night we watched educational videos on health and diet along with documentaries of individuals' testimonies. I woke up a little early each morning so I could watch the sunrise and pray. The owner, Karen, arranged to have two ladies come out for intercessory prayer for each of us. That was an awesome time for sure. These ladies spent an hour talking with me and praying over me. I totally didn't expect this time and felt so blessed to have had it. Karen also had someone come out to give us a 'raindrop massage' (you'll need to google it). The masseuse prayed over me while she gave me the massage. Another first but so relaxing. If there was any free time in between all we were doing, I spent it looking at cookbooks. We had two other visits that were unexpected but really cool. One was a wheatgrass farmer who came to deliver a flat of wheatgrass. He talked to us about the benefits of wheatgrass, how to grow it and so on. The really neat part was hearing his story on how he beat cancer naturally 18 years ago. The other visit was from the husband of one of the ladies staying there. He is a pastor and has survived cancer two times. The last time was liver cancer and he cured it naturally. He shared his story with me and offered much encouragement. A lot of the things that happened were completely unexpected but turned out to be my favorite parts of the week. When Thursday rolled around, I felt so good, so rejuvenated and ready to take on the world. I honestly felt, physically and spiritually, the best I have ever felt. And thank you for your prayers, Scott did great with the kids while I was gone!

Two of the mornings I spent on the beach bundled up watching the sunrise. I spent this time to pray and listen to God. The first morning as I sat far back from the water's edge, I watched as one seagull approached me one step at a time. He got closer and closer until he stopped about 5 feet in front of me. He stayed there for about 10 minutes just staring at me. I found this to be quite odd but didn't pay much attention to it. The next morning the same thing happened again. This time I found it really odd. So I prayed, God what are you trying to show me? And then the verse hit me, Psalm 91:4 - "He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection." This journey has gone from devastation to transformation for me and Scott. Through moments of fear, confusion, frustration, I have remained under his wings, protected from the storm. With the warmth of the sunrise on my face, I left the dunes feeling protected and assured that no matter what battles I may face in my future, He will protect me. His promises are what we stand on and we stand affirmed that His healing in my body is complete and perfect and we will not waiver from that. The pastor I spoke to last week told me that a time will come when people ask you how you are doing and you think to yourself, "oh that, that was awhile back. I'm fine now." Because what may seem to be present to others feels like the past to you. This rang so true to me because it is how I feel now. When I think of cancer, I think of it as something that I have gone through in my past. And maybe it's because I have been so blessed with good health these past couple months that its easier for me to do that. Maybe if my hair fell out or if I was sick all the time I would think differently. But I praise God for the peace He gives me each day

knowing that He has given me an abundant life and His plans for my future are good. From the moment we were told I had cancer, we knew our lives would never be the same. And that has been true in every way. I have learned so much about how my body works and in some cases doesn't work. I've heard countless stories from other individuals going through the same battle. I have seen abundant love from family, friends, and even strangers pour over my family. I have noticed the small details around me like gentle breezes, the warmth of the sun on your skin, my children's laughter, the love in Scott's eyes when he talks to me. I have let go of small details that I let grow into huge boulders. I have looked at God's word in a new light and in a much more personal way. I'm not sure I am ready to say I thankful for this disease but I think one day I will be. Because this little 'c' has provided so much growth for us in ways that would have taken years to get to otherwise. From devastation to transformation. Thank you God!

I'm feeling great by the way. We kicked up our nutrition to a whole new level. I'm exercising at least 3x/week and even, get this, went running the other day! Now remember this is the same person that 5 months ago could barely walk without a cane. Now it was no 26.2 but I praise God for every .5 I'm able to do without pain. In the name of Jesus, Cancer is no longer allowed to thrive in my dwelling.

Valentine's Day is tomorrow. I'm not eating sugar so there will be no binge session on Reese's Peanut Butter Hearts for me. The seasonal ones are so much better than the year round ones right? Anywho. We will be celebrating valentine's as a family. Each year we have our family valentine's date night. We dress up, set the table with candles and play nice music while we eat. Dinner time is typically a crisis at our house. That is no joke. There are tears, children running around the house while I yell for them to sit down and eat, a lot of begging on my part for them to at least try their dinner and it ends with me ordering everyone into the tub. All that being said, I bet you are biting the bit to join us for dinner right? Well I'm hoping with the festivity of it all, they will quiet done and eat peacefully, like every 1,3 and 5 year old should! Or maybe we will just eat icecream, cookies and cereal for dinner and that will keep them happy and me too. :) Hope your Valentine's Day is just as memorable.

With much love,  
AJ/Amanda

Game On!

## Comments

So awed at your retreat, seriously! I feel I need that, too! Just to refresh, rejuvenate and reconnect. You are

awesome, Amanda. I am honored to know you and to see this beautiful journey of yours/ ours. I love you immensely and although I was only your Doula with Ellie and Sam, please know I am always here for you. <3

—Maggie McCarthy, February 15, 2015

Amanda, you are such an inspiration and I continue to pray thanking God for your complete healing and restoration.

—Diane Lego, February 15, 2015

So glad to hear all of this news Amanda!!!! xoxozo

—Rebecca Benjamin, February 13, 2015

You inspire my faith so much, little one! God bless you always!!

—Shirley Davis, February 13, 2015

AWESOME WOW!!!! LOVE YOU< BOBBY

—Robert Broughton, February 13, 2015

Oh Amanda, your words of faith and transformation are such a comfort. I am SO grateful to God for you and your journey. . . AND the outcome. Thank you for sharing your retreat and the refreshment it brought. There are many things I have taken for granted at times. But, somehow a little pull here and there brings new perspective. I will keep praying for you and that you will write and share your journey in a way that keeps bringing healing and hope to others. I have learned SO much from you and your family. THANK YOU for sharing your struggles. ~Dawn

—Dawn Ortiz, February 13, 2015

I am so happy for you. And still praying

—Jeanne Marett, February 13, 2015

You are an inspiration to me. I know you and Scott have thanked Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, for your total cure because it has already happened in HIS time, although you may feel that there are still some traces of damaged cells.

Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ love you so much. I know Jesus wants you to help others who are sick and afflicted with your experience. Your beautiful journal will definitely be a vehicle to reach those people.

—Nydia Chaves, February 13, 2015

God is good. I am so happy that you are improving. Keep trusting in the Lord to see you through.

—Sandra Duncan, February 13, 2015

Happy valentines day Amanda. I love reading your words, keep writing!

—Joslin Fritz, February 13, 2015

Amen! God is good all the time! Will continue to pray for your full restoration during your transformation. God Bless.

—Ivis Hernandez, February 13, 2015

One of my favorites! "He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection." it makes you feel safe. So glad to hear you are doing well!

—Cathy Nolan, February 13, 2015

Happy Valentine's Day to you! and your wonderful family ?

—Patty Franklin, February 13, 2015

LOVE!!!! The victory is the Lord's! You are a blessing Amanda!

—Julie Spencer, February 13, 2015

So glad to hear from you ,I've been thinking & praying for you . I'm glad the spa was relaxing and peaceful and always hearing Gods words make everything good . Y'all have a great Valentines.

—lea martin, February 13, 2015

This makes me happy. I love you from the bottom of my heart!

—Amy Mason, February 13, 2015

Love it! So glad you got to take that all in and keep striving...much love and prayer to you and your family.

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, February 13, 2015

## Proverbs 4:20-22

January 22, 2015

*My child, pay attention to what I say.*

*Listen carefully to my words.*

*Don't lose sight of them.*

*Let them penetrate deep into your heart,  
for they bring life to those who find them,  
and healing to their whole body.*

Writing you today from the chemo bar. It's a non-chemo day for me, just receiving my study drug, OGX. I spend a lot of time in this place. Being here every week you see a lot of highs and lows. So far today I have been able to listen to a nurse brief a new patient on 'life with cancer and chemo'. My stomach sunk as I listened in to those familiar words. Those first few days/weeks the doctors and nurses shove so much information down your throat that you barely remember your name. Plus there is so much going through your head about your own life that you just can't absorb all the medical details coming your way. I hate it. I hate that everyday I hear of someone else being diagnosed with cancer. I hate that this cancer center is HUGE and is only one of hundreds in this country. Don't get me wrong, I am very thankful for the doctors and nurses that dedicate their lives to this field, for the impact they have had on my life alone has been incredible. But we were not created to live a life of disease yet somehow along the way it became normal. So how do we reverse this trend? The list of possible answers is too long to list here and my knowledge is too limited to try. But I do believe it begins with our connection, our relationship, our dependence on God. Optimum health cannot be achieved without it.

Lucky for me, I have the chance to work on a lot of aspects of my life right now. This weekend I am heading to a detox retreat in New Smyrna. It's a small retreat specific for people like me going through cancer. My diet will consist of fresh green juice every hour, raw veggies and teas. Beyond what I eat, I will also take cooking classes tailored to my diet and learn more about alternative healing methods. Fresh beach air and sunshine are a big part of the week as we spend a good amount of time outside soaking up the sun. And lastly, designated rest and quiet time are carved into each day. Oh, I forgot to mention that it's led by a Christian woman who starts our day with devotion and prayer. I cannot even begin to tell you how excited I am for this time! For time to 'listen to His words...and let them penetrate my heart', it will be a real good thing. I haven't been away from my kids or Scott for this amount of time before. It will be tough to be away from them. I certainly can't even remember having designated quiet time. It will probably feel weird to sit in silence and not feel obligated to do the dishes or laundry. But I will suffer through it the best I can. :)

I haven't filled you in on how well the last round of chemo went. My expectations were high and they were met! The comparison of round 1 to round 5 is night and day. I had a decent amount of energy and the nausea was barely noticeable. Praise God! I am 4 months into the journey and I can't even comprehend how blessed I have been through it all. From the amount of support to scan results to improved health, it's truly incredible. When I sit in a cancer center and look around, it's hard not to wonder why I have been so blessed. Why I improve while others don't? At times I can feel guilty about it. People are suffering, truly suffering



from their cancer and I am doing well. I can only give God the glory for my healing and peace. There is no other explanation for it, He is the one to praise. I am honored that He would use me in this way. That through our trial, others can see His hand on our lives and in return see it in theirs.

We continue to feel your prayers, thank you for your commitment to pray for us. Special thank you to the team I work with at UBS. You guys are my family. Thank you for allowing me this time off to heal and being beyond supportive every step of the way. So so so thankful to have joined the team 7 years ago. I cant imagine my life without you all!

Game on!  
AJ/Amanda

Prayer requests:

-My cousin's significant other was diagnosed with AML this past week. He will endure 28 days of chemo and will not leave the hospital until he is done. Please pray for his complete healing, energy through the process, for his faith to be strengthened and for his caregivers to remain strong.

-For Scott and kids to enjoy their days without mommy with minimal tantrums and early bedtimes. Might as well go big!

## Comments

Have a great break and may God continue to bless you and your family always.

—NANCY PARADA, January 27, 2015

AJ - So glad to hear things are going well for you. Enjoy your weekend - It will be hard being away from your family but it will be good for you to have time to heal and to focus just on you. Sending you prayers and positive thoughts !!

—Kathy Corrigan, January 24, 2015

wonderful to hear you are making & taking special healing, quiet time for yourself. You are such an inspiration, darling girl. Much love, Aunt Laura

—LD Kranz, January 23, 2015

Prayers for you....Think about you all the time..Glad you are doing good..Enjoy your time away..you need that..more than you know....?????????

—Flo Dudley, January 23, 2015

YOU INSPIRE ME AND I ALWAYS GET EXCITED WHEN I SEE YOUR MESSAGE IN MY BOX> I HAVE BEEN TO A FEW RETREATS AND THEY ARE AWESOME!!!!

—Robert Broughton, January 23, 2015

Oh Amanda, what a roller coaster of life. I am SO happy for you! I am so grateful that you are sharing your journey. I am SO grateful to God for his healing. I will pray for your family's health needs and continue to pray for yours. Will LOVE to hear about your cancer-free dieting. God bless you and yours. You are truly a blessing to us all.

—Dawn Ortiz, January 23, 2015

Wow!!! I am thrilled for you Amanda and this weekend. God is providing the 'perfect' gifts for you! Praise the Lord! Will pray the cutie kiddos are angels for Scott. ?

—Allison Vollenweider and family, January 23, 2015

Enjoy your time at the beach, meditate on God's word and cast down every negative word spoken. We get bombarded with so much negativity, every time you turn around there is an ad regarding cancer. Words and thoughts have power. This will be a good time to soak yourself in God's word. Love you.

—Diane Lego, January 23, 2015

Just when I think of you and haven't received an update there it is. So grateful for your healing. Enjoy your time at the beach. The sun and beach is where I turn to for my healing too. Prayer will continue and I'm sure Scott and the kids will enjoy their time together.

—Meg Folsom, January 22, 2015

Amanda, I almost called you today for some strength and prayer. Then when I opened my email - here you are! God heard me through the chaos in my brain! Do you have any particular books, scripture, prayers to recommend? I think our spiritual side needs treatment now. You are the strongest woman I know. I guess we find out how strong we are when strong is the only choice. Thank you for including us in your prayer request. Enjoy your retreat and feed your soul. I love you, Ellen

—ellen clayton, January 22, 2015

May God continue to heal you completely, and bless you abundantly.

Much love,

—Nancy Ranson, January 22, 2015

AJ-

Your positive attitude is contagious. Enjoy your weekend and soak up that sun.  
God Bless you and your family!

—Jennifer Barberis, January 22, 2015

The weekend will be great for you. The ocean air is pure oxygen. Enjoy the peace and quiet time.

—Nydia Chaves, January 22, 2015

Hi AJ

you write beautifully and God is always with you. Congrats on your special weekend. It sounds wonderful!  
I hope the sun is shining for you all weekend.

—Cathy Nolan, January 22, 2015

Love it!!! Keep it up AJ...God's hands surround you. and from the mommy in me...ENJOY the quiet time :)

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, January 22, 2015

Such good news! Enjoy your weekend and we are so happy you were able to celebrate with us!

—Nick and Jenna DeAngelis, January 22, 2015

AJ, Enjoy your weekend, you certainly deserve it! Sounds like it will be a ton of fun and hopefully very relaxing. So pleased to hear that you have been feeling ok throughout all of the treatment. Thanks for keeping us all posted!

—Brice Adamson, January 22, 2015

Praying for you glad to see things are going good, have a good time on your trip ... ?

—lea martin, January 22, 2015

## Another praise report

January 6, 2015

The scans showed my tumors/lesions continue to reduce overall! Praise God! My doctor took the time to show me my scans from Sept against yesterday's. It was cool because he could show me the 11 lesions in my liver that are now reduced to 3! What?!? That's so crazy. First I didn't know I even had 11 at the time. Probably a good thing I did not know that. Anywho, we are trucking on and knocking tumors out left and right. Thank you for your continued prayers, they are working and I am so thankful!!!

With love,  
Amanda

## Comments

Our God is an AWESOME God!

—Sandy Nason, January 29, 2015

I pray for you every day. SO awesome to see our God at work in your healing. Can't praise him enough.

—Dawn Ortiz, January 13, 2015

Such good news! Blessings! to you and your team of Doctors.

—Harriett Coleman, January 10, 2015

Awesome news AJ - Sending you love and prayers

—Kathy Corrigan, January 9, 2015

To God be the glory!! Many praying for you at my Church in Vero as well as myself!

—Tilara Yawn, January 8, 2015

Wow!!

—Kate Hughes, January 8, 2015

Amen praise God , so happy for you praying ,?

—lea martin, January 8, 2015

Amen praise God , so happy for you praying ,?

—*lea martin, January 8, 2015*

Wow! So grateful and continue to be prayerful!

—*Julie Spencer, January 7, 2015*

So glad to hear such great news. God is so good and is surely taking special care of you Love and prayers to all of you..

—*Sandra Duncan, January 7, 2015*

Best news I have heard in years!!! Thank you Lord.

—*Eva Demas, January 7, 2015*

Such good news my friend! God is good all the time!

—*Dee Mycroft, January 7, 2015*

GREAT NEWS AMANDA!!!! Yay!!!

—*Rebecca Benjamin, January 7, 2015*

It truly is an encouragement to hear this wonderful news!!! Thanks so much for your journaling which allows us to really share this journey with you! Both of you have been and continue to be such an encouragement to us. We love you guys!

—*Vanessa Talley, January 6, 2015*

Your faith and the diligence in your nutritional program makes your recovery possible.

—*Nydia Chaves, January 6, 2015*

Absolutely awesome Amanda!!! Praise the Lord!!! ?. 2015 year of healing!

—*Allison Vollenweider and family, January 6, 2015*

Praising God for his healing powers for you! You and your family are in my prayers.

God Bless,  
Sherrill Chappell

—*With Thoughts and Prayers! Sherrill Chappell, January 6, 2015*

So happy to hear the update Prayer works!!!

—*Meg Folsom, January 6, 2015*

Faithful is the word that comes to mind!!! You are faithful and have given this to the Lord in every sense of the matter!! He is continuing to walk in, with, alongside, before and behind you. Praying that what has begun in this healing is brought to completion. Complete healing physically, emotionally and spiritually!! Love you beautiful Amanda!

—*Cindy Thurman, January 6, 2015*

Way to go Amanda!! So happy for you. I wish I were there to give you a big hug! I am happy beyond words for you. My prayers of thankfulness and for healing will still be heading your way!??

—*Jeanne Marett, January 6, 2015*

I am ecstatic!. Love Bobby

—*Robert Broughton, January 6, 2015*

Great news! We will keep Praying!

—*Brooke Coe, January 6, 2015*

Such wonderful news!! Please keep fighting the good fight knowing that we are all praying for your complete recovery!!

—*Barbara Brady, January 6, 2015*

Such great news! Yay! God is GOOD!

—*patti barnard, January 6, 2015*

yay! Yay! Yay!!!

—*Whitney Saylor, January 6, 2015*

Fantastic news! Praise the Lord!

—*Kari Ferris, January 6, 2015*

Great News! Prayers work and will continue. Love to you and your family

—Yaiza Ramos, January 6, 2015

YEAH YEAH YEAH YEAH!!!!!! Praise the Lord!!!

—Cathy Nolan, January 6, 2015

Thrilled to hear the good news Amanda! Sending love!

—Joslin Fritz, January 6, 2015

Hoooooooooray!!!!!! Great news.

—Jean Cross, January 6, 2015

AWESOME! We are so happy for you!!! xoxo, can't wait to celebrate with both of you!

