

Wow, what a great day at Trinity!

My favorite Olympic champion will always be Dan Jansen from Wisconsin. I'd like to share his story today because he was a Christian, overcame adversity to accomplish his dream, and fulfilled his promise to his sister, not necessarily in his time frame but in God's time frame. I say time frame because there were many times Olivia's treatments were delayed a few weeks pushing her cure date back, and back, and back. My Father enlightened our family one-day getting us back on track, that everything works in God's time and to be patient, because something great is going to happen, and yes it did. Olivia defeated Leukemia by the powerful healing hands of Jesus Christ! With God all things are possible.

Dan Jansen was already the best speed skater in the world in 1988. He was the favorite in both the 500 and 1,000-meter races. Hours before the race, he received the tragic news that his sister **Jane** had died of Leukemia. The two were extremely close, and he made a promise to her that he would win an Olympic Gold medal in her honor. Jansen competed in each race, but fell in both, leaving Calgary without a medal. Four years later in 1992 at Albertville, Jansen again entered as the favorite in both races. Once again, he came up empty. After 1992, the Olympic committee decided to alternate the summer and winter games every two years giving Dan Jansen one more chance in 1994. Jansen knew Lillehammer was his last shot at Olympic gold and to fulfill his promise. His first race was the 500-meter sprint; he slipped again and finished 8th. The 1,000-meter race was not his specialty at all, and his last chance for Olympic glory, Jansen finally won an Olympic Gold Medal and on top that he set a new world record. He took a victory lap with his young daughter named, appropriately, **Jane**.

Dan never gave up, he trained hard, and when adversity struck numerous times he got back up, and persevered. Same goes for Olivia, she never gave up, stayed faithful, when adversity struck, she smiled her way threw it, got back up, and persevered! Jesus walked with her, and our family side by side through our 852-day battle with Leukemia, and restored her health. Thanks be to God!

Today we celebrate Olivia's recovery and the start of the Winter Olympics. Trinity Lutheran Church and School you are the true Olympic Champions. You have been there for Olivia through the entire adventure. Your support and encouragement helped our family persevere, just as Dan did, and just as Olivia did!

We have many people to thank today!

Pastor Mech and Pastor Berg, thanks for the many visits to Children's Hospital! Your visits helped us get through those first two weeks in the hospital, and every other time we were there for an extended period of time. Pastor Mech, loved the Faith experiment you showed Olivia using only water, dish soap, and pepper. Pastor Berg and family loved the songs you sang to Olivia to lift her spirits in the hospital.

Mrs. Menzer and Mrs. Hering, thanks for coming to the house once a week the last half of the 2007/2008 school year when Olivia was in first grade to continue to educate her when she could not be in school. Your dedication to her is very special to our family!

Abby Janke you came down to Children's Hospital with your Mom and Mrs. Le Clair a week after we found out. Your visit was special to Olivia. Abby you are a great friend to Olivia! She appreciated the visit so much it helped her feel normal, and made her smile!

Spencer Louis Mc Trusty, you made Olivia laugh so many times through all of this. You were concerned, came to many appointments, watched out for her, and had to deal with a tough situation at a very young age. I am very proud of you Spencer you are an awesome brother to Olivia! You kept praying and believing that Jesus would restore her health so you could have your sister back. Now you do. I love you buddy!

Mr. and Mrs. Becker I remember visiting Amy and your family at Children's Hospital. Lana made some cookies for Amy, and Olivia SOOO wanted to deliver them and see Amy! We are so thankful that Amy is in her life. Amy sent cards and messages to Olivia throughout her journey, but more importantly so thankful that Amy also beat Cancer.

The Anderson Family - You made a poster for Olivia with a big smile on it, and had it signed by many kids from Trinity, that is totally awesome. We looked at that poster many days and decided to smile our way through this. That phrase of smile our way through paid huge dividends because that is what we did, and the Trinity school kids made it happen.

The Fundraiser held by the Church paid off a lot of medical bills, we are very thankful to the congregation, the school, Thrivent, and everyone who came to support Olivia on that day 2 years ago. That helped us a lot and brought relief in a time of need.

The 1,000 cranes hanging just outside the gym is also special. Apparently an ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a **thousand origami cranes** will be granted a wish by a crane, such as long life, or recovery from illness, or injury. It also represents how another congregation in our community can rally around a little girl to make her feel special in a time of need.

To the third grade class, all of you treated Olivia like a regular classmate no matter how she looked, or how she felt, the entire class always came through from the start in 2007 to the finish line in 2010. Olivia and our family are thankful for your friendship to her, your support, your encouragement, and so much more. Our family thanks you SOOO much. Be proud of yourselves you deserve a Gold Medal!!!!

In conclusion the battle was tough & our faith was tested. Our faith is stronger now more than ever! We came up with a few slogans along the way PFF (Pray Hard, Fight Hard, Finish Line). Mission accomplished by the grace of God! I think Dan Jansen Olympic Gold medallist would agree!

This is the cool one! When things seem tough, or impossible do not look down, instead look up, Praise the Lord, smile your way through it, and know that with God everything is possible! Thanks Jesus for healing Olivia!

Enjoy the Olympic event today and know that all of you deserve a Gold Medal for helping Olivia.

God Bless, and thank you Jesus!!