

Treasured Sounds

By Shawna Smith

There are many unforgettable sounds in life; like waves crashing against the shoreline or a gentle autumn wind rustling leaves. Our unforgettable sound was the cry of our firstborn daughter, Simone. She was a beautiful baby and we were happy that all went well with the delivery at North Memorial Medical Center. However our happiness turned into shock 18 hours later when she was taken to Intensive Care.

The hospital staff was unable to determine what was causing Simone's unstable breathing condition. Simone was given pure oxygen through a dome-like apparatus which covered her head. As we were fighting back our tears, we noticed that Simone, even though she was having trouble breathing, was more interested in trying to lift the dome device off her head! We were amazed and this one action showed us a lot about her personality.

Simone was rushed to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Children's Hospital in Minneapolis. Simone was covered in wires and machinery but we were so grateful that we could be right by her side. In the wee hours of the morning, we will never forget the sound of the voice of Cardiologist Dr. David Burton as he gently and caringly told us that Simone had Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome. Dr. Burton explained that in order to correct her heart condition, she would need a total of three different open heart surgeries: 1) The Norwood, 2) The Glenn and 3) The Fontan.

The morning of Simone's first surgery, we met Surgeon Dr. Frank Moga. We were so pleased to hear Dr. Moga's success rate for the Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome surgeries and to see him showing compassion to Simone. At five days old, Simone had the Norwood surgery, at five months old she had the Glenn and at three years old she had the Fontan. We thank God that all of Simone's heart surgeries were successful.

Simone is doing very wonderfully and has a lot of energy. She is excited to learn, enjoys life, and has an infectious smile. We are tickled to hear Simone beg us with the following question: "Can I see Dr. Burton and Dr. Moga, please, please?" Obviously, this displays the positive impact that they have had not only on her heart but on her life.

Our experience at the Children's Heart Clinic has been remarkable. The doctors, nurses, technicians, and administrative staff have not only been excellent in providing wonderful all around medical services to our daughter, but we found them all to be kind and supportive to our daughter's needs and our own. When we go to the Children's Heart Clinic for check-ups, we are always greeted warmly and served sincerely.

There is another sound that is memorable for us and that is the sound of Simone's laughter. We are so thankful for the Children's Heart Clinic staff because of their love, dedication, and expertise; we can cherish the sound of Simone's laughter both now and for all time.