—Jenna Adams and Nick DeAngelis, January 6, 2015

Awesome!! Keep up the good work! You got this! and God has you :)

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, January 6, 2015

## 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

January 6, 2015

*So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

2015, here we are. With a new year comes a fresh start. I've always been one that enjoys setting new year's resolutions. Months later I look back and reflect on how they quickly faded in the hustle and bustle of life. But there is something good about looking at the year ahead of you and setting goals. My goals for this year are quite extensive. You know, the normal stuff like total body healing. I'm sure it's on your list too, right? One of my goals, which is a recurring goal now for many years, is to remove the clutter from my life. I wish the

accumulation of stuff around me didn't affect me but it does. I can't relax when there is chaos around me. Especially now, more than ever, I feel that it is this clutter that causes so much distraction from what truly matters in my life - my family, my faith, my health. All of those have taken a backseat time and time again because I needed to do one more task around the house. I feel like this is what God wants for my family. Less IS more. Without all those distractions, we can focus more on Him, our purpose and passions. With the help of a challenge from my dear friend, Mary, I accomplished one room last night, my bathroom. It's quite small so it took about 20 mins. But it's a start and I'm excited about it. Hopefully months from now I will still be working hard on this and seeing the rewards. But it's not just house clutter, it's life clutter too. What else am I doing that distracts me from what matters most in life? While Facebook is a fun way to kill time, it tends to creep into other times of my day when it's not necessary. How can I use that excess time to better myself or serve others? These are just things that have been going through my head lately. I hope no matter what your resolutions are for the new year that you attack them head first and when you stumble, pick back up and keep going. If it matters, you can do it!

Yesterday I had new scans done. Time sure is flying by fast since it feels like I just did the last ones a week ago. We were on a high for weeks after our last scan results. We certainly did not expect such a jump in such a short period of time. And today we will find out how I have progressed the last 6 weeks. We have full faith in more great results. It's only a matter of time before my body is rid of this cancer. God is doing a mighty work in me and I'm thankful for it all!

When I first diagnosed, the doctor told me a few things to do to help with my healing. One being to alleviate as much stress as possible. I want to thank you all for how you have helped with that. First with meals. Dinner prep time has always been a very stressful time of day in our house. It tends to be the time of day when my children lose their marbles and want to attach themselves to my leg. A lot of pushing, screaming, crying going on and that's just me. Ok, not really but maybe on the inside. So with the meals you have brought you have provided a peaceful time of day that has reduced my need for medication or wine. :) Second with yard work. A few of you have taken care of our yard without even asking. Just showed up did the job and left without waiting for a thank you. Having the yard taken care of has been so helpful as it is one less thing on Scott's plate when he is already over booked. Third with house work. I owe my parents and in laws years worth of thank you's for this. From laundry to dishes to whatever, you have stepped in and done so so much! Fourth with my diet. Ugh, my diet. It should be easy being that it's just fruits and vegetables but it's been hard to stick to at times. A few of you have helped over and over again with providing meals I can eat guilt free and actually enjoy! Fifth with the kids. Again I have to thank my parents and in laws for this one. Always available and ready to help no matter how extended they may already be. **ALL** of this stuff adds up and has provided a more peaceful, stress free environment that I know it has played a part in my healing so thank you for blessing us in that way. We love you all so much!

Game on!  
Amanda/AJ

Prayer requests:  
-Continued healing  
-For our focus to be always on Him, our family and our purpose



## Comments

Believing with you for complete healing. You are an inspiration. Happy New Year!

—Julie Spencer, January 6, 2015

Great entry, AJ. You have inspired me to get rid of clutter in my life. I can't wait to see you at the end of January! I'll be available in the afternoon on January 29th through 4 PM on the 30th.

Love ya!  
Ryan

—Ryan Brady, January 6, 2015

My prayers are with you today for great results . ?

—lea martin, January 6, 2015

My prayers are with you today for great results . ?

—lea martin, January 6, 2015

eat purple, red & blue food. Deeper colors, more nutrition. Hit garlic hard. I'm sure Scott will appreciate That!  
much love to you & gang. My prayers & love are w/you always.

Your adoring,  
Aunt Laura

—LD Kranz, January 6, 2015

My prayers are with you for another awesome report!! We miss you here in Ponte Vedra and think of you often!

—Cathy Nolan, January 6, 2015

Love you so much m!

—Nicole McMurray, January 6, 2015

Love you so much m!

—Nicole McMurray, January 6, 2015

## Isaiah 9:6

December 28, 2014

*For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,  
and his name shall be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

I coming off a Christmas high. Hours, days, weeks leading up to the big event. Trying to cram in meaningful Christmas memories, all the while attempting to teach my children the true meaning of Christmas. That when the bible mentions a life more abundant that it wasn't necessarily about an abundance of Frozen or Ninja Turtle toys. But Target and Toys R Us are working against me with their toy catalogs that appear at your doorstep every other day starting the day after Thanksgiving. My kids were asking for things that didn't even mean anything to them... but they sure looked cool in the catalog. With each new Christmas, the kids are a little older and seem to get it more, both the gift giving/getting aspect and the Jesus birth part too. Ellie is old enough now to track the days till Christmas and remind her brother that Christmas is really about Jesus. Sam is old enough to understand that Santa can withhold gifts if he chooses to but not old enough to change his actions to prevent that. Ha! Hosanna is young enough to consider every gift in sight actually belongs to her regardless of what it is. The excitement and pure joy of children is awesome. We were blessed to spend Christmas with my family in SC and loved every chaotic loud moment of it. You put 4 children under 6 in one house for a week and hope all make it out alive without any injuries. And we did. Ellie, Sam and Hosanna adore their cousins and cherish every visit we have together.

But we are home now and trying to figure out where to put all this new stuff. Ellie surprisingly suggested getting rid of all her toys to make room for the new. That sounds good to me. Less chaos and clutter = happier mommy. But I doubt I could get away with tossing all her old toys. I have to remind myself often that this is a season and one day they will be older, moved away and I'll be driving across town, climbing in their bedroom window to rock them to sleep while singing, "I love you forever, I like you for always, as long as I'm living, my baby you'll be." For those of you that don't know that book, it's a tad creepy but it still gets me teary-eyed when I think about my babies growing up.

The holiday season has been awesome. Filled with gatherings of friends and family, Christmas parades,

caroling through our neighborhood and much more. The great part has been the distraction from the little c in my life. There really hasn't been time to absorb myself in it. Sometimes that is good and other times it's bad. For example, it's hard to stick to a diet when every Christmas gathering is centered around delicious food. You can only turn that stuff down so many times before you buckle and find yourself in a chocolate sugar coma. So now I'm home and ready to focus again on good health. Luckily I have some great friends that help me through that process.

I know last entry I said I would do better at communicating and then I disappeared for nearly a month. Sorry. I am feeling great and when I feel great I don't think much about writing. I have completed the four rounds of the heavy duty chemo. With my next round I will be starting maintenance chemo. How long that will go...who knows. But the good news is the side effects will be more manageable going forward. My next scans will be in about 10 days. The results were so awesome the last time that we have remained on a high from that. We are very optimistic that it will continue on that path. I am still participating in the clinical trial which requires weekly infusions. We will not have confirmation on whether I have received the drug or not until the study closes. No one knows except the drug company as to when that will happen. So we keep moving forward, excited to see what opportunities God places before us. Because as we have said before, there is a reason for all this and we know it is for good.

The last 3 months of 2014 have been life changing. I have been lucky enough to feel God's love through his people, you. We will never be able to write enough thank you cards, or call each of you personally. We simply just can't thank you in the manner you deserve. But know that your prayers and help through this time has meant everything to us. It has humbled us so deeply and shown us what love and selflessness truly look like. Heading into 2015 we feel strong and ready for what is to come. We have an army behind us and a God beside us. We cannot ask for more.

We did not get around to mailing out Christmas cards but thank you sooooo much if you sent us one. We loved them all! We wish your family tremendous blessings as you wrap up 2014. God has much in store for us all if we only allow Him to work.

God bless you!  
Amanda

Game On!

## Comments

Happy New Year Amanda! I am so glad to hear you had a wonderful holiday season and things are on a positive path. I will continue to pray for you. Be well and stay strong. Your faith is a sign of your courage and your trust is God. It's amazing.

—Deby Barber, UBS, January 5, 2015

Happy New Year, dear Amanda! I can only imagine the chaos and joy of Christmas in SC. I wish I had been there for it. (Seriously). I also did not send Christmas cards this year. However, you are always in my thoughts and prayers - I hope you know that! My wish is that 2015 will be a year of miracles, letting God do His work. I love you bunches! Ellen

—ellen clayton, January 2, 2015

So glad you all had a good Christmas and many blessings for the New Year. God is Good All The Time .

—Linda Holder, January 2, 2015

Love you. So glad we were able to get together  
Love those lil angels

—Kaye Kaye, January 2, 2015

Amanda,

I continue to pray for a complete healing for you. I am glad you had a great Christmas. I saw your Mother while out Christmas shopping and didn't realize you was her daughter until she told me. I used to work with your grandfather at Saco Lowell many years ago. You have a wonderful family. May God bless you and your family!

—With Thoughts and Prayers! Sherrill Chappell, December 30, 2014

so happy to hear the good news of happy holidays & the great news of healing. You are so loved, Angel. I hold u always in my heart in perfect health. Happy New Year, Beloved.

Aunt Laura

—LD Kranz, December 30, 2014

You and your precious children being "at home" MADE my Christmas! You and Scott are doing a wonderful parenting job, especially the Christian example you set.

You are always in my thoughts and prayers. I love you bunches!

—Karen Stephens, December 29, 2014

So pleased for you that Xmas went so well...and just expecting 2015 will continue to bless you in countless ways. We love you and think of you often.

—Joan Rost and Joan Pendergast, December 29, 2014

Praying for you and all of your family every day.

—Jeanne Marett, December 29, 2014

So glad you had a good Christmas. We thought of you and your family often and of course kept you all in our prayers. We thank God for every step forward. He is in control and we just have to trust in Him. Love to you and your entire family.

—Sandra Duncan, December 28, 2014

Game on! 2015 is a year of healing!!! Praise God! So blessed to know you and your family. ??

—Allison Vollenweider and family, December 28, 2014

So glad to hear you had a great Christmas and the opportunity to spend quality time with family - That is always important and a sure way to lift your spirits. I pray that you continue to get positive health news as you begin 2015. Your UBS family continues to send you love and prayers - We miss you and send you positive thoughts each day!

—Kathy Corrigan, December 28, 2014

Beautifully said. Glad you had a wonderful holiday season and despite the outside influence, the kids are still learning about our Saviour. Always praying and much love.

—Jackie Fobbs, December 28, 2014

It was wonderful to see you at Christmas and you looked fantastic. Nobody would ever know what you were dealing with just by looking at you. I'm praying for more positive news with your next scans and continued improvement. I love you very much! Xo

—Amy Mason, December 28, 2014

## Psalm 107:1

November 24, 2014

*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

Sing with me..."Sing Praise, sing praise, sing praise, sing praise. Forever you are faithful, forever you are strong." Ok that's enough. You can keep singing if you wish. I'll wait.

As you know, I had a my scan result appointment this morning. I had noticed last week that the nodule on my neck had reduced in size a decent amount. Plus overall I am feeling really good. All that said, I walked into the appointment today with above average expectations. Keeping in mind that it had only been 6 weeks worth of treatment, and most likely months to years of cancer growth, I tried not to have too high of hopes. Well God did not disappoint me in anyway. The scans looked great! 32% reduction in tumor size. 32%. That's a whole heck of a lot of reduction if you ask me. So the great news is that it is working. The prayers, the diet, the chemo, the attitude, the love, the support...all of the above, it is all working. And I couldn't be happier! So today when I feel great I know God is good all the time and Friday when I feel pretty lousy from treatment, I am reminded that God IS good all the time.

So this is just another little gem to add to my thankful list for Thanksgiving. We have so much to be thankful for!

Much love to you all!

Game on!

Amanda

## Comments

Thank you for sharing Amanda - love to hear how you are doing! Love you and Happy Thanksgiving!

—Peggy Clare, December 1, 2014

Great news, Amanda! I hope you and your family have a Happy Thanksgiving!

—Amy Yohe, November 26, 2014

Praise God he is Good All The Time. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving. Love to all

—Linda Holder, November 26, 2014

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family. You all are in my prayers.

—Terrie High, November 25, 2014

God is soo good! So happy and thankful for your news!! Happy Thanksgiving!

—Michelle Bannister, November 25, 2014

The Lord is good. Last week Joel Osteen spoke about Psalm 23. He explained that though we go "through the valley of the shadow of death" the Lord has prepared a banquet on the other side of that valley. You have inspired many of us with your tremendous faith and strength. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is so proud of you and I know that HE has your banquet prepared for you. Keep your diet. Don't feed those cancer cells with any sugar.

—Nydia Chaves, November 25, 2014

Amen Praside Jesus .. so happy for you .. God is good

—lea martin, November 25, 2014

We rejoice with you! Happy Thanksgiving!

—Julie Spencer, November 25, 2014

Oh Amanda! I am OVERJOYED for you and your family! We will continue to be fervent in prayer. . . and rejoice with you! :)

—Dawn Ortiz, November 25, 2014

I am overwhelmed with joy! This blessing will be at the very top of things I am thankful for this Thanksgiving! Praise be to God!!!!

—Karen Stephens, November 25, 2014

AJ - So happy to see your post with the positive news! God is great and has truly blessed you and your family with your progress. Sending you love and prayers

—Kathy Corrigan, November 25, 2014

This is wonderful wonderful news! Thank you Lord and Happy Thanksgiving my sweet friend. God Is good

—Eva Demas, November 24, 2014

Praise God! We are so thrilled to hear about the wonderful healing God is doing. What a great Thanksgiving gift!!!

—Vanessa Talley, November 24, 2014

Praise God! We are so thrilled to hear about the wonderful healing God is doing. What a great Thanksgiving gift!!!

—Vanessa Talley, November 24, 2014

—Molly Carey, November 24, 2014

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow . . . Am so happy for you and your family. Happy Thanksgiving!

Much love,  
Nancy

—Nancy Ranson, November 24, 2014

There is Power in The Name of Jesus. Keep singing praises Amanda as will I.

—Gwendolyn Carter Thomas, November 24, 2014

What great news! Happy Thanksgiving!!

—Jeanne Marett, November 24, 2014

Wow! Such amazing news! So happy for you all!

—Ashley Mitchell, November 24, 2014

Such wonderful news! We will give special thanks when we share our Thanksgiving with Ryan & Francesca on Thursday!!

—Barbara Brady, November 24, 2014

Thanks for sharing that is the best news!!!! I continue to confess Gods word over you and believe that ALL IS WELL.

—Diane Lego, November 24, 2014

So happy for you I know the feeling well !! Have an extra piece of pie on Sat.

—Meg Folsom, November 24, 2014

What a perfect Thanksgiving gift!!! Praise God!



—Allison Vollenweider and family, November 24, 2014

Big sigh...great news.

Much love,  
Martha Edgemon.

—Martha Edgemon, November 24, 2014

Praising God!! Amen girlfriend!!

—Sandi McLaughlin, November 24, 2014

Awesome news!! Praising God with you:)!!! Happy Thanksgiving?

—Candace Stanaland, November 24, 2014

AMAZING!!!! SO MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR!!!!

—Rebecca Benjamin, November 24, 2014

Fantastic news! We're praying hard for you AJ. GOD IS GOOD! Lots of love ~ Fritch Family.

—Jennette Fritch, November 24, 2014

Wow. Im so happy!!!!!!LOVE YOU

—Robert Broughton, November 24, 2014

Terrific news!! Continued prayers!! :) Happy Thanksgiving to your family!

—Tessa Stanaland, November 24, 2014

Yeahhhhhh great news??????????

—Flo Dudley, November 24, 2014

yayyyyy!!!!!! Happy Happy Thanksgiving!

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, November 24, 2014

yayyyyy!!!!!! Happy Happy Thanksgiving!

—*Racquel Brown-Lindsay, November 24, 2014*

Huge smiles over here!!!! AWESOME! Have a lovely Thanksgiving with the family :)

—*Elly Brady, November 24, 2014*

YEAH!!!!!!!!!!

KEEP THE FAITH!

WE ARE PRAYING FOR YOU.

—*Cathy Nolan, November 24, 2014*

Wonderful news Amanda. I was with Jenn from AmeriCorps this past weekend, and we sent loving healing energy your way. I know how hard those scan result meetings are, and I send so much love to you and your family.

—*Joslin Fritz, November 24, 2014*

Such GREAT news! So happy to hear this! xoxo

—*Jenna Adams and Nick DeAngelis, November 24, 2014*

That is such amazingly fabulous news! I am so thrilled about this. I love u very much. Keep doing what you're doing and we will all keep praying!

—*Amy Mason, November 24, 2014*

what great news.

—*Judy Judge, November 24, 2014*

Amen!!!! I am so uplifted by your post. Praise God all the time! Wishing you a VERY Happy Thanksgiving. We both have a lot to be thankful for this year!

—*Bethany Martin, November 24, 2014*

So glad to hear the great news!!!!

—*Whitney Saylor, November 24, 2014*

Amen!!!! God is good.

—Jackie Fobbs, November 24, 2014

So awesome!! I am indredibly happy for you! Give Thanks :)

—Patty Franklin, November 24, 2014

## Jeremiah 29:11-14

November 19, 2014

For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. In those days when you pray, I will listen. If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. I will be found by you," says the Lord.

A well known verse indeed. I have recited it probably in the upwards of 3000x. That's a lot you say. Well, yeah it is but it's painted on the wall of the nursery in my home. So just imagine the number of hours spent rocking, feeding, reading to a child over 5 years and you would have read that verse that many times as well.

Usually people end this passage after "a future and a hope". It wasn't until recently that I read on to discover the goodness keeps going. "If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me." I like how 'wholeheartedly' fits right in the middle there. Because wholeheartedly is not a word I would use to describe my faith journey.

Even in the midst of this junk, I still find myself leaning on my own understanding and not His. But I crave it, I want to know Him more intimately than before. I want my inter being to come alive with the holy spirit. But for now it's in the quiet, stillness, whisper that I hear Him and not an explosion or fireworks that light the sky. I wonder sometimes if He looks down on me and wants to grab me by the arms and shake me a bit.

"Wholeheartedly I said. Did you miss that part?" I imagine what He would say to me as if would speak in such a way. But in reality He loves me regardless of how much I wholeheartedly love Him. I can tell you that I have been a part of some seriously moving prayer gatherings these past few weeks that have left me weeping.

And in each one the overriding take away is that I am loved by the King. This must be a hard concept for me because He keeps bringing it back to me time and time again. But I didn't use today's verse to talk about that, nope I actually just got sidetracked there. Really what I was thinking about is HOPE. So let me share a story with you....

Last night we were at the American Lung Association Fight for Air kickoff. <Climb is in March and I plan on recruiting climbers for my team, stay tuned.> A gentleman got up to speak and I overheard most of what he said. My kids were with us so it was hard to give my full attention. He told the story of his daughter's friend, 33, with 3 small children recently diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. She had given up on chemo and kind of dropped off the map lately. Scott leaned over to me and said, "Do you hear this? We need to talk to this girl. Her story is so similar to ours. Maybe we can encourage her." Fast forward 30 minutes and Scott is now

talking to that gentleman. Scott wanted to give him our number so this girl could reach out to us if she wanted to talk to someone going through the same thing. I came over and Scott introduced me, "This is my wife AJ." Then a perplexed look came over him, "What a minute, my daughter's friend's name is AJ." Yep, you guessed it. The story he told was about me. We laughed quite a good bit and still do thinking about it but we also learned something. When I go silent for a couple of weeks, you start to worry more about me. So I apologize for not updating you to let you know I have not given up and I still have tremendous HOPE!

