



Famous western author Louis L'Amour said, "Once you have read a book you care about, some part of it is always with you." Every one of us is living out a "book of life" that changes from chapter to chapter. In the book for Pat and Karen Phinney, there have been so many wonderful things written during our journey of forty-three years. They are things like a wonderful marriage, beautiful children and grandchildren, the best calling ever in serving the church, great friends, amazing experiences, disappointments and now the battle

against cancer. You have followed us along so faithfully in seventeen monthly updates about the progress and challenges of Karen's illness. This month, we begin a new chapter in our book of life.

A big decision was made. We are switching from conventional chemo to something new called, immunotherapy. God blessed us with the news that Karen qualified for a new clinical trial at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. Between the days of June 17 through June 25, Karen had numerous appointments at Mayo. She had blood tests, a CT scan, a biopsy of a lymph node, and numerous oncology consultations. The trial includes the merging of two drugs to bring the cancer into submission. First, Karen will take 3 pills a day called Azacitidine, which was once used to effectively treat leukemia. This is designed to weaken or tear down the protein structure of the cancer cells, so the immunotherapy can work. Secondly, Karen will get an infusion of the immunotherapy drug Keytruda every 21 days. Keytruda is FDA approved to treat certain forms of cancer, but not ovarian. It is designed to stimulate or supercharge the immune system to attack the cancer with the body's natural use of antibodies. Karen had her first treatment of Keytruda on July 2 and the second will come on July 23. Please pray that she can handle the side effects because there are a couple that are crummy. Pray that her body will accept the drugs and begin to fight the cancer as God originally intended with the immune system. If all goes well and she tolerates the treatment, then the trial is scheduled to last two years.

Though this new chapter of the clinic trail is unfinished, our hope and faith remains strong. Karen and I had devotions the other day from Psalm 57:1-2 and the Word encouraged our hearts. May you also take refuge in our mighty God as you live out your own book.

*"Be merciful to me (us), O God, be merciful to me (us), for in you my (our) soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I (we) will take refuge, till the storms of destruction pass by. I (We) cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me (us)."*

*Pat and Karen Phinney*