

Last May, Eli Ross, a parent in my preschool program dropped off his daughter, Katie, for school. I could tell something was wrong and when I inquired he said to me, "Mrs. Oliphant our little girl Meredith is very sick. We don't know what it is but it's serious. She's at Children's Medical Center in Hartford."

The diagnosis was every parent's nightmare. Meredith, at age three was diagnosed with leukemia. I can tell you first hand that Meredith's siblings Finley and Katie our pretty terrific kids; the kind a teacher always remembers. I'm sure Meredith who was registered to be in our school this year would have been equally terrific. So it didn't surprise me to learn that Finley was a bone marrow donor for his sister this Fall.

Since the diagnosis this family has been on an emotional roller coaster ranging from despair to hope. As friends we don't understand why such a horrific thing has happened to such nice people. Meredith has been on our church's ongoing prayer list.

I gave my Pay It Forward money in honor of Meredith Ross to the Caring Bridge, a website for families going through difficult medical trials. This site provides a link between these families and their friends by keeping everyone updated with progress reports, pictures and stories about the patient. It also has a place where people can send well wishes which I'm sure mean so much to the families.

If you would like to follow Meredith and her journey you can at Caring Bridge/Meredith Ross.