So where was I? Well chemo is starting to look like this. Chemo day is thursday. I feel great that day. By midday Friday I start to feel worn down. By saturday I'm done and dont want to get out of bed. Same feeling lasts until Tuesday which I have coined "Turn-around Tuesday" because it's usually 5 days later that things start to turn around and I feel normal again. Unfortunately with the last two rounds I have come down with a side sickness a few days after the turn-around tuesday. This past time I had a stomach bug that really knocked me for a loop. Lucky for me I have a fantastic family and friends that step in and handle everything beautifully when I cannot. A day or two later I was much much better and things were back to normal. This past week has just been crazy busy with appointments, school performances, prayer nights, etc. All good, no great, stuff, but stuff none the less that prevented me from taking the time to update everyone. We will do better next time.

Today is a big day as I have scans this afternoon. I'm excited to have them and not really anxious about it. I am confident in my future and the hope that abounds in our lives. So if the results are not exactly what we want, that's ok. I'm sure there will be some disappointment but we place our hope in the Lord and not in scans. i wont know any results until Monday at best. So stay tuned and add this one to your prayers.

In the meantime, we are celebrating Thanksgiving on Saturday and I'm really looking forward to it. I love this holiday and all it represents. A holiday focused on being thankful and this year my cup overflows with thanksgiving. Thankful for a God that loves me unconditionally and walks with me every step of each day. Thankful for each and every prayer said on our behalf. Thankful for family that forfeit their freedom to take care of me, the kids, the house, etc. Thankful for friends that make me laugh and cry when needed, that love me like their family, that homeschool Ellie when I cannot, that make food to feed us and send cards to brighten our days. Thankful for my children's schools that have rallied behind us in prayer, meals and financial support. Thankful for a husband who is as much a coach, mentor and encourager than I could ever imagine. Thankful for full length jammies that keep me warm on these cold florida nights. :) You get the picture and I'm not even close to mentioning them all. One of my favorite thanksgiving traditions is to go around the table and state one thing you have been thankful for that year. Typically a tear jerker moment in my family. Maybe you can do this with yours and cry a few good tears before gobbling down some yummy food.

Much love to you all!

Game on!

AJ/Amanda

Prayer requests:

- Good scan results
- Continued discernment over treatment options
- Minimal side effects for next round of chemo on Tuesday

## Comments

So happy to hear from you I was getting a little concerned too. Blessings to all of you. God Bless all of you and continued prayers of healing.

—*Meg Folsom, November 24, 2014*

We love your family! We are awaiting good news and are praying. You encourage me. Thank you.

—*Julie Spencer, November 23, 2014*

i was really worried about you and glad to know that you are hanging in there. be strong! this is a very tough journey. you will push through with all the love and support and prayers of friends and family!! my prayers are with you.

—*Cathy Nolan, November 23, 2014*

Our prayers are with you, Scott and the children every day. We love you all.

—*Kathy Haralson, November 22, 2014*

We stand with you!

—*Michelle Kutcher, November 22, 2014*

Praying you .. have a graet thanksgiving ..

—*lea martin, November 21, 2014*

thank you for sharing your updates with us. Yes, we do worry when we don't hear about how you are doing. You and Scott and family are always in our prayers and I keep up with you through barbara.you strengthen my faith through your faith in God

—*Judy Judge, November 21, 2014*

Praying for a great report. wishing you and your family a great Thanksgiving. XOXO

—*Diane Lego, November 21, 2014*

Amanda-Thank you for sharing and teaching us what goes beyond our own understanding. Thankful beyond words for YOU and all you give and have given to us. With all our love- Barbara and John

—Barbara Broughton, November 21, 2014

So thankful that you are such a true Christian. Your faith in God will lead you thru all of the rough times you are having, You are in our daily prayers and we do know that God performs miracles everyday. Hang in there, better days are to come. Love and Hugs for all of you .

—Linda Holder, November 21, 2014

AJ, Scott and kids..... Thank you for your tremendous testimony. Even the messy hard things are filled with grace and love. You can't help it. It oozes from you in such a beautiful way. As I just wrote that it is what we all want the cancer to do... ooze from you. Thank you Lord for forever holding the Broughtons close to you and working in their lives. I love it... game on!! Thankful for you!

—Cindy Thurman, November 21, 2014

thank you for letting us know how u r and giving us specific prayer requests. Gives me an opportunity 2 help, even from so far away. 3 churches praying 4 U up here in North Klackalaky (as John B calls it). U R enveloped in radiant health and infinite love. Please say howdy 2 the gang 4 me & kiss them beaut babies. Aunt Laura

—LD Kranz, November 21, 2014

Love hearing from you; everything is always so wonderfully put :) Continuing to pray for you. We love you.

—Sarah Stephens, November 21, 2014

This verse spoke directly to me today...and even though you journalled it on the 19th, which was my daughter's birthday, GOD had me read it today because I needed it right now. Wow, His grace :) You and your family are still and always will be in my prayers...GAME ON!!!

—Racquel Brown-Lindsay, November 21, 2014

Hebrews 11:1 .. Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

AJ, I have faith God is continuing to heal you, even when we might not see all the results yet. May God's grace rain down you and family this weekend. Love you, sara and mike

—Sara Whiting, November 21, 2014

You are an amazing woman and God has this! He has destined our paths and when you can walk no further, he will carry you. I love you tough girl and I continue to pray for you and the family. God Bless!

—*Jackie Fobbs, November 21, 2014*

Love you and those verses above!

—*Dee Mycroft, November 21, 2014*

Our family continues to pray for you:)

—*Rebeccal Lang, November 21, 2014*

## Jeremiah 1:5

*November 5, 2014*



Before I shaped you in the womb,  
I knew all about you.

Before you saw the light of day,  
I had holy plans for you:  
A prophet to the nations—  
that's what I had in mind for you.

There is something comforting about this verse right? Before I was even born, God knew about this specific day, the days that led up to it and the days that will follow. "A prophet to the nations", that part is hard to imagine for myself. The funny thing is that sentence alone I pray often for Hosanna. You see, she's our third child and upon arrival to this earth she has found a way to make her voice heard and her presence known. She is strong as an ox and completely fearless. In all honesty, it's somewhat exhausting at times. So I pray that this strong willed force to be reckoned with will use those strengths to change the world all for the glory of God.

That indeed, she will be a prophet to the nations. It's easier to see that in my children than in myself. You don't limit the potential of your children, because they can do ANYTHING! But little of me, eh, I don't know. God certainly couldn't be calling me to do something great and loud and bold and fearless and all for Him.

Right? Well, that's probably wrong. He's probably calling all of us to do just that. But you see, there has been this faith curtain I have always hid behind. Compartmentalized christianity. Yes, I believe but I don't need to share my faith with unbelievers and make them uncomfortable. And please don't ask me to pray in front of anyone, oh no, my anxiety levels would through the roof. And if you knew me B.C. you would probably say, Who is this person? Not the AJ I knew. "If you could see me now, I wish could show you how, I'm not who I was." Brandon Heath song sums it up pretty well. Sometimes I even felt bad about not being the old AJ to those people anymore. I'm a people pleaser and generally want everyone to like me and be happy. It took a long time to just accept that some people from my past will not like the new AJ/Amanda and you know what, that's ok. Because through years of growing my faith and a couple of months of diving even deeper, I'm glad I'm a new person. I'm comfortable speaking about my faith and God has given me a new boldness I didn't have before. I'm still seeking what God wants me to do with this little c (reserving the big C for Christ). Is it just this, sharing my story? Maybe, maybe not. I can tell you, it's easy for me to write these things, to share the thoughts and feelings I have. But day to day, it's really hard for me to live this. I don't know if it's the medicines, general fatigue or just simply being a mom to 3 young kids but most days I'm somewhat disappointed in my actions. My patience level is very low and my temper is easily lost. Am I showing the love of God to those closest to me? Probably a 50/50 split. In a time that I can show them what joy in the face of fear looks like, I'm showing them more time outs and more frustration. It bothers me a lot. Would life look like this if I didn't have cancer? Very likely but it's hard not to feel it compounded with everything else going on.

So that's probably my biggest prayer request, that I can bring more joy into my home and handle parenting small children better. This is just me, not a reflection of Scott's actions or anyone else for that matter. It's just something I struggle with.

Geez, I've been rambling again. The last week and a half has been good overall. Big improvement on energy and overall wellness. I had a couple episodes of fevers but they lasted no longer than a day or so. Halloween was great and God gifted me with much energy to get through that day. Thankful for that! Ellie dressed up as...wait for it...Elsa. I'm sure you didn't see that one coming. Sam was spiderman and Hosanna was Anna. It was too cute of a costume to not have her match her big sister. They had the time of their lives and now consider candy a part of daily diet. Lucky to spend the night with good friends and enjoy the cool weather.

Tomorrow is my second dose of chemo. I am determined it will go better this time around. I know what to



expect and I know how to better manage my medicines to stay on top of the side effects. Plus I met with a nutritionist yesterday and feel pretty good about how to get more nutrition in my body during those post chemo days when all I want to do is sleep. Basically, my toolbox has been ramped up and I feel ready.

We continue to feel abundantly blessed by each of you. I think I have cooked dinner twice over the last two months and that alone has been HUGE. Dinner time is always a stressful time in our house so having a meal prepared has saved the day time and time again. Thank you! And I love each and every shaw that has been sent to me. I think I have enough now to mummify myself. :) The cards, the text messages, the emails and calls, they all mean so much to us. Thank you so so much!

Prayer requests:

- 2nd round chemo will go smooth with minimal side effects
- That my patience will increase and maybe the decibel level in the house decrease. :)
- For our hearts to be open and ready to God's plan for our lives.

Love you all!

Game On!

Amanda

P.S. My cousin got married this weekend and I could not attend. They sent me a picture of them holding an "AJ's Army" banner and all wearing the bracelets. I cannot even begin to describe how much that meant to me. Such a special day for you and you all took the time to include me somehow. It makes me cry now just thinking about it. Thank you so much for making me feel so loved! Couldn't help but share the picture. Love you guys!

## Comments

Praying for you every day. I can't imagine how you do what you do. You are so strong. God is with you. Don't be hard on yourself about not being all you want to be. Your energy has got to go toward getting well. There is so much love and so many prayers coming your way. And many prayers for all of your family also. Keep up that winning spirit.

—*Jeanne Marett, November 15, 2014*

Hey Amanda Thinking about you all the time. Wish we could be there with you for a few days. Hopefully soon. Love you a bunch

—*Dale Stephens, November 12, 2014*

Amanda - I am a friend of your aunt Amy's. I know from experience that cancer and chemo changes a person. No one can tell you what to expect because every patient is unique . . . like a little cancer snowflake! Just be who you are - even if one day you're grumpy and the next day you are a giggling, silly mess.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

—*Monica Debbi, November 6, 2014*

Personally I have just started using Psalm 19:14 to hopefully help me with my mom impatience and frustration!!;) "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight O Lord my strength and Redeemer". Praying for you guys!!

—*Allison McNeely, November 6, 2014*

Personally I have just started using Psalm 19:14 to hopefully help me with my mom impatience and frustration!!;) "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight O Lord my strength and Redeemer". Praying for you guys!!

—*Allison McNeely, November 6, 2014*

Thinking of and praying for you this week!

Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

—Psalm 62:5–6

—*Candace Stanaland, November 5, 2014*

I for one, can vouch for the fact that since birth, you have been a warm, loving, loveable child. And you are a wonderful mother too. I loved the "old" Amanda and I love the "new" one. I am so very proud of you and how your faith is growing daily.

To quote our pastor...."as believers, we are simultaneously saint and sinner". We all just have to work on the saint side harder!

—*Karen Stephens, November 5, 2014*

Great to hear you venting about your feelings....Talking about what you feel is part of the process...I think of you every day....you are in my prayers ...Stay strong...I love you my Friend ????????

—*Flo Dudley, November 5, 2014*

I remember well the post days, it does get easier after the first one since you do know what to expect, side effects are always different. At least for me it was. Praying for you and just love how God is pouring out His love onto you. I remember after I got the "call" I prayed and had such a peace come over me I just knew it would be ok no matter what. Again remember I'm just down the street and love little people, or I could come over and help. The name of the cleaning company is Ruby Red, I can call for you if you'd like. Just sent me a txt. God Bless and Keep you.

—Meg Folsom, November 5, 2014

Amanda, I hate to tell you this, but your neighbors (meaning us) probably hold the street record for the decibel level in the house! Put two strong-willed attorneys (one of which is Cuban, which is loud by nature) and two vivacious and strong-willed boys in one house, and well, not a recipe for quietness! So, I totally understand where you are coming from on that one my friend, but want to assure you that we have NEVER heard anything remotely loud coming from your house (I wish you could say the same for mine, and if you did, I wouldn't believe you! :) This said, I will be sure to pray for your patience to increase as well as your other pray requests. Also, I didn't know the old AJ anymore than I know the new AJ, but I think the new AJ is a pretty amazing lady! :)

—patti barnard, November 5, 2014

Tough few days ahead but better after that. THIS TOO SHALL PASS > LOVE BOBBY B

—Robert Broughton, November 5, 2014

Girl!! I love you and am praying for you without ceasing! Lilly, my 8 year old, calls your name out, praying for you at every meal and bedtime! I love you sweet friend! Hang in there! {{{hugs}}}

—jennifer winch, November 5, 2014

Amanda, you have always been the light of the room, back in the day and now. I would not say that you are a different person (what you call yourself the new you), I say you are the same loving Amanda but in a different stage of your life. With children, husbands, jobs, etc, etc, we all kind of have to do a little upgrade ;) (I hope we can call ourselves wiser than in college, lol!!!) you have always been a good, loved and loving person. You can tell by the amount of people that have showed you support who have known you from different stages of your life. We all love you because of you, the wonderful Amanda.

Do not worry about patience with your kids, trust me, I lose mine often but is part of parenthood, it is in the job description.

We are and will be praying for you, for these next weeks be with no side effects and for God to keep doing his magic thru you.

Besos, paola

—Erik Herrmann, November 5, 2014

Amanda,

You are amazing. God's work isn't easy, but the rewards are everlasting. I pray that God will spread his healing power around you, and through you, so that your body will be restored to a healthy wellness. All is well with your soul. I also pray that your prayer requests will be answered to your satisfaction. Your blog is a blessing to each of us. God loves you, and so do I.

—Nancy Ranson, November 5, 2014

Ann Jones comment below really says it all. Talk care we are all thinking of you and praying.

—Patty Franklin, November 5, 2014

Praying for you and your family....it was nice to see you all on Sunday :-)

—Ruth Doellefeld, November 5, 2014

AJ, you are in my prayers daily. Whoever you are becoming is someone we all love, support, and admire. Being a Mom is tough in the best of circumstances. What's important to remember is that your children feel your love (even in "time-outs") and will always know how much you love them and will return that love. Take care of AJ! The other AJ (Ann Jones)

—Ann L Jones, November 5, 2014

## James 1:2-4

October 21, 2014

*(From The Message) Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.*

Slow down, before you imagine me with my super christian hero outfit on, this has been a hard verse for me to swallow this week. Last week, before chemo, my spirits were high and my confidence bank was loaded, ready for what laid ahead. Wednesday arrived and chemo day was a breeze. I actually felt a surge of energy, likely due from the steroids I received. I was feeling good, good enough to trim hedges that night. Thursday was ok for the most part. It wasn't until that night that it hit me pretty hard. So considering it 'a gift' was not exactly

what I was doing. It was a rough few days that seemed to go on and on and just when I thought I was coming out, nope, it sunk lower. Nausea, high fatigue, other fun stuff. Sitting here on day 6 post chemo with 5 post chemo hydrations (normally only get 1), I finally feel better. Praise God! There were many sleepless, painful moments where all I could do is pray and plead and try my darnest to praise. It wasn't easy. I was feeling pretty bad about the situation and hated thinking this was my new every 3 week norm. I know it's in those really low moments when my faith is growing even if I don't feel like it is or even if I feel like I'm running from it. And yes I wanted out of it prematurely, like 42 days ago premature. It's hard not to pray for this to be taken from me every 23 hours of the day. But that is not His plan for me, not right now. 2 Corinthians 12:9 states, "But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." I will have more weak days, even weaker than what I experienced this round but there is comfort in knowing His grace is sufficient, His power is made perfect in my weakness and His power will rest upon me. So it's ok to be weak, He prefers me that way.

On a positive note, last Friday my leg pain had gotten bad enough that my doctor ordered radiation. Since then my leg has been significantly better, like hardly taking pain meds better. This is a HUGE win for me and my family. The leg issue had gotten so debilitating that I was very limited on activities with my kids. Now it's not perfect but it's awesome and I'm so glad we did that.

So tonight for the first time in nearly a week, I sat outside and watched my children play. The weather is perfect, their faces are perfect, their squeals of joy are perfect. And for that moment, I am perfect too. Thank you God for that.

Game On!

Amanda

Prayer requests:

- To be better prepared for round two of chemo
- To bounce back quicker each round
- To let God continue His work in me and not try to stop it prematurely

## Comments

Sending you lots of love Amanda! Thinking of you!

—*Joslin Fritz, October 30, 2014*

Continually praying!

—Candace Stanaland, October 30, 2014

My thoughts and prayers are with you. Sometimes we just have to do life 5 mins at a time. Remember I'm just down the road a ways and can be there in a flash to help you or your mom or whatever you need.. God is blessing you.

—Meg Folsom, October 29, 2014

Thank you for sharing through your journal! I can only imagine how wonderful it felt to see your children play out sound, squeal and having fun!

Elizabeth

—Elizabeth Villegas, October 23, 2014

Glad to know your leg pain is better now. Praying for you!

—Ruth Doellefeld, October 23, 2014

Amanda, you are in my thoughts and prayers daily. Prayers are being lifted for you all over the world. I just hope the love and support for you and your family can give you all some comfort. When you need it, I hope you can feel all the hugs and bless your heart's being sent your way. Love you all.

—Sandra Duncan, October 23, 2014

Amanda, I feel you...your thoughts , your pain, every crappy thing you are going thru...I like you had some of the same reactions to Chemo...tired..no energy ( still have that problem)...diarrhea .felt great after Chemo and the next day too..got me on the 3rd day..I felt better on the fifth day ..our difference is mine was every week.3 weeks on 1 week off..

I didn't have the nausea like you do, just every now and then...messed up my blood....took away my taste.. What I am trying to say is all the things I went thru...I made it...God gave me the strength and will to do it...You will too. I hear it in your messages..you are strong.....stronger than you think you are..they didn't think I would make it...but god did...He held my hand all the way..I know I have a 70% chance of it returning...I look at it this way..I have a 30% chance of it not..You can do it too...no....you are going to do it...

