

Friday - March 7

The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him. Psalm 28:7 -ESV

When my daughter, Monica, was born in 1987 with numerous special needs, I went through bouts of questioning God. It became difficult to go to church and hear over and over “just trust in God and He will answer your prayers”, while at the same time, it seemed every doctor appointment brought more bad news. My prayers weren’t being answered at all, if anything, things were just getting worse and there were no answers in sight. So I was angry at God and just gave up on the hope that He had any answers to give me.

But God didn’t give up on me! He kept nudging me in ways that I can see now, even though I didn’t at the time. And when, in the midst of all the doctor appointments, surgeries, seizure medication issues and schooling decisions, my husband asked for a divorce and I hit rock bottom, God gave me the biggest nudge of all - right through the doors of PUMC. And that’s when I discovered that prayers are answered, even if the answer wasn’t always what I wanted to hear or within my timeline. I found out that God is really good at bringing people into someone’s life just when they are needed most. I learned that a church family can not only surround you with love and acceptance, but they are there to pray for you when you are lost and can’t find the words to say.

Monica loves coming to church, she knows she’s loved, accepted and cared for even if she doesn’t have the words to say it. Her face lights up when the staff and other friends greet her. She knows that when a friend is going through a rough time, you pray for them. And if she interrupts a service to call out “Hey Justin!” as he walks up to the altar, that’s OK too. And for all of this, I am so grateful.

Nancy Cuartas

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for being with us even when we can’t feel your presence and for never giving up on us when we put distance between ourselves and you. Thank you for bringing people into our lives who can help us when we just can’t do it all ourselves. Please guide us as we strive to be your hands in this world and bring hope to others. With a grateful heart, Amen.