



Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor
Office of the Mayor

December 10, 2007

To our City Council, City Staff, and Community Members:

On behalf of my wife Stacy and myself, I would like to thank you for your ongoing prayers and support for our family, especially for our newborn little boy, Michael Joseph Morrissey. Right now, baby Michael is hanging in there, but he is in a very tough fight and he has already been through a tremendous struggle. We appreciate and cherish every moment we have with our baby.

Michael has a rare heart defect known as Ebstein's Anomaly. This problem is typified by a misplaced tricuspid valve on the right side of the heart resulting in a failure of blood to get properly pumped through the heart, oxygenated, and distributed throughout the body. While this problem was diagnosed earlier in Stacy's pregnancy, no one anticipated that Michael's condition would worsen as it did, resulting in the emergency delivery on December 1.

In addition to Michael's very serious heart condition, we were told last week after genetic testing was done that baby Michael has a very rare chromosome disorder called an "18q deletion". We do not have the full report yet, but the doctors informed us that this would likely result in moderate to severe mental disability and other physical challenges. Stacy and I feel, however, that God has prepared us for any difficulty and our baby is a glorious blessing no matter what his condition. Although this condition is very rare, there are families throughout the country dealing with this specific chromosome condition as well as others that result in similar issues for their children. Right now, Stacy and I just want Michael to improve physically so we can bring him home. He is such a beautiful little baby!

The underlying problem, however, is still the heart valve; and we are praying that he can get well enough for a surgery to improve that condition. Baby Michael Joseph continues to be evaluated by the cardiologists for treatment and surgical options. Ideally, they would like to wait as long as possible for the surgery so his body is stronger and better able to tolerate a surgery; but it seems that we simply don't know if his body will get better without some initial surgical intervention. It puts our poor baby between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

We don't know where our family's path is headed exactly, but we do know that we are so much the greater because of our baby boy. No matter how much time God gives us with our baby, he is our blessed gift and words simply cannot describe how much we love him and how much love and joy he has brought into our lives.

Stacy and I have been absolutely humbled by the outpouring of love and kindness from our community.



Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor
Office of the Mayor

We thank each of you for your love, prayers, and support. We apologize that we cannot reply individually

to each of the letters, calls, and emails we have received, but please know that your efforts on behalf of baby Michael and our family are greatly appreciated. This is why we love our hometown.

I realize that we are working through many tough issues right now as a council and a community including dealing with the first snow and ice storms of the year as well as ongoing issues with our police union. Our staff and Council are doing an excellent job of staying on top of these issues. Despite being with my family and new baby as much as possible, I have also been able to keep involved in these issues and appreciate all of the efforts. As a City organization, I have asked our staff to remember that we achieve our greatest successes when we work as a team and remember that our vision and values are there to guide us.

May God continue to bless our City and strengthen and encourage us in times of challenge.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence J. Morrissey". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large loop at the end.

Lawrence J. Morrissey
Mayor
City of Rockford

LJM/jls