I love you my Friend...There's not one day that you are not on my mind...I pray for you..I send my strength to you..

Just fight , fight and fight...never give up....tell yourself that you can do it....that God has his arms wrapped around you, telling you that he is with you.....??????????????????

—Flo Dudley, October 22, 2014

You have always been the more courageous of the two of us! You wore lipstick at an earlier age than me, sky diving, going to foreign countries to serve others, birthing babies at home -- you name it, you have always been up for an adventure. While this is not the adventure any of us would have dreamed for you, you are up for the

challenge! Even in those weak moments, you have more strength, grace, courage, and faith than most! Remember your army is here, fighting with you and for you! I am sending you some Sidney sunshine tomorrow! I wish I was there as well, but know that you are always present in my thoughts, prayers and heart! I love you!

—Jennifer Butler, October 22, 2014

Amanda, You take my breath away as you share your pain, your faith and your love. You are an incredible testimony. Praying that God's strength gives you comfort as you go through the days that follow your treatment. With love and prayers

—Barbara Broughton, October 22, 2014

Oh Amanda, as a Mom, too, my heart just aches for you. I know God is in control, yet, I share your fleshly concerns of being a Mom. I pray you will be content with all you are, who you are and feel his comfort and awesomeness in new ways. You are so inspiring. I covet your courage and resolve. Prayers for you, Scott and the children. ~Dawn

—Dawn Ortiz, October 22, 2014

Amanda, I worked with your Dad at Family Court for many years. He has told me of your condition and I wanted you to know you are in my prayers! I am going through chemo for breast cancer at this time myself and know how you feel. The treatments do get easier as long as you remember you are fighting a battle with the #1 leader, Jesus! I am on chemo # 6 and have 9 more to go :)

—Lisa Holbrooks, October 22, 2014

Thinking of you often, and you are always in my prayers!

—Debbie Mazzulla, October 22, 2014

AJ  
I love your courage and faith in God! he will keep you strong as well as all the prayers coming your way! Round 2 may be tough but you will get through it because of your faith and family.  
Take care.

—Cathy Nolan, October 22, 2014

You are amazing! Praying for you!

—Cindy, October 22, 2014

Thinking of you each and every day. You are still inspiring me! I am learning about Cancer and Chemo

treatment in nursing school right now, and I am so interested because of what's going on with you, I just might make an A! You are amazing! We love you.

—Sarah Stephens, October 22, 2014

We know test don't we Amanda! Because of you, I'm praising God for mine....Wow!! Thank You I love you and I really never stop thinking about you

—Dale Stephens, October 22, 2014

Amanda, you are amazing! Keep strong and positive! God is with you! We are praying for you !!! We love you. From the Herrmanns

—Erik Herrmann, October 22, 2014

We admire your courage and faith. If anyone can do this, it's you! Praying and thinking of you everyday....

—Karen and Lance McKinnon, October 22, 2014

You are constantly in my thoughts and prayers!!! Stay strong!! You've got this.

—Daniel Jones, October 22, 2014

You're a brave woman. Up here in the beautiful mountains, many churches, many friends, praying for you. Me 2.

Vote Yes on Amendment 2.

You Are perfect.! Hug and kiss the gang for me.

Lots of love

Aunt Laura

—LD Kranz, October 22, 2014

Dear Amanda, Him in you is MIGHTY! It's in our own weakness that we get to see (and focus on) His Grace shining brightly within us. YOU, my Sweet Friend are a beautiful example of that. I stand with you, Scott and your Amazing extended Family, trusting Father God to continue carrying you through this. I am in awe of Him as He shines through You. Much Love.

—debi cox, October 22, 2014

Praying for your specific requests! And YES His grace is sufficient! And where it may seem bleak on paper there is nothing impossible for our awesome God! The bible verses you quote are on point and will be our strength when we have none left. May God hear our prayers and answer them even tho we know it will be in



His time. God bless!!

—*Ivis Hernandez, October 21, 2014*

I love you sweet lady!!

—*Jennifer Ellenburg Winch, October 21, 2014*

Amanda! I am so glad that you are getting some relief in your leg! We think about you daily! Your strength will get you through this! xoxoxo

—*Rebecca Benjamin, October 21, 2014*

You continue to amaze me with your strength, courage and unwavering faith. I'm so happy that the radiation helped with your leg pain and I'll continue to pray for little to no side effects next round of chemo. You'll have to forgive me if I pray that this be over and you are completely healed prematurely. It can't happen fast enough in my opinion. I love u very much

—*Amy Mason, October 21, 2014*

Keep looking up! HE will never leave you or forsake you. I love you!!!

—*Karen Stephens, October 21, 2014*

You are an amazingly brave woman chasing after The Lord!  
I am humbled and amazed at you AJ... Your army continues to lift you up!  
Love,

The Zizmers

—*Michael Zizmer, October 21, 2014*

You are an amazingly brave woman chasing after The Lord!  
I am humbled and amazed at you AJ... Your army continues to lift you up!  
Love,

The Zizmers

—*Michael Zizmer, October 21, 2014*

So thankful for a good night and will continue to pray for your faith to be strengthened and your spirits yo be

lifted

—Michael and Kelle Zizmer, October 21, 2014

Amanda You are in our prayers everyday

—Gail Behan, October 21, 2014

Thinking of you Amanda and sending you positive energy and hugs and love and chocolate. In the form of a cookie. Slash delicious energy bar. To give you energy. Love, Joslin xoxox

—Joslin Fritz, October 21, 2014

Yayyyy love you so much!

—Nicole McMurray, October 21, 2014

## 1 Thessalonians 2:8

October 14, 2014

*So we cared for you. Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.*

This verse came to me today and I don't think it could be more fitting to describe this past weekend. 'The Acre', as it is called, is a quaint tucked away gem right off of Edgewater Drive in College Park. I didn't even know it existed until now. What an awesomely unique venue to host Sunday's event. Fit my personality to a tee. That was just the beginning. My friends had put together this awesome event full of games, bounce house, silent auction, photo booth, bbq, ridiculous desserts, an amazing band, and a powerful message all aimed to lift our spirits and encourage us as we start this new chapter in our lives. Mission accomplished! There were so many moments of pure joy for me and Scott. Friends I haven't seen in years traveled great distances to surprise me, co-workers from other cities came to town, people I didn't even know but who knew our story were there just to support us. "...we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel but our lives as well." You did exactly that and we are so blessed by your love and support. You were the church, the body of Christ, fully present, fully alive, outside the confines of the church walls, showing His love...exactly the way God intends it to be. God was present, we knew that and hope you felt it too. As we laid in bed that night reflecting on the day and all its magic, we knew that this day would be one of the few that would forever be sketched in our memory, similar to our wedding day or the birth of our children, we will cherish this day forever. Thank you.

So tomorrow is the big day. We begin Chemo <insert dramatic music>. This past week I have had 3 loading doses of OGX, the trial drug. All in all I have felt fine. Some minor nausea, light headedness and chills, but it was sparingly. Thankful for that! But chemo is a whole new ballgame. Doctors and nurses like to emphasize that "each person is unique and responds differently...maybe you will have no side effects at all." But geez, don't even let yourself read the possible side effects sheet cause there is a good chance you will bleed from the eyes. I'm just saying. Ok, that's not a true side effect but the list is quite long and daunting and can down right scare you. Good news is that I should not loose my hair. So those of you with blade in hand, ready for the head shaving party, you can put the blade down. I will let you know if we need to set a date for that. :)

There is a great chance of side effects in my future. I think that unknown part is what makes me uneasy. I cant project how this will impact my family. Have you seen my children? They are a tad clingy to say the least, well the younger two are. Don't get me wrong, they will go to some people but the list is short. And we are so blessed to have parents who are so helpful, so available and so loved by our children. But I still worry about them and how they will handle mommy feeling sick or confined to bed for longer than normal. I try not to think about it too much, or 'camp out' in those thoughts as I heard someone say today. Psalm 91:4 has provided me a lot of comfort lately, "He will cover you with his feathers and under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness will be our shield and rampart." Whew, I love the visual with this one...God's mighty wings covering me, protecting me, giving me refuge. Here is the kicker, I'm not the only one under His wings. My whole family is there with me, we are all protected and covered. He will carry us ALL through this. Not just with My health or My spirits but also for Scott, Ellie, Sam and Hosanna. When we don't know how to comfort or discipline them because we are beyond exhausted or maybe we are just having a bad parent day, He will cover the gap and make us whole. He will give us moments as a family when we know He has us cradled under His wings and when the world should be in a complete upheaval, we will feel calm and comforted. This I know is true. I look forward to meeting Him there and falling before Him in praise.

So one foot in front of the other. We move forward. We grow. We continue to be amazed by you and by Him. We have an army of support and a shield of protection as we start chemo tomorrow. We pray over our medicine before they give it to me each time. I think this is my favorite part of my treatment (that and the nap). There is something cool about offering up this medicine to God, asking for His blessing over it, knowing He has the power to use it according to His will. It gives me great peace every time. We are trying to be as intentional with this process as possible. And this is a first for me and it's a learning curve for sure. But it's good, its' really good. Don't wait, like me, to be intentional when it comes to your relationship with God. Dust off that park bench, offer Him a seat, share a coke and smile. You will be glad you did.

Oh, one last thing. A friend of mine recently experienced the awesome healing hand of God. Psst...word on the street is that He still heals. Check out their story here and be amazed. Praise God! <http://vimeo.com/108782208>

Much love to you all!

Amanda

Game on!

Prayer requests:

Energy and minimal side effects from treatment

Ability to relax, play, be silly and just enjoy my babies in the moment

To continue trusting God for complete healing

P.S. To my family that came down this weekend. I had the best time with you and cherish the memories we made. You all mean the world to me. Thank you for being here and loving on us all. We miss you already!

## Comments

I heard Acre is really cute! So glad y'all had a great time...we wish we could have been there! xoxo

*—Jenna Adams and Nick DeAngelis, October 15, 2014*

Dearest A.J. ~

I spoke to Ivonne early Sunday afternoon, got the address and name of the facility and rushed out of the door around 4:45P without my cell. I later found out that the address was 4421. I drove from one end of Edgewater to the other. I WAS SO LOST! I am so SORRY I MISSED IT. I would like to visit you when you feel up to it. Just to stop by with a little something for you and fellowship w/ you. I will email you probably tomorrow to see how you are feeling. God Bless you and I Thank GOD that you had such a WONDERFUL time. I had a song I wanted to share with you on Sunday w/the band. I was really upset when I couldn't find The Acre, I was really looking forward to seeing you and the kids. You constantly in my PRAYERS and thoughts...Always remember, GOD IS ABLE!

*—Yasmin Peoples, October 15, 2014*

I really wish we could've been there Sunday! Love you all and praying daily. By the way, Amanda, The Lord healed me several years ago miraculously of a serious stomach ailment. I know what His healing touch feels like and praying you experience it. He is a powerful and loving God and His ways are perfect.

*—Julie Spencer, October 15, 2014*

"CAMP" your thoughts on those bright, sweet, beautiful gifts from God, Ellie, Sam, and Hosanna. Much love

—Molly Carey, October 15, 2014

We love you, AJ. You are amazing! We're on our way back from Maui and will be close enough to do whatever we can. Please let us know. Allen and I are here for you.

—Ann L Jones, October 15, 2014

Prayers to you Amanda for God to do his magic in you by healing you. Many hugs from us.

—Erik Herrmann, October 14, 2014

I really loved being there this past weekend. Loved being close to you and with you on Friday during treatment. I met so many kind people that obviously love you very much. Loved the time at the pool on Saturday. Church on Sunday morning was fantastic and the event Sunday evening was unbelievably awesome! I've been praying hard for some time now for my faith to grow stronger and my trust in Him go deeper. After this weekend, God used you and those around you to answer that prayer. I came home with an overwhelming desire and hunger to go deeper in my walk with Christ. I want what I saw you and so many others have. Thank you for that. It was so inspiring.

I can't wait to come back soon....Continually praying and thinking of all of you.

Love you, Dale

—Dale Stephens, October 14, 2014

Great post, AJ! Here are two little videos I made documenting parts of the weekend:

<http://youtu.be/VxgIBoOc1Qk> and <http://youtu.be/FXOrCtCFNFA?list=UUtdeogfgB6wpC6IeIxzYZsQ>

—Ryan Brady, October 14, 2014

Praying for you and your family

—lea martin, October 14, 2014

Still praying for you....still thinking about you everyday...Yes everyone is different even though a lot of us were having somewhat the same drugs...It was powerful drugs I had..I like you was scared of the unknown...yes..you may have days you might not be feeling so great. Chemo does that to you...it plays with your body..It really messed up my White Count and Red cell count...really didn't have the bad effects that I thought I would have...most was tired, no energy and loss of strength. The one other thing it did was messed up my taste buds...nothing taste good..or no taste at all..still have a little of that. Did not have to stay in bed , would lay on the couch and watch TV a lot .they had prescribed me four different meds that I took for nausea at home after Chemo..I only ever had to take #1and 2. 3 only a couple times ..4 never. I did lose all my hair..( best thing was no shaving for almost two years or fussing with my hair lol) It was like a big support group every week with

each other because all of us had some kind of GYN Cancer. That helped a lot to be able to talk to others who was going thru the same thing..I hope you are one of the ones that get thru this without all the bad effects...God will give you the peace and comfort you need to get thru this...Stay strong..I wish I lived close enough to be able share and give you my strength to keep on keeping on..You are going to beat this thing..  
I love you my Friend???????????????

—Flo Dudley, October 14, 2014

God has prepared you and your family for this very journey. You are extraordinary and your faith can move mountains. We know He will fill in those gaps when you are unable to. May God's love and peace overflow into your hearts so much that your naps and rest time are a like a vacation in His presence. ?You are special and deeply loved! ? Always praying.

—Allison Vollenweider and family, October 14, 2014

Sending you prayers and hugs! You continue to inspire me through your faith and positive attitude. :)

—patti barnard, October 14, 2014

Sending love and prayers. Your faith , intention and beautiful spirit shines through in every post. Love you.

—karen demuth, October 14, 2014

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Sending love and prayers. Your faith , intention and beautiful spirit shines through in every post. Love you.

—karen demuth, October 14, 2014

I am so glad we were together this weekend and I had the chance to experience the overwhelming love and support you have there! I felt God's presence at the party and many times throughout the weekend. Watching your face during church, as you sang and lifted your hands in praise, I knew you were under his wings, secure and encouraged. I love you for so many reasons, but your faith and strength are at the top of the list! I know you

worry about what the kids will remember about this journey. They will remember the lessons of grace, humility, love, laughter, vulnerability, strength, emotional presence and faith that you show them everyday! They will also remember that they got to eat a lot more desserts than usual!!! You are an amazing mom! You have been so from the moment you became pregnant with Ellie. We are with you on this journey! I love you and I have never been more proud to be your sister!

—Jennifer Butler, October 14, 2014

I love this! I love the part offering of the medicines to The Lord so he can bless them so he can do his magic his will. I will definitely be part of that magic prayer as well for your healing process my friend. Love you bunches. Go in peace stay strong you got this!!!!

—Eva Demas, October 14, 2014

## 2 Timothy 1:7

October 7, 2014

*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

This past week or so of waiting for test results has been a good one. It has given us time to just be still and wait. But yesterday the wait was over. The test results came back and came back much quicker than we expected (thank you FL CI for that). I do not have the marker needed to participate in the specific trial we were hopeful for. And the second test did show I have a specific mutation, RET. Turns out it's very rare among the lung cancer community, approximately 1%. Leave it to me to have some odd ball mutation. Good news is that it was identified and some really smart folks out there are working on drugs specific to this mutation. The doctor's office called around 4 yesterday to say I would start chemo this morning. Whoa whoa whoa, hold up a minute. Yes I knew this day was coming and yes I knew this was most likely the path we were heading towards but it felt so sudden to me. I hadn't really had many emotional moments in the past week and there I was with phone in hand crying. It was like my pretend world of no cancer was ending and the reality of treatment was upon me. I expressed to my doctor, whom I really respect and appreciate, that I need to talk through this one more time before we start. This morning we sat together, discussed treatment options one more time. I can only imagine how tired he is of that conversation but he does it with a smile. We decided to participate in a different trial which combines the standard of care (chemo) along with the trial drug (OGX). Tomorrow I will be sitting in a chair beginning this beautiful process towards healing. I Remember that book I mentioned to you in the last entry? Well it's full of healing scriptures that we have been reading over and over again. God's word is true and if I believe that, then I know that He will heal me. If you feel moved to pray these scriptures along with me, you can start here on page

45. <http://hopefaithprayer.com/books/Healed%20of%20Cancer%20-%20Osteen.pdf>

But fear, oh yes that ugly thing that creeps into your head and forecasts an miserable future, it's got to go. Fear is not from God but from the opposite. So when those nasty thoughts come along and my breath gets short and my chest tight, I repeat 2 Timothy 1:7 a few times along with some other verses that remind me that God will not forsake me and He has not given me a life of fear but of love. Ok...exhale...I can breathe now. I'm not pretending that it's easy cause it's not, but I will keep working on it until it is. Or maybe I'll just shake it off as Taylor Swift would say. BTW, TS, thank you for a fantastically catchy song. :)

I'm so blessed to have equal minded people in my life speaking scriptures into my life and standing with me in prayer. For my husband that allows me to cry and be angry at the same time yet continues to lift me up day after day without ceasing. Man, we are overwhelmed with the blessings of so many people. I need to do one entry where I just write out each and every person's name that has blessed us but I'm thinking that's impossible as it's beyond what we even know. I hope one day to show you just as much love. Your generosity and gestures have taught us so much.

Something that has been on my heart this past week is the image you may have of me. You see, I'm just AJ or Amanda, depending on how you know me. I'm nothing special or out of the ordinary. And for some of you that have known me for a very long time, I'm sure these words of mine are surprising. 30 days ago I would not have written entries like these. My faith was there, somewhere in my head, but it hadn't found it's way to my heart. For years I have felt that way. I would see people at church who have that extra special something about them. You just knew it...them and God, they got a special thing going on. I'm pretty sure they audibly hear God speak to them, in a cool friendship kind of way, cause they are tight like that. How else do they have such confidence, such boldness and such peace? I wanted that so bad. I have even wondered many times before now, what was it going to take for me to let God into my heart, to open all doors, all windows and just let Him in? So here I am now, 30 days later with my world flipped upside down. But that fresh breeze is coming in as my doors, windows and heart are wide open and ready to receive the full love of God. I feel a little cheap that it took something so scary as cancer to let that happen but whatever, I'm here now and ready. Do I think God brought this on me? No. Do I think He will use it for good, for his glory? Absolutely! What other choice do I have? Without my faith I am left to approach this disease with what true hope? But it is still a decision I have to make each day. I choose God. I choose His promises. I choose His healing. I choose His love. And because of my choices, I am encouraged, loved and at peace. And because of my choices, He grows closer to my heart every day. I'm not perfect and I'm probably still not the person in church mentioned above but I am His and nothing else matters.

