

Dearest Friends and Family,

December 2021

I cannot believe that it is December already! It seems like this year has flown by and I keep wondering if I missed a month or something.

This next week marks 18 months since I lost Clay and what would have been our 31<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary. I realized a few weeks ago that at this time last year, I was just doing whatever I could, to “make it through” the holidays. All through Thanksgiving, Clay’s memorial service, our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Christmas, I felt like I was on autopilot and the destination and goal was to survive until January 2<sup>nd</sup>. With God’s help through family and friends, I made it through. What I have realized THIS year, is that I have been EXCITED for the holidays to come and I have been looking forward to participating and doing lots of things and making new memories with friends and family. What a difference a year makes!

My year started out with a jolt, on January 1<sup>st</sup>. The renters who had been in my rental house came over and said they would be moving out at the end of January. My head immediately started swimming over what the next move was. I had been sitting around doing nothing for 7 months and it felt like God was opening a floodgate. I decided it would be better to sell the house then to keep it as a rental property. At the end of January, I was finally able to get into that rental house garage and go through and unpack, all of our belongings that had been in storage for over 10 years. In one week, I went through every box and container that we owned, and got rid of about 2/3 of our stuff. It was an extremely emotional week for me and it wasn’t until then, that I got really ANGRY at Clay for leaving me with all this work. Up until then, I had not experienced that part of grief called anger. I kept feeling that God was telling me to “simplify” my life. So, I got rid of stuff. Memories were smacking me upside the head with each box I unpacked, and wondering if I should keep something or get rid of it.

By the middle of March, we had renovated the house and put it on the market and it sold for my asking price. The new tenants are people I have known from a store I frequent here in my neighborhood. As soon as that house sold, I finished some of the renovations to the home where I am now living. I still had painting to do, but the big den renovation was done.

April and May brought my two COVID vaccinations and most of my friends getting vaccinated as well. It felt like my world was opening up again. With summer coming and the one-year anniversary of Clay’s death approaching, I just felt like I needed to have time to enjoy the summer, and put off looking for work for a while. I had a great summer. I made several trips to see people that I had not seen since Clay died, and several people came to see me in my new home. It was a great summer but went very fast.

I had said I would start looking for work in September and I did, and started stressing and working on a new resume. (Who knew that people who help with those charge \$600 - \$1500 for this service!) I did go on one job interview, my first ever I might add, but I did not get the job. I had visits from several other Congo missionaries in November and got to drive them down to the Outer Banks of NC for their missionary retreat. I got invited to spend Thanksgiving with a friend from TASOK and his family in Kansas, and they paid for my trip, what a blessing! I just returned from that wonderful trip and am getting ready for Christmas. Another Congo friend is coming next week to spend a few days with me.

I will once again start looking for work, probably part time, after the holidays. In the meantime, I am not going to stress as God has blessed me SO MUCH, this year and I am going

to soak in making new memories for this Christmas season. If you want to continue supporting me financially, you may still do so through Appointment Congo as they are still willing to help me out.

I don't know yet what 2022 has in store for me, but I know it will be GOOD, as I serve a loving and amazing God. He has good things in store for me as he continues to write my story. Please pray for me to have good health, to find a good job that fills me with joy and to find new relationships as I still struggle to find community here in this area.

May the blessings of Christmas be with you throughout the year.

Love,  
Cindy