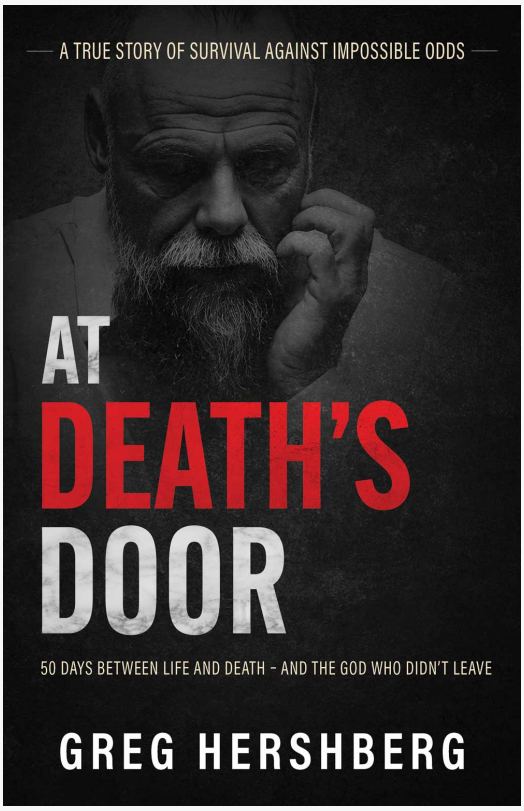
Pastor Recounts 50-Day Fight for Life, Doctors Call Survival 'Medically Inexplicable'

MACON, GA, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A Macon, Georgia pastor is sharing his story of survival after a sudden medical collapse in led to a 50-day hospital ordeal that included two cardiac arrests, a 12.5-hour emergency surgery, and blood loss that exceeded his body's total volume — an outcome his surgeon could only describe as a "phenomenon."



At Death's Door by Greg Hershberg

Greg Hershberg, 65, collapsed in a St. Louis airport on November 13, 2023. Doctors later determined he had a life-threatening staph infection in his bloodstream, acute kidney failure requiring dialysis, and internal bleeding. During emergency surgery, doctors removed his aorta and iliac arteries and rerouted his blood through an axillary bifemoral bypass.

Hershberg coded twice during his hospitalization and lost roughly 12 units of blood — more than the estimated eight units in an average adult body. At one point, his heart continued beating with almost no blood remaining, a moment his longtime vascular surgeon reportedly could not explain in clinical terms.

"There was no clinical explanation for why my heart continued to beat," Hershberg said. "My surgeon, who trained his entire career to deal with facts and measurable outcomes, could only describe what happened to me as a 'phenomenon.'"

Hershberg has written about the experience, including moments of severe despair during his recovery, in a new book, "At Death's Door: 50 Days Between Life and Death and the God Who Didn't Leave," released by Aneko Press. The book includes accounts from his wife, Bernadette, and their four adult children, as well as reflections from physicians who treated him.

Hershberg said the ordeal has left him with a lasting limp and a changed outlook on illness, suffering and caregiving.

"I've had to wrestle with why I am here and someone else is not," he said. "When I tell my story, I do so carefully."

Hershberg leads Beth Yeshua International, a Messianic Jewish ministry with congregations on six continents.



Author and Rabbi Greg Hershberg

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>
> *Greg Hershberg*

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