Prayer requests:

- That the drug we receive will be the drug and not a placebo. Don't worry, we will still receive the standard of care, just possibly not the extra stuff.
- Discernment over how to explain this to our children, mainly Ellie.
- For our doctor and medical support staff.

Much love to you all. We are really looking forward to seeing you this sunday!

Amanda



Game On!

## Comments

I pray for you and your family that God gives all of you comfort and peace throughout this ordeal. Just know you have more people than you know praying and claiming your healing.

—Sandra Duncan, October 12, 2014

Amanda, I pray for you everyday that God will heal you so you can raise those 3 precious children. The Lord still works miracles.

—Peggy Wicker, October 11, 2014

AJ - You are such an amazing and strong woman. With all that you are going through, YOU continue to inspire us. Truly amazing. You are in my thoughts and prayers for a full recovery and guidance for your doctors. Your UBS Family is with you every step of the way. Much love to you and your family during this difficult time.

—Kathy Corrigan, October 9, 2014

Beautifully written, Amanda. You are an amazing testimony to Christ. And that is why we are here..to bring Him glory. Praying for you daily.  
Julie, Ray and Cole

—Julie Spencer, October 9, 2014

Praying for the PERFECT combination of healing. If it's the new drug, then let it be. I know God heals. I pray for you throughout the day. My heart is heavy for you at times and joyous others. I expressed my feelings for you to an elder and he told me to read Hebrews 11. I hope to find comfort in God's word with you. You are inspiring when it is the last thing anyone can expect from you. This, my friend, is true faith.

—Dawn Ortiz, October 8, 2014

Thinking and praying for you and your family .. (cancer is words I never thought I would hear in 2013 ) but I did my whole world stoped , I had thyroid cancer. I just did not understand why , but know after all I've been through the the question is why not me ? I know its scary and your mind is racing , but take time to breath and know God is at work . Our time is not Gods time . You will be in my prayers ...

—*lea martin, October 8, 2014*

AJ you are amazing! Prayers coming your way for you and your family as you start your treatment.

—*Gloria Kelley, October 8, 2014*

So inspiring, again. Everytime I read these I am reminded of how great our God is. Praying, praying, praying!! Love you Amanda.

—*Sarah Stephens, October 8, 2014*

You are amazing! Your words are so true and beautifully spoken. I think about you and your family often. You are in my prayers!

—*Jennifer Fortner, October 8, 2014*

Praying for you Amanda...I don't think there is a day that I don't think about you...I think it is because I went thru some of the same things you are going thru...shock..having your world turned upside down..labs and Chemo for eighteen months..seems like that's all I did..I also had stage iv Cancer...I wasn't suppose to make it..but I did with God, Family , Friends and people I didn't know Praying for me...I never gave up and won't . You are going to do the same..you also have the same courage I have....just fight, fight, fight, never give in to this horrible time in your life....I am going to tell you..God gave me peace at the beginning of my journey when I really needed it most..I will never forget that day...Never forget ,.God will never leave you..he will be with you every step holding your hand.saying come on AJ...you can do it..you will feel him, I promise. I am pulling for you.Praying for you..Praying for you to never give up no manner what. My love to you and your wonderful Family..????????????????????

—*Flo Dudley, October 8, 2014*

Amanda, You are such an amazing woman! I am sending thoughts of healing and love to you as you begin treatment!

—*Joslin Fritz, October 8, 2014*

I am praying for you my beautiful friend!! Your words and your faith are ministering to my heart!! God is using YOU to breathe fresh air into my spirit (and into the spirit of others). And, God does give us more than we can handle sometimes, because He wants us to be FULLY dependent on Him and Him alone. He wants our callouses to be on our knees and not on our feet. God wants to take our burdens from us and carry them completely. (I don't know about you, but I have a bad habit of taking something to God, laying it down at his feet, walking away, then turning around real quick and picking it back up to carry it again. Why? Why??) I am blessed to be your friend. I love you to pieces and am praying for you throughout every day! {{hugs}}

—*Jennifer Ellenburg Winch, October 8, 2014*

You are amazing in your faith. The scripture that I repeated over and over was "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." For my treatments I would plug in Casting Crowns starting with "I'll praise You in the storm." You know where to find me allow me to help in any way. God bless

—Meg Folsom, October 8, 2014

Your mention of wanting \*that\* faith and wondering what it would take reminded me of the song by Sidewalk Prophets called "Keep Making Me". If you're not familiar with the words, the lyrics are here: <http://www.klove.com/music/artists/sidewalk-prophets/songs/keep-making-me-lyrics.aspx>. There have been many times that I've sang along & thought "yes, I want to be broken, so I can be healed". And, then I stop and say - wait, what does that mean? Do I really want to be broken or just "kind of" broken? Do I have that kind of faith?

I hate so much that you are going through this, but He is using you to reach others who need to know Him. You are definitely \*that\* person, and believe me - even before this journey - you were that person. I could see your faith the first time I met you.

You are such an inspiration! You are a shining angel and God is using you in mighty ways, sister!

—Much love, Stephanie Martin, October 8, 2014

Praying without ceasing. You are an inspiration.

—Darby Ramseys sister Palmer, October 8, 2014

We are all with you in this battle, AJ, and we all love you!!!

—Elly Brady, October 8, 2014

AJ, it never matters how or when you come to God, the bible says come as you are. I'm so thankful that your heart is full of praise and faith. I'm praying for you always. Love you!

—Jackie Fobbs, October 8, 2014

May God continue to do a great and mighty work in your heart as you fully abandon yourself to Him. You are beautiful and God's glory is already shining through you! Praying always for you and your family. ?

—Allison Vollenweider, October 8, 2014

AJ you now have a strong faith and will in God and that will be what holds you together through all of this! I like what your friend Nancy Parada said, "We all should live like we have cancer and have that relationship that you speak about. So often we put God on a shelf for only difficult times. " That is so true!! THINKing and PRAYing for you always.

—Cathy Nolan, October 8, 2014

AJ - you're amazing! John 14:27 My prayer is that you may find that peace. Hang tough - you have prayer warriors behind you-more than you could ever imagine!! Love ya!!

—Cathy Anderson, October 8, 2014

Amanda, you are an inspiration. I love reading your posts. I'm with you reading those scriptures over you and your family. God hears every word and He is faithful forever!!!!

—Bethany Martin, October 8, 2014

Amanda. I just read your post, you have a beautiful soul. I will pray for you and your family each and every day. Stay strong!

—Terrie High, October 8, 2014

Amanda, I am thinking of you and praying for you and your family. Keep exercising your faith, and stay strong. See you on Sunday :-)

—Ruth Doellefeld, October 8, 2014

AJ. You are beautiful. My heart and prayers are with you this morning as you start your journey towards healing. See you Sunday.

Karen Demuth

—karen demuth, October 8, 2014

I am so touch by your words and courage. I can feel God's presence when I read your posting. We all should live like we have cancer and have that relationship that you speak about. So often we put God on a shelf for only difficult times. My prayer is that I will keep Him as close as you are. May He bless you and your family and keep you in His care.

—NANCY PARADA, October 8, 2014

You are in our prayers and thoughts as you begin this journey...what else is there to say but as you say...game on!!

—Joan Rost and Joan Pendergast, October 8, 2014

Amanda, You are so strong. I will be thinking of you tomorrow. We are here for you with whatever you need!!  
xoxoxoxo

—Rebecca Benjamin, October 8, 2014

You're an amazing soul Amanda! I'm so proud of how you have been so strong and steady in your faith. What an example for those around you. You will beat this.....no doubt about it! Praying for all the things listed above and so much more. I love you very much!

—Amy Mason, October 7, 2014

Love you . You have always been extraordinary. Xoxoxo  
Kaye bobby & emily

—Kaye Kaye, October 7, 2014

## Psalm 46:10

October 2, 2014

*Be still and know that I am God*

This verse and verses about trust have come before me many times this week whether through my readings or from text messages from you (which I love BTW). We were hopeful to receive two test results this week. One for genetic mutations that may have targeted therapies and one to determine if my tumor has a PDL marker that would allow me to participate in an exciting clinical trial. However on wednesday we were told that it would likely be the end of next week before we knew the results. Ahhhhhh, waiting. I'm kind of an immediate person, not a be still person. When I want something, I want it now and if you cant do it then I'll do it myself. It's just my m.o. But there is soooooo much out of my control with this darn thing. Yes, control, that's another piece of my m.o. You see, God knows what we need even before we do. All week he sent these verses to me to remind me to trust Him. And while I want a clear answer that points me in the right direction of my treatment plan and yes, I want it NOW, I will pause, be still and know that He is God. He will not let me down and He is in control. I know many of you are very worried about us waiting another single day and I get that. Just know that I have peace with this and I can only attribute that to Him and I'm so thankful for that. We are doing the most we can holistically to treat this until we start any medical treatment. Hopeful for the difference that is making.

In the meantime we will soak in the daily blessings we continue to receive. As I write I am covered with a prayer shawl that was knitted specifically for me by a women's guild from the Most Holy Trinity Parish. With each knot they prayed for me by name and petitioned God for my healing. I'm so honored to receive such a gift.

And being such a cold natured person, this is the perfect 'treatment' gift for me! Being wrapped in prayer has a new meaning for me.

I also had the awesome pleasure of meeting one of the teachers from Ellie's school today. Just last year she was diagnosed with colon cancer. A young woman with young children just like me. She's a first grade teacher. So imagine the genuine sweetness that you expect from that and multiply that by 57 (cause 56 just isn't enough). She shared with me her experience and her determination to beat this. That this is NOT of God and would not destroy her but in fact it gave her the opportunity to share her story with others and show God's blessings and grace through difficult times. What more could you aim to accomplish? Her bubbly personality is infectious. At one point she said, "by no means would I want you to have cancer but I'm so excited to see how God uses you." This is exactly how I feel and love hearing it spoke back to me. It's fantastic encouragement. She also gave me a small book, *Healed of Cancer*, that I'm stoked to read and plan to distribute to all who wish to read along with me. Book club anyone? :)

We still have not explained my condition to the kids. Ellie is the only one that would really grasp the conversation. Sam would likely get distracted mid sentence, tackle Hosanna until she fought back enough to get him to leave her alone. She would then run to the closest climbing structure (albeit a bar stool, closet shelves, or kitchen table) to keep me on my toes. What I'm trying to say is, I don't see that conversation going very far. I imagine we will talk with Ellie alone and we are still praying over the words to use that provide comfort and assurance and not fear. She's very tender hearted and already knows something is wrong with me but she thinks it's just my leg. She has been learning a lot in school about helping others and she is doing an awesome job of doing that with me. Unfortunately the other two haven't gotten the memo yet about that. Maybe it's because they can't read? I'm working on that. The bible clearly states that He will not give us more than we can handle. Well I'm feeling pretty special that God thinks I'm super strong and all but really God, did I have to have cancer at the same time my 3yr old loses all sense of self-control and my 18th month old decides to start a career as a stunt double? Couldn't we have waited until they were highly respectful teenagers with a heart to serve their mama? That's wishful thinking of course. <sigh> Back to the book Amanda, back to the book. God's plans are higher than mine. Lean not on my own understanding. You get the picture. It's fuzzy to me sometimes but I still focus on it until it becomes clear.

Thank you all time and time again for your continuous prayers, your meals, gifts, cards, sweet hugs, helping around the house, edging the driveway, encouraging words, and soooooo much more that you have done. We are covered in love and that's a pretty cool place to be. Like the teacher said, I wouldn't wish this on any of you but man, it's cool how people will love you fully in times like this. I'm mean really, we are not that cool or special but you treat us like that. So thank you for that!

Prayer request:

Treatment discernment

Energy to enjoy the nights with my family

Pain free sleep

For our spirits to remain high

Looking forward to a healthy, sunshine filled weekend with the family that is full of laughter, new memories,

and cuddle time. I wish the same for yours!

Love you all!

Amanda

Game on!

## Comments

Amanda, you are such a strong and faithful person. I am praying for God's healing and thinking of you and your family always. Ryan (and his brother, Andrew) go to Annunciation Catholic Academy and the school has morning prayer each morning in the courtyard before school starts. A prayer petition was said for you yesterday morning. We are all praying for you. Ryan misses Ellie and his preschool friends. Continued prayers for you.  
Love, Lori

*—Lori Mowery, October 7, 2014*

Thank you for being so transparent:) you make my cry one minute and laugh another! Looking forward to seeing you this weekend:))!! Praying-

*—Candace Stanaland, October 6, 2014*

I look forward to your journal entries. The Holy Spirit is answering prayers moment by moment in your life and it's exciting to read. Thank you for your openness and vulnerability.

Trust GOD from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for GOD 's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to GOD! Run from evil! Your body will glow with health, your very bones will vibrate with life!

(Proverbs? ??:?5-8MSG)

*—Brandi Crane, October 6, 2014*

Love you, and my thoughts and prayers are with you and all of your family members. Your strength is amazing.

*—roy high, October 4, 2014*

Stay strong AJ - We continue to keep you and your family in our thoughts and prayers - Love you, Kathy

—Kathy Corrigan, October 4, 2014

Amanda, We don't know each other well in the literal sense. However, I've known Scott since his first day on this earth (first from my dear Aunt Ellie B., and then from John & Barbara, and of course, from personal experience. I attended your wedding. I basked in the joy of the births of your children. You are my family, and I love you. I pray for your complete recovery every day. You and Scott are a fine example of what makes up a Christian family, and I am so grateful for your faith in God. God is in control. You will remain in my thoughts and prayers throughout this journey. We'll be cheering for you on the sidelines every step of the way. Wishing you God's abundant blessings.

—Nancy Ranson, October 4, 2014

Amanda, it was my privilege to get to meet you and speak with you. I am praying those healing scriptures for you and your family. Please know that even though we have just met, we are part of the same communities, God's and ICS, and I feel connected in this way. I am here to serve you and your family in any way I can. I hope you have a wonderful weekend with you sweet family!

—Bethany Martin, October 3, 2014

Sign me up for the book club. Love you!

—ellen clayton, October 3, 2014

When I hear this song, I think of you! I love you!

Oceans by United

You call me out upon the waters  
The great unknown, where feet may fail  
And there I find You in the mystery  
In oceans deep, my faith will stand

And I will call upon Your name  
And keep my eyes above the waves  
When oceans rise  
My soul will rest in Your embrace  
For I am Yours, and You are mine

Your grace abounds in deepest waters  
Your sovereign hand will be my guide  
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me



You've never failed, and You won't start now

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders  
Let me walk upon the waters  
Wherever You would call me  
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander  
And my faith will be made stronger  
In the presence of my Savior

—Jennifer Butler, October 3, 2014

I sent you an email to your work address a few weeks ago. Did you get it?

—Julie Adamson, October 3, 2014

You are winning already, AJ! Your strength and faith and genius continue to shine through the tough times.  
You go!

—Jean Cross, October 3, 2014

Oh, you take after your aunt in many ways! But you are much stronger! Being still and patient is hard. You are in God's hands! We continue to pray for healing and your other requests. We love you!

—Karen Stephens, October 3, 2014

Hey Kiddo! May God continue to walk with you every step of the way and continue to bless you with love & support. And may he provide you with gentle but encouraging words to give to the kids. Love ya.

—Alicia Smith, October 3, 2014

More and more prayers are send your way several times per day. From our family and from my entire school.

—Yaiza Ramos, October 3, 2014

Beautiful and inspiring AJ. HE is with you!

—Newton Jones, October 3, 2014

Love this girlie - you are a rock star....so crazy that you have a stunt double too:) Love you girlie.

—Nicole McMurray, October 3, 2014

It was so good to see you yesterday and give you a hug! I love reading your journals and how you know that

God is with you every step of the way! It's great to know that you met Mrs. Martin and received such words of encouragement and love! I am praying along with soo many others for you and your sweet family! I pray for discernment for your decisions, your prayer requests, and of course, I am praying for your sweet Ellie!! xoxo

—Michelle Bannister, October 3, 2014

You are so AMAZING! Lots of prayers coming your way!

—Amy Yohe, October 3, 2014

That was so inspiring to me. God is already using you. Praying hard for you and your family Amanda! Love you.

—Sarah Stephens, October 3, 2014

AJ you are so strong and so dedicated, with all the prayer warriors and your powerful bond with God, you will shine and beat this monster to the ground !! I' m praying for good news for you .

—Cathy Nolan, October 3, 2014

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AJ you are so strong and so dedicated, with all the prayer warriors and your powerful bond with God, you will shine and beat this monster to the ground !! I' m praying for good news for you .

—Cathy Nolan, October 3, 2014

Praying for you sweet, strong and faithful lady! Your posts and the love surrounding you is beautiful. This weekend, specifically Sunday, is supposed to feel just like fall (for FL). I hope you can do something fun with your kiddos!

—Elizabeth Boyd, October 3, 2014

your posts are a inspiration. And you made me chuckle out loud with your descriptions of your children

—Judy Judge, October 2, 2014

Absolutely love reading your posts....they inspire me, amaze me, encourage me, and crack me up. So glad you got to talk with Mrs. Martin!!! What an awesome perspective and encouragement! Praying hard for discernment:) We love ya'll tons!

—Elizabeth Chaves, October 2, 2014

Simply put.....I love you

—Amy Mason, October 2, 2014

## John 3:30

September 28, 2014

*He must increase, but I must decrease*

Ah, the days roll by and the reality of this sinks in more and more, yet somehow it still feels like I'm watching this from above, separated from the truth. I see the fear in other people's eyes when they hear my diagnosis. Sometimes I wonder if they are more scared than me. Well, that probably isn't possible but my self-protection mechanism is in full force and preventing me from the thought of anything other than a positive outcome in my future. But what worries me is the present. This pain in my leg that at times is debilitating. The energy to run and play with my children, laying down with them at night or rocking Hosanna to sleep, it just isn't an option right now. The idea that treatment very likely will kick my butt for a solid week each and every cycle. What effect does ALL of THIS have on my whole family? I know this is a season, possibly a long one, but I'm praying hard that my broken record of "Mommy cant play/run/lay down with you right now" will move to the second song and does not become a memory for them that they cant move past. Or that their frustration in my condition leaves them feeling separated from me. These are the things that tug hard on my heart.

Man, I can't even tell you how deep and wide my prayers have become. They have moved beyond the simplicity that I have hidden behind for years.. This past week I was blessed by Mike & Kelle who organized a prayer night where about 20 friends gathered to pray over my health, my spirits, my energy and my family. It was a powerful powerful night. To be in the room with individuals completely sold out for Jesus and fully believing in the healing powers of our God...wow, it was awesome. One individual that night discussed the importance of praise/petition balance. That stopped me in my tracks. How often in this journey, or any difficult time in my life for that matter, have I spent the majority of my prayers pleading with God for healing, protection, whatever. Only after would I follow it up with a quick "Oh yeah, and thanks for all the awesome stuff you have done." Ok, so it's not that casual, I do try to sound a bit more poetic and use my best christianese. But really, is my heart praising Him for just being Him regardless of what He has or has not done

for me? No. Most of my prayers relate to how He has blessed me. Geez, I knew I was self-absorbed at times but now I see it in a different light. Lets recap here, The man that created the earth and the stars, who created lightening and rainbows, who clothed every flower, who breathed life into every creature including myself, including my husband and my children deserves a bit more praise than a quick hi five for being awesome. More of Jesus, less of me. More of Jesus, less of me. Thank you ICS for putting that verse in my heart before the battle began. My armor of God's word is my shield of protection and it's only growing stronger and larger.

