

A Cancer Prayer

by Stephen R. Chance

Dear God, we have prayed often for you to rid our child's body of cancer and never let it come back. We have prayed often for you to spare his body from the harsh side effects of the treatments he must endure. We have prayed for mercy and strength. But we have not yet prayed for the things about cancer we would like to keep.

Please let us keep the love that has been laid bare and that binds our family, our friends, and our community.

Please let us keep our preference to be together.

Please let us keep our appreciation for simple pleasures.

Please let us keep our ability to not sweat the small stuff.

Please let us keep our tolerance for each other's mistakes.

Please let us keep our focus on each other's needs.

Please let us keep our patience when faced with normal childhood mischief.

Please let us keep our tendency to treat others tenderly – knowing that we don't know the crosses they bear.

Please let us keep the ease with which new acquaintances become dear friends.

Please let us keep our enhanced appreciation for nature.

Please let us keep our motivation to live vigorously now rather than planning to live later.

Please let us keep our calling to help others fight cancer with better weapons and smarter generals.

Please let us keep our need to reciprocate the wonderfully kind favors we have received.

Please let us keep the strength to press on when faced with other illnesses, deaths, and human tragedies.

Please let us keep you at the center of our lives during good times, too.

Amen.