

Dear Family and Friends,

1/12/2018

The Lord is so good! These words fill my mind when I think about all He has done and is doing. I know I have not been very good at keeping up with many of you, but I hope this update will help fill in some gaps for those who I have not been able to contact personally. By God's grace I am excited to share that I am loving living the heart of South Carolina. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think that the Lord had plans for me here. After four and a half years, I finally finished my bachelor's degree in Biology from Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC in December 2016. The Lord had burdened my heart for medical missions since the summer before my senior year of high school and although I still believed God was leading me to medical school throughout my last year of college, the Lord began showing me in subtle and gentle ways that He was turning me a different direction away from medical school. I was devastated. I was confused. I was frustrated. Before I even knew I wasn't going to medical school I thought maybe I could at least go on a summer mission's trip and was heartbroken when the Lord, through the godly counsel of my parents and pastor, closed that door too. I had no job prospects and began researching opportunities that would hire biology majors and I hit another disappointing roadblock. I would need more schooling. But I still had a passion for missions and medicine. I continued researching.

The Lord through this "setback" (which really was a divine redirection) guided me to a mission's website that was looking for certified lab techs for a missionary hospital in Asia. Having no idea what a "certified lab tech" was much less did, I discovered that with a biology degree it would only require around 2 years to train in that field to become a Medical Laboratory Scientist (HUGE WORDS = you oversee and work in a hospital lab), and the Lord had in the previous college semester helped me cultivate my love of the laboratory environment (many thanks to my teachers Dr. Amy Tuck and Dr. Steve Figard for that). However, programs that teach this subject are very competitive and generally small making the likelihood of getting in not very probable (but I was convinced that if the Lord wanted me in a program, He would make sure I got in). The Lord was clearly still using my burden for medical missions to point me to the next step – applications. Three programs in South Carolina caught my eye, but one topped the list – the Lexington Medical Center School of Medical Laboratory Science. The day I discovered the Lexington program, I also discovered that I had missed the application deadline by one day. Disappointed, I still emailed the program director, and much to my surprise she responded by telling me to send in an application anyway! After a profitable interview in March, I eagerly awaited the verdict within a week's time from the interview. I was not accepted. I then moved to the second



program on my list and within a couple weeks discovered they were not having enrollment for the fall program due to too many students in their previous winter enrollment. Through correspondence with the third program, it was clear that that would not work either. Back to square one. I still have no job prospects and still have a burden for medical missions.

After hearing Ken Ham from Answers in Genesis speak during the BJU Bible Conference, I decided to apply to work at the Ark Encounter and was accepted! Now all I needed was housing

in Williamstown, KY, where I knew absolutely no one. God graciously provided housing through the family of Mike and Margie Vale, who became my second family. They made sure I was safe and healthy, helped me get involved in church, and loved me as another daughter. I will always cherish the memories I had there with them and with my dear friend Hannah Goetz who I graduated from college with. On my way from SC to KY for Orientation at the Ark Encounter the end of April, I received an unexpected phone call from the Lexington program director informing me that a slot had opened up for me if I was still interested. Boy was I interested! And actually, only four students enter this program a year! By delaying the time frame, the Lord had providentially provided me with housing and a job for the summer before enrolling in the program starting in August.

As if this wasn't enough of a blessing, the Lord was not finished demonstrating how much He cares and orchestrates ALL of the circumstances, timings, and details of my life. In late July I finished working at the Ark Encounter and my parents and I drove to Greenville where we had two days to find a decent car and five days to find safe, suitable housing in Columbia, SC for at least one year's duration. As unlikely as the situation sounded, the Lord answered both those needs in record time by providing for both requests in just three days! The car He provided was in pristine condition with excellent care and maintenance history serviced by none other than our trusted mechanic in Greenville. Upon arriving in Columbia, the Lord provided housing for the month of August with a dear lady from church, Grandma Schaefer, who is a rich blessing to all who know her, and from September on I have been living with Momma Shelvie and Lulu (her little puppy) who are constant sources of encouragement, prayer, and support. My church family at Grace Baptist Church in West Columbia where I am now a member is a love and a joy to serve and fellowship with. I am now almost half-way through the program and though it is difficult and challenging, I am abundantly blessed by my teachers, coworkers, and classmates who encourage me to excel to my greatest ability. While I still don't know what all the Lord has planned for me in the future, I believe and trust that He will continue to lead me as I faithfully follow His guiding



hand. All of these circumstances and details I could never have imagined would come together in such a beautiful picture of God's strength in times of weakness, God's comfort in times of hurt, God's supply in times of want, and God's perfect will guiding us all the way. We often think our stories of God's faithfulness are trivial and not important enough to share, but I know I am always blessed and encouraged beyond measure when I am reminded through your examples of God's faithfulness that the Same God who parted the Red Sea infinitely cares for you.

**"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his Hand."**

In Christ's love,

Elizabeth Hanna

**Psalms 37:23**