I wish I could send you all a huge hug that lingered for a bit, the kind where you aren't quite sure when to let go because the other person is still holding on. The kind where you pull back and look in each other's eyes and the silence communicates it all. I feel like that is the only way I could tell you how truly blessed we feel by all you have done. I would be remiss if I did not specifically thank my parents. They have been here since day 1, holding my hand every step of the way. They have always been selfless when it comes to family. Dropping everything to care for someone else. Having them here has helped us more than words can explain. It has removed the simple stress points from my day like fixing lunches, cleaning playrooms, folding laundry, etc. I really cannot thank them enough. I only pray that one day I will be able to show my children and grandchildren the same kind of love you show us and when they ask me why, I will tell them it's because my parents loved me completely and served me in any way they could, and that I want them to know what that feels like.

And I so thankful for fun distractions. My best friends from high school, Eva & Kaye dumped their families for the weekend and embarked on a 9 hr drive to hang with me. We had the best time creating new memories with my kids and they absolutely loved having them here as much did I. Friends like these are so good for your soul. They know your history, they know your heart and they stick with you even when you make big mistakes. They make you laugh until you pee your pants and they help clean it up when you do. Thank you for those kind of laughs.

And oh yeah, I'm extra thankful for surprises. My other life long best friend, Mary, took my hard drive that crashed a few years ago and did the leg work to find someone who recovered 2 years worth of photos. Two years worth...that was basically every breathing moment of Sam's first two years of life. He is already the middle child, the last thing I need is to hear for the rest of my life is how I lost his first 2 years worth of photos. Yes Sam, I do love you just as much as your sisters, I just screwed up your digital history. I hope you understand. Future drama is officially avoided. Thank you Mary and awesome IT guy!

And most important...Thank you Jesus for being my savior. For creating beauty in everything. For giving me the ultimate gift, your ultimate sacrifice. For knitting me together and knowing every triumph and failure I would face. Thank you for your grace that you have given me time and time and time again. Thank you for not giving up on me no matter how many times I pushed you away. Thank you for your plans for my life, for my future...for I know they are GOOD. For loving me for exactly who I am yet loving me even more that you would not leave me there. How Great Thou Are, How Great Thou Are!

Learning, growing, Praising more each day,

Amanda

P.S. Oh, geez, totally forgot to say that chemo will not start tomorrow. Pretty big news for those of you that sign on just to see how treatment is going. Sorry about leaving that out and making you wait for the P.S. to find out. Woops. We decided to wait for additional tests to come back and will likely start treatment one week from now. Next entry I'll dive more into that. For today, it was just reflection time for me. Thanks for listening as always.

Game on!

## Comments

Go tell it on the mountain over the fields and everywhere, go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is Lord... I will continually pray for the Broughton family.

—*Gwendolyn Carter Thomas, October 3, 2014*

AJ just know that I am praying everyday. Keep the faith. healing is yours Jesus paid the price. Love you.

—*Diane Lego, October 2, 2014*

I'm a friend of your S-I-L, Meredith Wilson! I'm praying for your continued strength and health. God is capable of miracles! Your words are inspiring. Thanks for sharing your heart. Keep the faith!  
Hugs. -Kristen Kirk

—*Kristen Kirk, October 1, 2014*

Thank you for sharing your story. We are praying for you and your beautiful family.

—*Tanya Hunter, October 1, 2014*

Game on AJ!

The Burrell Family is praying for you every day.

—*Jim Burrell, October 1, 2014*

I love you girl! Please know that I am fervently praying for you daily! Keep on praising God through this storm!!! You are an encouragement to others!

—*Jennifer Ellenburg Winch, September 29, 2014*

Hi Amanda,

You haven't heard from me because you have so many other more important things to do with your time! Like loving your children, going to the doctors, meeting with church members, coworkers, family and friends who are with you, going to the doctor's some more, going for more tests and lots and lots and lots of praying. I talk to your mother a good bit so I'm keeping up. I told her that she has to know in her heart that this cancer smancer ( new made up word) is not going to get you. I have no doubt in my heart and soul that you are going to be alright. Let me say that again. I have no doubt about your healing. I prayer several times everyday for you and your family and also for your doctors. You will be in the right place at the right time. Yes, you have many churches, prayers groups and prayer angels all over the United States praying for you.

For the past 38 years as I've watched you grow, I have always been so happy to be a small part of your life. You are such an accomplished, beautiful woman - always inspiring and sweet. Your kind, gentle soul lifts everyone around you. I can speak for my parents that they have always felt that way too.

So listen cancer smancer, Wicker Women are strong and a force to be reckoned with! I love you so much. I'm sending you a hug right now.

—*ellen clayton, September 29, 2014*

Love you AJ!! And yes indeed, GAME ON!!

—*julie fage, September 29, 2014*

Praying for you..think about you every day...So much I can relate to..Stay strong ????????

—*Flo Dudley, September 29, 2014*

Amanda,

I just wanted to let you know, that I have my entire family praying for you. I know God is looking down on you. I know Chemo will be hard, but I know will overcome it. I feel it in my heart.

—*Carolina Wilson, September 29, 2014*

Sorry AJ. I meant AJ!!!

—*karen demuth, September 29, 2014*

AK. Thank you for sharing. Your words are a gift. Your beautiful. Love  
Karen

—*karen demuth, September 29, 2014*

Thank you for blessing me this morning.

—*Lanie Ligon Sandridge, September 29, 2014*

Darling Amanda: Just a note to let you know that you've been added to a couple of wonderful powerful prayer lists all rooting for your perfect health and giving thanks for you and all you do. Rev.Cath DePalma, who officiated at Aunt Betty's celebration memorial last year, has added you to their gratitude attitude perfect wellness prayer group. And my dear friend, Gail Johnson, up here in North Clakalakky (as John B calls it) has gathered the healing forces of Wright Creek Baptist church prayers for the triumph of your loving strength, warrior spirit and your splendid, boundless vigor. You are the light; so filled with impeccable love and compassion, your positive energy launches the broken cells far off into the universe (kablooeey!), making even more room within you for robust fitness and outstanding stamina. You are exquisite and superb and very much loved. Aunt Laura

—*LD Kranz, September 29, 2014*

AJ,  
Thank you for taking time to blog. Jesus's goodness and God's glory shine through!

Here is a link to a blog I wrote while healing from stage 2 breast cancer. Staging and medical stuff is different, obviously, but I have been told the hints on coping with chemo, radiation, surgery, and healing have been helpful to others. God bless you and family. much love, sara <http://sarawhiting.blogspot.com>

—*Sara Whiting, September 29, 2014*

Thanks for sharing your reflections and thoughts. So glad you are surrounded by your babies, hubby and amazing parents. I know first hand how much they love you and I'm so glad they are to comfort you all. God has given you his dove, to let it soar in your spirit, your heart and your soul. Romans 5:5: "And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." Let his wisdom, keep you, teach you, lift you and bless you now and always. Such is the covenant that God the Father makes with his children who are much beloved by him. Romans 8:16: "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." Be blessed and kept always, praying continuously.. Love you

—*Jackie Fobbs, September 29, 2014*

You take my breath away with your words and authenticity. I cannot wait to see you in a couple of weeks and give you a lingering hug! In those difficult moments, remember what Grandmother Wicker used to always say, "Lord, help me to twist." The kids may remember this time in their life, but will remember it for the strong faith you showed them, the unwavering love you have for them, and the amazing mom you are! I love you all!

—Jennifer Butler, September 29, 2014

Thank you for reminding me that Jesus deserves more than a high 5 for being awesome and that as Christians it should always be more of Him and less of me. You are a remarkable young woman. Praying you feel His presence always.

—NANCY PARADA, September 29, 2014

"Shout to The Lord...nothing compares to the promise I have in you" is the song that rose in my heart as I read your post, Amanda. Please know that you and all your family are in my daily prayers, and give your Mom (my bff) one of those lingering hugs!

—Barbara Goggans, September 29, 2014

You're testimony genuinely humbled me and touched my heart. Thank you for that neighbor! :)

—patti barnard, September 29, 2014

You amaze me constantly with your strength, courage and faith. You are my hero! I'm so proud to be your aunt and friend. We understand each other in ways that I love.....mostly humor. I love you very much

—Amy Mason, September 28, 2014

Your testimony is already beautiful and points me to Jesus! Thank you. We are lifting you up to our awesome Lord!

—Julie Spencer, September 28, 2014

This journal entry is my favorite so far. Eye opening stuff Amanda. We love you and will continue to pray. Thank you for taking time out of your day to bless me and others with the Lord's words flowing through you.

—Rachel Nejem, September 28, 2014

Your words touch my heart Amanda! Praying for you, Scott and those precious babies:))!

—Candace Stanaland, September 28, 2014

You rock girl! Love you and praying for you!



—Nicole McMurray, September 28, 2014

Prayers from us are still as strong as you are. Your strength is remarkable!

—Yaiza Ramos, September 28, 2014

LOVE. The Lord shines thru you sooooo beautifully:)

—Elizabeth Chaves, September 28, 2014

I love reading your post!! "More of Jesus, less of me" such a good reminder for many of us! Thank you for your transparency during your journey! I find comfort in your words and positive attitude! I hope you continue to find strength in our prayers! Daily prayers for your family!!

—Tessa Stanaland, September 28, 2014

You are so beautiful...inside and out!!! Wishing you well with the chemo. (A friend of Amy Mason in Charlotte)

—Karen Platt, September 28, 2014

Girl! Your words speak into souls. You have a beautiful gift of self reflection, that through it all, brings us all closer to knowing Jesus in a more intimate fashion. I don't "know" your history, but I do know that your story is worth sharing. You bring light to my day when I should be lighting yours. You make me consider my specific prayer and praise as I reach out for yours. You bring humor into the most dreadful of circumstances. You are a Gift from God through whom others will love him more. I pray for you, but I also praise you! Thank you for being so willing to let us in to your story. You are a blessing worthy to be blessed!

—Carla Hall, September 28, 2014

You are a precious soul. I love you.

—Karen Stephens, September 28, 2014

## John 14:13-14

September 21, 2014



*Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.*

How comforting to believe that whatever I bring before the Lord in petition, He will grant. This weekend has been great, really great. I have had more hands laid on me in prayer and petition than I could have ever imagined. From a girls night out to my sunday school class and my church elders visiting me a few hours ago. I have heard from people that I lost touch with or haven't seen in years. That can be somewhat awkward right? So it's been 10 years since we spoke...uhhhh, so what have you been up too? What do you say? I certainly dont want it to be all about me. I mean, I feel bad for them almost because it's got to be weird to make that call. What I'm saying is, I get it and I appreciate you stepping over the awkwardness to call and encourage me. I was reading some comments on a donation page a friend set up and there was one from my favorite college professor. I haven't found him on any social media for years so how did he hear this news? I don't know but I'm so glad to hear from him. I also cant help but think about people I lost touch with that I really want to call and say hi too. Not in a Debbie-Downer-guess-what's-new-with-me-kind-of-way. I just feel like there are people that were precious to me in my past and I hate that they are not around anymore. Man! Why does it take something as stupid as cancer to make you reach out and really love someone? I guess I have been floating through life on my fairy tale hot air balloon with only fluffy white clouds and care bears on the horizon. Fully expecting plenty of moments to show love to those near to me. You never expect something like this to happen and damnit you shouldn't either!

Thank you to my transformer angels that decorated my yard with harvest decorations and bible verses. Thank you Meredith for the long hugs and listening ear. I'll never be able to thank you all individually as I'm sure I

will forget someone. So thank you, all of you, and you know who you are, for that really awesome thing you did that most likely made me cry but in a happy tears kind of way. My grandmother and mother certainly raised me to send out thank you cards but I would sit writing all day if I did that.

The hardest part of my day was talking to my niece after she was told the news. In moments like that, I am plain and simple mad. Sidney, I'm not going anywhere. You are my heart and my hero and I will fight this with every ounce within me. Run hard, run for me.

I saw a park bench at church today. I find myself looking at things in a different way lately. The area was grown over with ferns and plants. The bench had room for one person to sit without any plants rubbing up against you. I looked at this immediately thought this is me and Jesus. How long have I let the seat next me sit empty, grown over with weeds? All the while He wants to sit with me, comfort me. I'm done with that. Jesus, the seat next to me is open, please join me, I need your presence more than ever.

So we will continue to cry out, face on the ground, pounding hands against HIS chest in petition. He will hear me, He will hear you. I believe that.

Much love to all,  
Amanda

Game on!

## Comments

AJ, Milt and I really want you to know that as much as we wish this wasn't in your story, we know that you will be your best gladiator. You are strong, you are beautiful, you are determined, and you WILL prevail. We send our love, our admiration, and the strongest positive forces and prayers we can.

*—Jean Cross, September 26, 2014*

AJ,  
Thank you for your insights, for sharing your thoughts.  
Yes, Jesus is sitting right next to you. Right next to you every second of every day. Holding your hand. He is in control. And He is always good.  
Bless you and your family,  
sara and mike

*—Sara Whiting, September 26, 2014*

AJ, you are so brave and your faith is precious. I just wanted you to know you are in my prayers many times a day. You have a gorgeous family, you are surrounded by more friends than you can imagine, and you will receive His healing in mind, body, and soul. We love you! Ann (another AJ)

—Ann L Jones, September 25, 2014

Hi AJ,

Thinking of you today with much love to you and your family. Lovely story you shared on your post today. Remember, you are much loved.

—Jackie Hoffmann, September 25, 2014

Hi, AJ: I cannot tell you how much I hated hearing this news! I am part of several prayer groups - some on a national level - and we have everyone not only praying, but also BELIEVING that God is going to intervene in marvelous ways for you. Matthew 18:19 says, Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20 For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) in (into) My name, there I Am in the midst of them. Girlfriend, you have way more than 2 or 3 agreeing with you! LOL! Much love to you from another friend at Merrill Lynch!

—Shirley Davis, September 23, 2014

Amanda - Just heard about what's going on with you last night. Oh my gosh... First of all - where does the time go? Doesn't seem long ago that you were asking me for endless amounts of statements - LOL! :) Remember, you still owe me. LOL! Just know that you are in my heart, thoughts and definitely my prayers. I pray that you will have peace, understanding and all the LOVE that your heart can hold. Being positive and trusting God will be a large part of the journey. Sending my love and hugs from Merrill Lynch... Traci :) XO

—Traci Conway, September 23, 2014

Just to let you know that I think about you every day., and Praying for you....I think a lot of thoughts are because of my journey especially when it first started....not knowing ...how , what, when , where and why...I have been thru them all..it is so many decisions..questions...hang in there...stay strong and know you are loved. God is love...He will be with you every step .??????????

—Flo Dudley, September 23, 2014

I love your journal. You have the positive attitude and faith that Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ needs us to have during difficult times. In 1 Thess.5:18, we are taught "In every thing give thanks for is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

Gratitude means having faith in God. Let's thank Him everyday that Amanda is cured and her health has been restored as we wait for its fulfillment.

—Nydia Chaves, September 22, 2014

Team Broughton is still praying strong!

Loved what you said about the park bench...He just wants to sit/be with us.

Reminds me of lyrics from a Bethel song

"What can I do for You? What can I bring to You? What kind of song would you like me to sing?

'Cause I'll dance a dance for You. Pour out my love to You.  
What can I do for You beautiful king?

I hear You say..."You... don't have to do a thing. Just simply be with me and let those things go. 'Cause they can wait another minute"

—Grace Whitlow, September 22, 2014

Beautiful words Amanda! You're right, it shouldn't take something like this to bring people together. But the world has a crazy way of making us all come together in times of need. Thank you for your positivity! You are truly an inspiration... And when this is all behind you, what a great story of triumph you will have to talk about with your three beautiful children and your husband when you are old and grey!!

—Rebecca Benjamin, September 22, 2014

AJ - i came back to work today and saw the emails from the council with your news. I will be thinking about you and your family each day. I hope that you are doing well today and that you are keeping strong. i know this is a tough time, but i can sense that you will get through it. Sending you much love!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

—Tara McCann, September 22, 2014

My sweet sister, I know yesterday was incredibly hard on you, for all of us. As I said then, it's your fault for being so loveable! You are more than her aunt. I gave birth to my beautiful daughter, but in so many ways she shares your qualities and you are her cooler and much funner second mom! I love how you have fostered your close relationship with her over the years and miles. You are her hero and rock star! She asked me why God let this happen to you. I told her that I didn't think it worked that way...that our bodies were human and imperfect and sometimes they fail us. I believe God is here in this moment and surrounding you with his love in tiny and enormous miracles and grace everyday. God has his hand in your recovery and your healing, not the cancer. I want to thank you for giving me the strength to help her face this challenge. It is because of your faith that I am able to do so. I love you beyond measure and I am so proud of you! Go Team Amanda!

—Jennifer Butler, September 22, 2014

Beautiful and touching!! Thank you for sharing your heart! Much love to you and your family! Always praying!  
??

—Allison Vollenweider, September 22, 2014

AJ you are truly an inspiration. I haven't known you very long but I am saying prayers for you often. You are always on my mind. I have so many words but not sure how to write them. You can do this!

—Patty Franklin, September 22, 2014

Amanda...you will never look at things the same again..things that you thought were important suddenly are not ...and when you see things that you took for granted every day...become so important and beautiful in your life...This ugly thing will change your life and thinking forever....I am praying and thinking about you EVERY day..my love to you and your Family...Remember to laughs you me and Toni had when you worked at ML...

—Flo Dudley, September 22, 2014

Sweet Sidney what a smart loving little girl. And so so beautiful. Daniela's best treat is when you brought her over to play. My heart pours as I picture all of this but you know what...I have always noticed she has so much from you and she will grasp from all of this and she will make something good out of her aunts fight!! You are hers and our hero and you will come out, out of this on top and well. It's because you touch life's and you make difference my sweet your making people come even closer to God because thats the right way. We want you well so keep strong because giving up does not exist. love you.

—Eva Demas, September 22, 2014

AJ. I started the morning with your post. It lifted me up and touched my heart. It was so real and full of love. Thank you. Sending love. Karen Demuth

—karen demuth, September 22, 2014

That was an awesome post! Although I thought I was your heart and I will run for you too albeit not very far as I am out of shape and I don't particularly like running. Love the bench picture and your thoughts on that. I'm proud of you and I love you!

—Amy Mason, September 21, 2014

## Proverbs 3:5-6

September 20, 2014

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your path straight.*

Good morning!

