

by Gary Stevenson, Olathe, Kansas

Kris Burke serves as a Kindergarten aide at Madison Place Elementary School in Olathe, Kansas. She and her family are very fun, upbeat people with a strong Christian faith. About 10 years ago her husband, Kerrin, contracted a virus that specifically attacked his kidneys. A short while after this, his kidneys failed. He was immediately put on dialysis and remained on there for about a year. During that time a good friend of his decided to be evaluated to see if he was a match. It turned out that indeed Kerrin's friend was a match and so, Kerrin received a living donor kidney about eight years ago and lived successfully for six years. He served, as a computer engineer for a firm here in Kansas City and everything seemed to be going well.

Then, almost 18 months ago, his donor kidney began to fail without any apparent reason. About 12 months ago he had to take a leave from his job, as he wasn't able to continue working. They've struggled to keep on top of their mortgage but things were getting especially difficult about six months ago. So far, they have made it. About two months ago his doctor told him he needed to start dialysis again.

Back in September I was

sitting with Kris (Kerrin's wife) while eating lunch and asking her about how Kerrin was doing. Out of that conversation I made the decision to be evaluated as a living donor. In November I learned that I indeed was a match and a qualified candidate. And so, with my wife Kettrin's support, I made the decision to proceed. On February 16, 2010, I had surgery at the Kansas University Medical Center to remove one of my kidneys and have it placed in Kerrin.

The great news is that Kerrin is doing well. My kidney seems to be functioning 100% for him and his numbers are all looking great. It should be only a matter of weeks before he will be able to return to work.

Many have asked me why I chose to do this. Some have even suggested that I was a bit nuts for doing it. I understand their questions. However, the sole reason for me choosing to do this is simple. This life, this body, this kidney is not my own. I have been given so much and have been blessed to a level beyond anything I deserve. I could not justify sitting by and not doing anything if I could do something to try and help someone in need. It's as simple as that. Yes, there have been moments I've questioned my decision. But, every time I've found myself questioning this experience I have been reminded of the miracle of God's grace and His faithfulness. He has given to me so much. I in turn want to give to others. And I don't have to fear, because I know He will be faithful.

My recovery is going very well. I continue to deal with some pain and side effects from the medication. But I continue to get stronger and believe I'll be able return to work within a couple of weeks.



Published by **The Center for LifeStory Writing**

Freelance Group • March 2010

College Church of the Nazarene, 2020 E. Sheridan, Olathe, Kansas 66062

All rights reserved by the author. Copyright © 2010

All links are active, just click.