Woke up to a rainy dreary day in central florida, which is quite uncommon. For the first time ever our two oldest children woke up and entertained themselves for a good hour allowing us to rest in bed longer than usual.

Oh and Hosanna had her first pig tails today that stayed in longer than 7 seconds. Thanking God for little moments like that. Over the past 11 days He has blessed us in small quiet ways and in loud knock down the door ways. It's been awesome to see His hand in all of this. The generosity and love that has been shown to us is overwhelming and I really dont know what to say in response. My heart overflows, thank you.

We had the brain and hip MRI on Wednesday and met with a doctor yesterday to review the report. Praising God in the fullest for a clean report on my brain!! The hip report did show signs of cancer which explains this pain I have had for 5 or so months. So here's the crazy thing, the leg pain was my first symptom of cancer.

That doesn't seem right! Who would ever think, "Oh this aching pain in my leg is really bad, it must be lung cancer." No one. That's been one of our struggles with this is how would we have ever caught this earlier? Or how could someone else? I don't the answer to that. There isn't a mammogram for the lungs and basically there isn't enough money funding research for lung cancer. Did you know, statistically speaking, lung cancer kills more people than breast, colon, or pancreatic cancer COMBINED? Yet it remains one of the least funded researched cancers? My sister in law said it, We need an ice bucket challenge! And it's true. More awareness, more research should be placed on this cancer. Alright, that's enough rambling on about that, if you come up with a great FB challenge to start, let me know. I'll be the first!

We also found out this week that I do not have one of the mutations that we hoped for. Yes, it's possible to hope for mutations. My sister jokingly said we could dress up as teenage mutant ninja turtles for halloween...because they are a mutant gene. Gotta find humor in this or it will get the best of you. So a targeted therapy has not yet been determined. My tissue will go out for more screening which will include screening for PD1 marker which is a cutting edge treatment in trial right now. We basically have a dump truck worth of information in front of us to digest, pray over and decide on what treatment is the best. Mike & Newton, the guys I work for, have been incredible about reading over the trail information, making calls and getting down the nitty gritty over the differences to help us with our decision. I am sooooo thankful for that!

We may even head up north for a 4th opinion so make the bed Kristin as we may see you soon and be sure to put a mint on the pillow, I always demand a pillow mint. But whatever we do, we need to start something relatively soon.

How are we holding up? About as good as you could imagine. I definitely have low moments and host my own pity party a couple times a day. But then there's this peace that is felt between Scott and I. He is so remarkable and dedicated to my success, it's beautiful. His positive, cheerleader attitude is exactly what I need.

He lets me have my low moments and certainly joins in but he knows how to bring it back around and help me focus on what is good. And there is so much good in this even if it hurts to say it out loud. My army of prayer warriors are incredible and that's an understatement. So many of you dont even know me and you are on your knees in prayer for my strength and healing. What a testimony to me! Your faith increases my faith. Thank

you.

A friend sent me this devotion exert, a prayer.

*Lord, today instead of seeking to understand the complicated situations in life...I'm choosing to give them to You in prayer. Here they are Lord. I'm trusting You to direct me, guide me, and love me through what I dont understand. With a sometimes trembling heart I embrace Your promises. And. Walk. In. Faith*

Wow, I dont think I could come up with a more suiting prayer right now myself. So I repeat this one, over and over and over again until my heart is full of peace.

Prayers needed: targeted therapy available, discernment over which treatment, leg pain to minimize, peace in home and heart

Much love to you all!

Amanda

Game on!

## Comments

You are an amazing and inspiring woman! I love you so much!

—Karen Stephens, September 21, 2014

Please consider supporting Amanda and Scott by making a donation to help them with medical expenses. 100% of your donation goes directly to Amanda: <https://www.youcaring.com/AJsArmy>

—Ryan Brady, September 21, 2014

This was created by your body. I believe that it can also be healed that way. I am hoping that they use something to enhance your immune system. I have always believed that this was the way which would ultimately prove successful. You are awesome! Love Bobby

—Robert Broughton, September 21, 2014

This was created by your body. I believe that it can also be healed that way. I am hoping that they use something to enhance your immune system. I have always believed that this was the way which would ultimately prove successful. You are awesome! Love Bobby



—Robert Broughton, September 21, 2014

I continue to be so amazed by your strength and courage. I am praying for you daily and have so many great friends who have told me they are praying for you as well. As you go through each day focus on keeping a positive thought process. I know that would be so hard at times but I really believe that it's key to healing. You are such an amazing person and it's so obvious that so many people feel that way about you. You have a great network of friends and family around you and we are all lifting you up. I'm so thankful for all the people who are helping you, praying, making phone calls, doing research, whatever it is....it all helps. You have great bosses and it's truly amazing all they are doing for you. It's a true testament to how you have touched everyone's lives. I love you very much. Stay strong and keep thinking positive thoughts. I'm sending lots of love, good thoughts and prayers your way!

—Amy Mason, September 20, 2014

AJ. Sending love and prayer for a targeted therapy , decreased pain and for this to be behind you. KD

—karen demuth, September 20, 2014

Thanks for the update...you are certainly in our prayers...you are indeed blessed with a winning spirit and that is indeed a major part of all you are going through. Just know we think of you often and continue to hold you in love and prayer.

—Joan Rost, September 20, 2014

Thinking of you again today and wishing you a weekend full of love and faith!! You have a beautiful family!

—Karen Platt, September 20, 2014

Amanda, I am humbled by your positive and faithful spirit during this challenge. Praying for you daily...if there is more I can do, please ask. Loved seeing your pictures at the beach on FB, looks like fun times! :)

—patti barnard, September 20, 2014

Amanda I work with your Aunt Amy and I am praying for you and your family. It is so hard to understand the why of things but we do trust in a God of miracles and He is still in the miracle business today. I am praying for healing and discernment on which direction you should go with your treatment. Also for the peace that passeth all understanding. God bless you and keep you always.

Nancy Parada

—NANCY PARADA, September 20, 2014

The Bible tells us that in all things we are to give thanks. That sometimes seems impossible. However, Dale and I have learned over the past 2 1/2 years that there really are dozens of things to be thankful for in all

circumstances, even the worst ones. I am so happy and proud to see you finding and acknowledging your many blessing each day. I thank God for your loving Christian husband, for placing you in Florida (never thought I'd say that!), for the amazing Godly men you work for and your co-workers that have been so helpful and supportive, your loving parents and for all your wonderful army of prayer warriors!!!

As God has placed you and the people you need around you, we will pray that he will continue to guide you to the right place and treatment to beat this into remission!

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help I trouble." Psalm 46:1

—Karen Stephens, September 20, 2014

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

—Isaiah 40:29–31

—Candace Stanaland, September 20, 2014

How wonderful that God provided Mike and Newton to do all that work for you. I will be praying for the things you listed and especially that God will fill you and your family with His peace that passes all understanding.

—Marie Koth, September 20, 2014

So many of you dont even know me and you are on your knees in prayer for my strength and healing. What a testimony to me! Your faith increases my faith. Thank you.

Amanda (defined as ONE WHO IS #LOVABLE) this written declaration is a "powerful revelation" -it is the scripture fulfilled -Faith to Faith Glory to Glory! We are one connected in battle, in faith and in love. Your beautiful essence is with me past sunrise and sunset -it stays with me even into my dreams. Be wellthy Be whole Be Loved

—Anita Turner Bell, September 20, 2014

## Donations

September 17, 2014

Hey troops! Someone mentioned to me that this site asks you to make a donation on my behalf. Just so you know, those donations do not come to us, they go to Caring Bridge. CB is an awesome organization that does

incredible things so if you want to make a donation, that's awesome.

That's all for now,  
Amanda

## Comments

my prayers are with you and the family. god bless you and the family.

—*Marisol Miranda, September 26, 2014*

Please consider supporting Amanda and Scott by making a donation to help them with medical expenses. 100% of your donation goes directly to Amanda: <https://www.youcaring.com/AJsArmy>

—*Ryan Brady, September 21, 2014*

Praying for you each day, Amanda! And for your husband and sweet kids. Try to talk to your mom. She is being busy, so I don't bother her much, but my love is with you. Jeanne Hiott Marett. You may hear from a friend of our family, Sherrill Chappell, who has just finished her Chemo. She has very special thoughts for you. She is my brother's girlfriend. Keep up the good spirits!

—*Jeanne Marett, September 19, 2014*

Hi everyone...if you are inclined to donate directly to AJ and Scott, a youcaring fund has been set up on their behalf. Here's the link: <http://www.youcaring.com/medical-fundraiser/join-aj-s-army/235932>

—*Kristin Sandler, September 18, 2014*

## Roman 15:13

*September 17, 2014*

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

You can't really prepare yourself for an outpouring of love. Kinda like when your first child is born and you just can't believe how much love you have for that little person. That is how I have felt this past week because

of you, each and everyone of you. Whether you brought food, signed my guestbook, said a prayer, made calls on my behalf, sent me words of encouragement or bible verses, it has filled my heart in ways I could have never know. This whole thing is still all so surreal. Sometimes I go several hours without even thinking about this intruder inside of me. I had a peace with me yesterday that I can only attribute to the love you all have poured on me. God is with me every step of the way, whether I'm aware of it or not. With all that said, thank you for lifting me up and believing in me. And a special thank you to my dearest friend, Mary, for spending her birthday going to doctor appointments with me. Not many people would choose to spend their birthday like that and I am so blessed to have you in my life! Don't worry, I did give her a piece of cake and candle, I'm not completely self-absorbed. :)

were scheduled for a pet scan today and 2 MRI's tomorrow. The pet scan was cancelled due to insurance not fully approving it yet. They will approve it, it just got caught up in the red tape. Hoping to make that happen by Friday at the latest. I'd like to get all these tests behind me so a treatment plan can be put into place. It was also good not to have another appointment today. I enjoyed my homeschool day with my sweet Ellie and I got to be there when Sam and Hosanna got home from school and see they sweet faces. And to top it off I was treated to some heavy love from a dear friend, Kelle, who brought me 4 full bags of yummy organic veggies and fruit with recipes to help me eat clean. Yeah I know there is controversy over whether diet has any bearings on cancer but how can it not help? Will it cure cancer, probably not but I'm pulling out all stops here and hoping for the best! Now if you see me at a restaurant and I'm devouring a hot lava cake, please don't be disappointed in me. I'm human of course and one can only turn down chocolate so many times.

The 3rd oncologist we met yesterday was certainly my favorite. Not only was he very thorough and warm, he gave me his cell phone number and encouraged me to use it. I appreciate that. But what I appreciate even more was the moment before he walked out when he looked at me (there were 6 of us in the room btw), smiled and said "You'll get through this." I needed to hear that from my doctor. The first doctor I saw was very good and highly recommended but the warmth wasn't there. I don't expect doctors to give hugs and wipe tears but when it comes to something as serious as cancer, I certainly expect them to have cheerleader qualities

But even if he didn't say those words, I still have hope. That is the one thing I have hold on to.

So we keep on, we take each day as one hour at a time. And hopefully by Friday we know more my physical state and we develop a plan to attack this intruder and we will do with the power of the Holy Spirit and the stubbornness of me! Yeah, a few of you have commented on my stubbornness being an aid in this battle. God made me with certain quirks, both good and bad. Maybe this trait is exactly what is needed, so I embrace it.

I'm trying to shift my thoughts as much as possible when it comes to this crappy crap thing. Paradigm shift I believe they call it. Can't imagine it will be easy but I'm giving it a shot. And this is my first shifted thought. I have Stage 4 , great, that is just my instructions to focus on 4 things through this

My Faith

My Family

My Health

My Future

Cancer cannot take my spirit so there, take that!

Lastly, I do have a new specific prayer. My right leg has been hurting for about 5 months now. We believe it has something to do with my piriformis muscle hitting the sciatic nerve and causing pain down my leg. It's gotten over time and nothing seems to heal it. There is thought that there is a connection between the and my leg, we wont know for sure until the end of the week. Pray that the two are not related and that I be able to rest and have a night of painfree sleep. And if it is just my muscle locked down the nerve, then pray for the muscle to chill out and let my nerve go! Thank you!!

Keeping the faith,

Amanda

## Comments

Amanda I have just read your journal and I as I cry I will sit in prayer for you. I know some strong prayer warriors and I will ask them to join me as well. I will see you and my sweet Scott on Sunday. You will get through this and what an amazing testimony you will have. God loves you so much.

—Kathy Whitmire, October 10, 2014

Good morning. Sweet Amanda. I just read your Journal entry and you are one amazing woman. I just wanted to let you know that you have an entire church family and me praying for you here in MA. Faith will prevail. Love you!

—Cynthia Haralson-Tallman, September 19, 2014

Hi Amanda, You don't know me, but I am friends with Johnna Juarez. We had breakfast yesterday and she shared your story and asked me to pray for you. I subscribed to your post and please know that I will be praying for you and your family every day.

—Lanie Ligon Sandridge, September 18, 2014

Praying for you continually, Amanda. I AM UPLIFTED BY YOU!!!! Your true faith in trial is humbling. The Lord's healing hand on you all.

—Dawn Ortiz, September 18, 2014

Hi AJ

iI have that same pain form the sciatic nerve you do and sleeping is sometimes so difficult. It's my left side. iI have found that putting a pillow under my knees when i sleep helps immensely. i have not gone to the doctor yet but i know exactly what it is and when it happened. I have been told that yoga really helps too. wish I were closer so I could be there to help! you were always such a great help here!! i loved your meals you used to sell !!

—Cathy Nolan, September 18, 2014

I love your attitude! Since I read your first post here, my husband has made an apt to see his dr for a check up as well as my sister. You are touching lives through your battle. I wish I could wish this thing away for you. I think of you so very often Amanda! I pray God enriches your life. Many hugs, kisses, love to you!

—Marti Holler, September 18, 2014

Amanda,

You are a wonderful writer! I am thankful for you allowing me to follow you on this journey! You are so strong and you WILL BEAT THIS!!! I hope you get some answers soon. Hoping that you sleep through the night, pain free.

I am here any time of day! We have lots of clean recipes to share... I will start making extra on the days that I do get to cook ;) ahhh the dreaded question "What are YOU making for dinner? Maybe I can get some ideas" :)

xoxoxo

—Rebecca Benjamin, September 17, 2014

Love coming your way!!

xoxooxoxo

rock springs has added you to their prayer list. Love you moochie k

—Kaye Kaye, September 17, 2014

AJ - We are keeping you in our prayers and sending good thoughts your way...and cookies as well. Don't worry, they are home made and organic, in keeping with your "clean eating"! Love ya....keep your chin up!

—Jenny and Mike Perrottet, September 17, 2014

Your an amazing woman. If I knew that of you before it has no comparison of that to this day. I love you sweet friend.

Embrace all the love, enjoy your kids. Your doing great!

—Eva Demas, September 17, 2014

Wow, AJ. That was a beautiful entry. This journal is a wonderful idea. I love to read your writing. You have a real gift (one of many). I will take your prayer request to heart and to practice. FYI - I called Mike and Jenny Perrottet last night to let them know what is going on. They are 110% there for you.

—Ryan Brady, September 17, 2014

Thinking of you and sending prayers (lots of them) your way!!!! I know that you are going to fight this with all that you have and know that you have a lot of people that plan to fight with you!!

Isaiah 41:10 Fear not, I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous hand.

Please let me know if there is anything that we can do for you or your family, meanwhile you will be in our thoughts and prayers.

—Daniel Jones, September 17, 2014

Thanks for the update. I continue to pray. Also, doctors should give hugs and wipe tears. But if they won't, we will! Xoxo

—Kathy Ikonomidis, September 17, 2014

## Isaiah 41:10

September 15, 2014

So do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

This is the verse that I hold tight to these past 6 days.

There are days you will always remember. Maybe a childhood birthday, the day you left for college, the day you got married and the day your children are born. You can remember almost every detail of that day, as if i

happened yesterday. Last week I added a new date to my memory bank that I don't think I will ever forget, September 9th.

For those of you that have not heard the full story, I will fill you in now. And let me say that if I did not reach out to you individually, please don't take it personally, it's one of those things that you don't want to hear yourself say over and over again.

It all started a few months back when I noticed a small nodule on my neck located above my collarbone. For a couple of weeks I just thought, "Well this is kind of weird." But that was it, I didn't think much more about it.

And then a month passes and it's still there. I didn't have a primary doctor (mine had moved) so it took a little time to find someone and be seen. By the time I got to a doctor, I had also developed a cough, a random dry cough. He took a chest x-ray and nothing stood out to him so off to an ENT I went. I got a call a couple days later that the radiologist saw a shadow on my chest and recommended a CT scan. At this point we are thinking it is some kind of infection, nothing more. Within a day or two my doctor called to say the CT scans indicated some abnormalities in my lymph nodes, left lung and liver. A biopsy was scheduled for 9/5. I was nervous about the procedure but only slightly because I've always been healthy and I'm not a high risk candidate for anything serious. Then we waited for the results. On Tuesday, 9/9, my phone rang while at work. Oddly enough I had stepped out of a client meeting to gather some papers when the call came in. And this is when the ball dropped. "Amanda, this is not what we wanted. The biopsy is positive for cancer." As most of you know, I'm seconds away from crying at any point, good or bad, it's just how I'm wired. I stood there in total shock, my heart beating 100 miles a minute, an overwhelming urge to throw up. I told him I could not talk and would come to his office for more info. I went to a private room to call Scott, barely able to catch my breath. As I called Scott all I could say over and over again is, God is good all the time, God is GOOD ALL the TIME. Was I reminding myself this? Was God speaking through me to comfort me in possibly the worst moment of my life to date? I think both are true. If I truly believe that God loves me fully, that He cherishes me, that His plans for me are Good, that even in the darkest moments He is right alongside me holding my hand, if I believe this then even now I should praise Him. And I'm scared, of course I am but I am determined to keep my focus on God and not fear. Even in these very early days of discovery I can see the hand of God in my life and the blessings He is pouring out on our family through our friends and family. Yes I found out at work that I have cancer but within minutes I was being prayed over by my awesome godly team and I just happen to work with a lung cancer survivor who within minutes was comforting me and looking me in the eye saying, "YOU CAN BEAT THIS." God has put people in my life that I have always cherished but in moments like these you can step back and see why exactly they are there. And maybe it was for this exact battle. The amount of love and prayers we have received this past week is beyond beautiful. It's hard to even grasp. Me saying, Thank You, seems so small but please know your prayers and words of encouragement are felt and do make a difference in our days.

We truly have been blessed by you all. Our families have been incredibly strong and encouraging in just the way we need it. I don't know where we would be without the love and support we get from them. Thanking God for my retired parents who dropped everything to be here to support us. The part that has been so beautiful for Scott and me is the renewing of our love for each other. Scott has certainly had low moments of sadness and anger but his commitment to me has moved me in ways that I can't explain. His faith in our God is profound.

When I am having a moment where my tears take me over, he knows exactly what to say and he has poured scripture over me for hours, even when I was asleep. He is so determined to beat this and is doing everything he can to help make that possible. He was absolutely created for me and I am so thankful to go through



something like this with him by my side. I'm sorry, I have rambled on quite a bit and if you are still reading, thank you.

So where are we now? We saw two oncologists today. They confirmed that I have Stage 4 lung cancer.

Writing that is sickening. How do I go from a cough to stage 4 cancer? It just doesn't make sense. But what I have learned is that lung cancer has a way of hiding with very little symptoms and will spread before you even know it exists. The doctor told me today, "There is a growing epidemic of young non-smoking women who have lung cancer." Really? So how does one prevent lung cancer?!? This is still a mystery to me. We have more tests in the coming days to determine exactly what type of genetic mutation took place so my therapy will be targeted. There is also a chance of me participating in a very promising clinical study at Moffitt. All of this will be determined fairly soon. Many of you have asked what you can do to help. Thank you for that, really.

At this point I don't even know. As my treatment plan starts to come together I will know more and will definitely seek out help in areas needed. But I do know that my army of prayer warriors will seek God's glory through this and I know His plans for me, for my family are GOOD. Specifically pray that the genetic test results grant us the ability to halt the growth of this cancer without the need for chemo. Specifically pray for discernment as we choose a doctor and treatment plan. Specifically pray for peace in our home so that we can maintain the energy needed to love on our babies without burdening them with our stress.

Thank you again for the love you have shown our family. We feel it and send it back to you!

I will continue to remember that God is good all the time and praise Him in my darkness.

Amanda and Scott

Game On!

## Comments

Amanda, my heart is broken after reading this. Please know that prayers are flowing your way. God Bless you and your family.

*—Linda Hufty, September 26, 2014*

Hi Amanda. I am close friends with your aunt Karen. My dad was recently diagnosed with lung cancer. Like you, he had absolutely no indication or reason to believe that he was sick. He went in to have some swelling in his ankles checked out and left with a diagnosis of lung cancer. Now, that we have gotten through the initial shock of his diagnosis, we have dug in and are ready to fight this thing. Even though you do not know me personally, I felt the need to let you know that I am praying for you. I have also added you to several prayer lists which include hundreds and hundreds of people. Cancer is by no means a death sentence. I know so many cancer survivors who have overcome incredible odds and are living happy and healthy lives. It sounds like you are a fighter and a believer and you will be one of those survivors!!!

—Teresa Hancock, September 21, 2014

Amanda, I'm Grace's mom. I saw you at the baby shower and to know about this news was a big surprise for me. But, one thing is true, God is good all the time and he have the control all the time too. I'm praying for you and for your family. Some times the only way that we have to know some special blessings is to go through darkness, but God is holding our hand always. God bless you!

—Morelia Gonzalez, September 21, 2014

Amanda- I don't even know what to say. I am for sure praying for you and your family. There is one thing I am sure of, and that is: your strength. You are one of the strongest women I know. You are so kind and virtuous. I will be praying that you hold onto that strength and that your family continues to be a pillar of support for you. My love to you.- Tiana Morey Zambelas

—Tiana Zambelas, September 21, 2014

Praying

—Flo Dudley, September 20, 2014

Please know that you are in our hearts and prayers daily! We love you and are willing to do what we can to help you thru this! David wanted to know if you'd consider James 5 healing prayer...just a thought. Much love and hugs to you!!

—Sandi McLaughlin, September 20, 2014

Praying

—Flo Dudley, September 19, 2014

Amanda..My Prayers for you are so strong...I like you had stage iv cancer...I had Ovarian cancer that had spread everywhere and I had no idea that I had anything wrong with me....Today i am in remission after 18 months of Chemo and Surgery...5 months now....Believe me..I know exacally all your feelings...I just want to say stay strong ..God will be with you at all times..He gave me peace when I needed it most..and he will you too..I am sending my love to you and your Family and so many Prayers ....

—Flo Dudley, September 18, 2014

AJ-

My family and I have been praying for you, for your family, your babies and your husband! May God lay his hand on you and give you peace and courage to fight this!

—Rebecca Brooks, September 18, 2014

Amanda- Eric and I are saddened by all of this. After reading the comments, it seems that you have so many friends and family praying for you. Gods love is pouring down on you and your family and we are all here for you every step of the way. Everyone believes you will fight this and you will!

—Dawn Janowitz, September 17, 2014

Oh Amanda! I will pray for you and your family. I know God is good. He IS with you, scariness and all. I just met my friend Janice who is 59 with stage 4 breast cancer at Moffitt a couple weeks ago (This is her 4th time with breast cancer). She is officially in remission from their care. I pray you will have the same blessing.

—Dawn Ortiz, September 17, 2014

My heart goes out to you. Praying for your family. Love you tons. Libby. be strong as I know you are.

—Kaye Kaye, September 17, 2014

AJ, know that my thoughts and most devout prayers are with, about, and for you. There is little doubt amongst those that know you that your tough, possess incredible resolve, and are not to be tangled with! May all of God's graces surround you, keep you, heal you, and lift you!

—Andrew Betts, September 16, 2014

My dear niece, I have always been proud of you, but never more than I am now. Your faith and your fight will be an inspiration to others and will glorify God. God is good ALL the time. We WILL celebrate the power of prayer and His healing power! Dale and I will be praying for you, Scott, "my" precious children and your family every day. Cling to God's promise to never leave you nor forsake you.

I love you, Karen

—Karen Stephens, September 16, 2014

Amanda we have never met, but I heard of your story through a mom at the school my daughter goes to...ICS. I just read your story above and want you to know that I am praying for you and believe whole heartedly that God can perform miracles! Your faith is just so inspiring and encouraging! Thank you for opening up and sharing tugs very real struggle you are going through!

—Erica Earley, September 16, 2014

A.J., my Aunt Julie shared your news with me today. You might not remember me, but we've spent at least one or two New Years together :). I just want you to know that you and your family are very much in our thoughts and prayers! It just seems unreal that you have to face this. If there is anything at all we can do to help, don't hesitate to ask! In the meantime, you've got many prayers headed your way!

—Elizabeth Boyd, September 16, 2014

You are in my thoughts and prayers Amanda.

—Heather Hennessee, September 16, 2014

Amanda, I don't know you personally, but your story has touched my heart. Know that you & your family are being lifted in prayer daily. Psalm 56:3-4 When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

—Carolina Dunton, September 16, 2014

My precious cousin...please know that I am holding you close to my heart. We are praying for you and may others come to know Christ through your faith and testimony of His greatness. Stay strong and God is Good ALL the time. Love you!!

—Christie Klessens, September 16, 2014

You may add the Vollenweider family to your 'prayer warrior army' Amanda. ? May God continue to strengthen Scott and give you all peace beyond belief. Much love to you all! ? Exodus 14:14. The Lord will fight for you, you need to only be still.

—Allison Vollenweider, September 16, 2014

I am praying for you and your family. I know you'll beat this dumb cancer...and in the end you'll have an epic story to tell.

—Melissa Thompson, September 16, 2014

My parents had a wonderful faith in God. They believed that prayer could move mountains. I have followed my parents belief and I have never given up hope even when there have been some very rocky roads. You are such a very special person that my prayers and novena to St Martha will be just for you at this time. We love you A.J..

—Peggy Perrottet, September 16, 2014

HI Amanda. Thank you for sharing so openly. Your honesty will help others grow in faith during a time of so many questions. I am praying for you with everything that I have. Please let me know if you need anything. I mean it! We are so close and so happy to help if we can. Stacy

—Stacy Wilde, September 16, 2014

Sending up prayers for you daily as well as your family.

Psalms 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of

whom shall I be afraid.

—Sandy Nason, September 16, 2014

AJ - I know we haven't seen each other in 12 years and our Americorps time together seems like a lifetime ago, but please know that I will be thinking of you and your family daily. I am so sorry this is happening to you. You were a strong person years ago and are even stronger now with your husband and kids by your side. Much love to you.

—Jill Oakes, September 16, 2014

Amanda,

I am so incredibly saddened by this news but so uplifted by your strength and resolve. You have a beautiful family and they will serve as daily reminders to carry on this fight. If there is anything at all we can do to help you all, please let us know. I see a lot of play dates and some tired out little boys in our future. You, Scott, Ellie, Sam and Hosanna are in our thoughts and prayers.

Ashley

—Ashley Mitchell, September 16, 2014

Amanda, hold tight to those words... GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME. I will be praying for you as well.  
Hebrews 11:32-35

I could go on and on, but I've run out of time. There are so many more—Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, the prophets. . . . Through acts of faith, they toppled kingdoms, made justice work, took the promises for themselves. They were protected from lions, fires, and sword thrusts, turned disadvantage to advantage, won battles, routed alien armies. Women received their loved ones back from the dead.

—Beth Stevens, September 16, 2014

AJ... AJB,

Thank you for sharing your story with us all. You are such a strong person that is full of life, joy and happiness. You will get through all this and fight it !!!

I think about you, Scott and your 3 beautiful children everyday and I am here for all of you. You have my support and love. Stay strong and you will beat this !

Love you girl !!!!

—Sally Lee, September 16, 2014

Amanda, I have been praying for you and your family since we received the news. We are here for you and your family. I will help in any way possible. You are such a strong person and I know you will beat this. Love and prayers.

Johnna

—Johnna Juarez, September 16, 2014

Praying for you and your family and for your complete recovery.

—Randall Henke, September 16, 2014

Amanda, I don't know you. A friend from church, Jennifer Winch, posted this on our church FB page. You have already given glory to God by praising Him in the midst of this storm. I have prayed for you, your family and the doctors treating you and will continue to do so every time I think of you. Nothing is impossible with God!

—Marie Koth, September 16, 2014

Amanda,

I've been and will be keeping you, Scott and all your family in my prayers... alongside the army God has assembled.

This quote from Peter Kreeft came to mind as I was reading your journal...

I strongly suspect that if we saw all the differences  
even the tiniest of our prayers make,  
and all the people those little prayers  
were destined to affect,  
and all the consequences of those prayers down through the centuries...

We would be so paralyzed with awe at the power of prayer  
that we would be unable to get up off our knees  
for the rest of our lives.

With God all things are possible...  
In Him,  
Marita

—Marita Wiley, September 16, 2014

You are surrounded with LOVE and prayers, not only from me but from your entire loving community. I am completely in shock, but my heart goes out to you all for strength and constant goodness. <3

—Maggie McCarthy, September 16, 2014

Amanda, I am saddened by this news! You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers! You will beat this! Please send the kids over to play anytime! Lauren would love to play with Ellie!

—Amy Yohe, September 16, 2014

You are in our thoughts and prayers, Amanda!! You are such a strong person and I admire you in more ways than one. You will get through all of this. Like so many others, I am here for you as well ((big hugs!))

—*Jaime McKee, September 16, 2014*

AJ - At a loss for words, except to say that I love you and am praying for you.

—*joanne testoni, September 16, 2014*

AJ. You. Your testimony. How you live your life is an inspiration to me. I do not know you well but I do know through Mike and each time I speak to you on the phone how full of love and grace you are. I was an oncology nurse for almost 20 years. I saw miracles everyday. I also have a friend Pam in Jacksonville who was diagnosed with stage 4 Lymphoma in her lung last November. She is cancer free. She is praying for you everyday as I am. Pam told me if you'd like to speak with her., she is available anytime. I hold you. Your family. Your babies close in my heart with prayer. You will be cancer free. Your strength and faith are beautiful. Love.

Karen

—*karen demuth, September 16, 2014*

AJ. You. Your testimony. How you live your life is an inspiration to me. I do not know you well but I do know through Mike and each time I speak to you on the phone how full of love and grace you are. I was an oncology nurse for almost 20 years. I saw miracles everyday. I also have a friend Pam in Jacksonville who was diagnosed with stage 4 Lymphoma in her lung last November. She is cancer free. She is praying for you everyday as I am. Pam told me if you'd like to speak with her., she is available anytime. I hold you. Your family. Your babies close in my heart with prayer. You will be cancer free. Your strength and faith are beautiful. Love.

Karen

—*karen demuth, September 16, 2014*

AJ.

I am in your army of prayer angels and I will pray for you every day! You are so strong and I know that you will pull through stronger than ever! I will be checking on you often. Your friend.

—*Cathy Nolan, September 16, 2014*

AJ,

Your words are beautiful, powerful and strong. Your strength is deep, real and alive. It takes great courage to share what you have shared, to be vulnerable and to be open to love and support. Your courage is real.

I am sure that you have thought about what it means to form one body with Christ. The belief in one body both overwhelms me and gives me comfort. I pray that, as one body, our shared strength can overcome any shared suffering.

Read the following two verses:

Romans 12:5

So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Corinthians 12:26

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

It is going to be hard, at times, to accept help and support from others. You may feel like you don't deserve it or can't repay it back. Don't think that for a second.

You may feel like your body is failing you. Know that you are part of the body of Christ and that will not fail you.

You may feel alone in this fight. Know that we belong to one another.

We belong to one another. Isn't that the most beautiful thought? We belong to one another.

We will suffer together. We will rejoice together.

I love you, AJ. Your strength is real. Your courage is real.

Ryan

*—Ryan Brady, September 16, 2014*

Hi Amanda and Scott! We met your family at the beach last year while we were there with our family; Steven, Candi and their children. Your words and strength are inspiring! I've clung to God's promise in Jeremiah 29:11 many times over the last year. I have added your family to my bible study prayer list. You have many prayers covering your family from KY, OH and IN. Faithfully praying your family through this time! You've got this!!!

*—Tessa and Mike Stanaland, September 16, 2014*

Amanda, what a pillar of strength you display. We are praying for you daily for strength and healing! You WILL beat this! xoxo

*—Whitney Saylor, September 16, 2014*

Hi Amanda!! Thinking and praying for you and your family!!! You are so strong and can fight this;)) I work for UF health cancer center and we also have an amazing team of doctors! Please let me know if I can help in anyway!!! Xo!!



—Lindsey Arrow, September 16, 2014

Amanda, I am Candace Mom, just want you to know that all of you are in our prayers. Your strength is an inspiration.

—Gail Behan, September 16, 2014

Amanda,

I don't know you personally but I want you to know I will be praying for you and your family.

—Nona Strickland, September 16, 2014

AJ, you may not remember me but I'm part of your UBS family (we've never met but we've emailed). I will certainly be praying for you and your family. God does have a special plan for you and remember His ways are not our ways and even though we don't understand everything, His ways are perfect. God bless. Ivis

—Ivis Hernandez, September 16, 2014

AJ, you and your family are in my constant thoughts and prayers as you navigate treatment options.

—Jodi Driscoll, September 16, 2014

Amanda, your strength is amazing and inspiring. I have been fervently praying this week for you and your family and will continue. "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us" Ephesians 3:20.

—Jen Palmer, September 16, 2014

Amanda and Scott,

We are praying so hard for all of you. We are here to help in any way possible (prayers, groceries, laundry, meals, playdates, etc.). So far, we have people in IN, IL, MA, TX, KY, GA, TN and Fr. Walsh at St. Margaret Mary keeping you on their prayer lists. More good prayers coming for strength and healing!

—Marie Trifone, September 16, 2014

Praying, praying, praying!!! Your strength is inspiring... Love you:))!

—Candace Stanaland, September 16, 2014

Nick and I are right along side of both you and the family...DON'T YOU FORGET IT! You will be a great inspiration to someone in the future. We can't wait to celebrate a recovery with you guys!

—Jenna Adams and Nick DeAngelis, September 16, 2014

Amanda -- I am a friend of your friend, Tara Posey. Tara shared this so that I can join your mighty prayer team. I am covering you and your family in prayer. You CAN do this --- our God is a mighty and awesome God and he has you, and your family, in his loving and capable hands. God Bless You as you go through this journey.

—Cathy McCormick, September 16, 2014

You will beat this

—Alyssa Crews, September 16, 2014

AJ, you will beat this. You and your family will be in my prayers every day. Xo

—Kari Ferris, September 16, 2014

You are beyond beautiful and strong, inside and out, and I have no doubt that you will kick this in the ass so hard!!! Praying for you and sending all the love I can squeeze out. You got this, girl.

—Elly Brady, September 16, 2014

Praying for you and your family. God's got this! You are already healed!

—Julie Evatt, September 16, 2014

We are right with you every step of this journey, praying...battling with you and on behalf of you. Your family is so precious to us!! I am beyond proud and inspired by your faith and strength ? We all love you soooooooooo so much!!

—Elizabeth Chaves, September 16, 2014

Praying, lots! Xoxo

—Kathy Ikonmidis, September 16, 2014

I just keep hearing Big Red aka Michelle singing "You are good all the time, all the time you are good!" Thank you for sharing your story and your heart! We will take care of those specific prayers! You take care of yourself & your beautiful family. Prayer warrior power!!!!

—Carla Hall, September 16, 2014

We will be praying for you and Scott. God is looking over you. The victory is yours. Love you

—Kathy Haralson, September 16, 2014

AJ, my dear friend ! I've always admired your honesty and quiet strength. As I read this, two things come to mind..... "This to shall pass" and "What an incredible writer"! I remember hanging at your desk for our quick but often profound discussions about God and life. I remember you speaking about "knowing" God on a deeper level and this sneaky passion to write. (Albeit for yourself or your beautiful kids). Though this is a dark and I'm sure confusing place, something beautiful will emerge! Not only will you know God more intimately but your healing and your writings will inspire many as well. "This to shall pass" and you will continue to be the love and light to all who know you! So continue to love, continue laugh, continue to write because victory is yours! I'm praying with you and for you....Love ya girl!

—*Louis Bell, September 16, 2014*

You are beautiful sweet friend and the peace and faith in this message brings me to tears! God is most certainly good all of the time! Praying for you daily!! Lots of love and hugs for you and your beautiful family!

—*Heather Mount, September 16, 2014*

Amanda...I am visiting your page because I saw my friend Amy Mason's post on facebook. As a Christian and prayer warrior, I wanted to let you know that you will be on my prayer list. God is in control and He hears our prayers. He can heal and comfort. Stay focused on Him and just know that you have one more prayer going up daily for you. God loves you!!!

—*Allison Lilly, September 15, 2014*

You will beat this! You will be happy! You will have complete strangers praying for you!! Laugh as much as possible.. We are on your side in this...You are not alone! Ask and ye shall receive... If you need anything please make it known! Sending lots of love your way!

—*Karen Platt, September 15, 2014*

Amanda, I'm so proud of you and how you're handling this difficult situation. I'm not sure I could be as strong....so for that and so many other reasons, I admire you. You are so special to me and you always have been. I love you to the moon and back and I know in my heart that if anyone can beat this, it's you. Continue to be strong. Continue to pray. Continue to laugh and have a positive attitude. I believe that laughter and a great attitude can make a huge difference. I'm a phone call and a free flight away if you need me. I believe in you and I love you. Kick this cancers booty!

—*Amy Mason, September 15, 2014*

There are no words right now. I'm in disbelief and I just want you to know I will be thinking of you on a daily basis! You're a fighter, you always have been. Kick this thing's ass!

—*Jen Stone, September 15, 2014*

