



# STACEY'S — STORY —

**It started with a long awaited positive pregnancy test – JOY! But that joy quickly faded at the very first ultrasound that revealed my baby's life and my own were in serious danger. How do you choose between your baby's life and your own, when everyone is telling you that you *have* to make that choice?**

My story is one of joy, fear, and ABSOLUTE resolve– it is a story of life, faith, and miracles.

It started with a long awaited positive pregnancy test - JOY! Unfortunately, that happiness was short lived. At my first OB appointment my doctor performed an ultrasound and right away saw our sweet baby, but something else was there, too. She sent us to see maternal fetal medicine the next week so they could hopefully figure out what it was. That appointment was the turning point in my life; everything from that day on was an unknown. That was the day I first heard of a twin molar pregnancy. We had a healthy baby and alongside it there was what they thought was a complete molar pregnancy, which is when an egg is fertilized, but instead of a normal, viable pregnancy resulting, the placenta develops into an abnormal mass of cysts. My situation was very rare since we had a viable baby along with a complete molar pregnancy.



***“I prayed to the Lord, and he answered me.  
He freed me from all my fears.”***

**PSALM 34:4**

A molar pregnancy creates many health risks to the mother and in a normal situation the woman would have a D&C to get rid of the molar pregnancy. This is exactly what the doctors wanted me to do even though I had a healthy baby, too. **That day was the first of many times I was told I needed to terminate my pregnancy.** And, while I had a loving husband and a beautiful 2 yr. old boy at home, terminating my pregnancy to save my own life was NEVER an option for me and yet abortion was recommended as my ONLY option. Every single doctor's visit included a replay of the pain-staking conversation about all of the complications and risks of my baby not surviving, but also potentially losing my own life to the danger growing inside me.





***“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”***

**MARK 11:24**

While I’ve always had my faith, I wasn’t one to bring people into my world and ask them for prayer or help. However, I found myself talking more with God, praying each day and night to keep me safe and keep the baby safe. I felt a strong, quiet resolve that my decision to have my baby was the **ONLY** option. After all, who am I to end her life to save my own?

I had weekly doctor appointments, lots of different tests and ultrasounds. I loved watching the ultrasound scans and

treasured the images they gave me of my growing baby. The medical team said I had to reach 24 weeks to make it to viability, and I truly didn’t know if I would beat the odds and ever get the chance to hold her. One horrific and miraculous day that will be etched in my mind forever is when the doctor said a certain lab value registered way too high causing my life to be in immediate danger and we needed to have the D&C immediately. I remember sitting in the consultation room, looking through a veil of tears, knowing in my heart there was no way I could go through with it. The doctor tried to console me by offering that in my case this wouldn’t be considered an abortion. I told him it felt like it to me and asked if I would be able to at least receive my baby’s body for a proper burial. He told me that wouldn’t be an option because the baby would come out in pieces; how awful is that!? Well, with a life or death decision in progress, my mom’s prayer warriors were in full stride and God took over. The doctor drew the same labs for a second time and, miraculously, my values went down substantially enough to make the D&C no longer necessary. Prayers answered. Choosing life was still my choice.

***“The Lord will protect you from all danger; he will keep you safe. He will protect you as you come and go now and forever.”***

**PSALM 121:7-8**

I made it to 23 weeks when I was admitted to the hospital for observation. That was a very hard time for me health wise, but thank God I made it to 24 weeks and 5 days - 5 days past viability! As they wheeled me away and sedated me, I wasn’t sure what the outcome would be and I just prayed over and over “God save me, God save my baby!” I woke up not sure of what had ultimately taken place and was overwhelmed with joy to learn that our sweet baby girl was born, Elsie Eliana. (Eliana means “my God has answered”.) Weighing in at just 1 lb. 9 oz., she spent 5 months in the NICU fighting through a myriad of health concerns, but conquering each one. Sadly, I, too, was not yet out of the woods. During her NICU stay, I was diagnosed with gestational trophoblastic disease, meaning the molar pregnancy had spread to my lungs. And, while the doctors were right about most of the health problems I would encounter, they had no idea the power I had on my side – faith and prayers can truly move mountains. My chemo treatments lasted four months, leaving me in no immediate danger, and baby Elsie was home for Christmas.

I have my sweet Elsie and she is the happiest little girl. While I am still dealing with follow up treatment for myself, I know that all of this was worth it. Each day that I have the gift of looking into her eyes, I know how blessed I am. God has a plan for us; every life is sacred.



# THERESA'S STORY

## A MOTHER'S JOURNEY OF FAITH

(Stacey's Mom)

Learning that grandchild #4 was on the way, I was soaring with joy! However, after discovering the problem with the pregnancy and the health risks that Stacey would be exposed to, I was consumed with fear and extremely concerned about the health and well being of my daughter, my baby. My mind raced with all the possible scenarios. I wanted to protect her from harm, from hurt, from heartache. And, she had a 2 yr. old little boy at home, along with a wonderful husband, who loved her and needed her. While of course I could step in and help if something were to happen to her, my grandson needed his mother. Amidst a whirlwind of emotions mixed with medical jargon, my head craved more information, more assurances. I wanted to protect my child.

***“He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power.”***

***“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”***

**ISAIAH 40:29; 41:10**



I didn't even want to look at the ultrasound because I didn't want the "heart connection". After one of Stacey's appointments, she asked me once again to look at the ultrasound picture – she really wanted me to see this child she was carrying. I finally relented and immediately fell in love with this perfect child. I understood why she could not terminate this baby. Stacey was fighting for her child just as I was fighting for mine.

At that moment, I made the commitment to fully trust in Stacey's decision and to lean on my faith in a way I'd never had to before. So I did the thing that I relied on most in my life – I prayed. I called everyone I knew; I emailed everyone I knew, I asked people to pray for Stacey and the baby. I knew that I needed to bring out the prayer warriors – we needed A LOT of prayers. I went beyond my comfort circle of close

family and reached out even further than my church community and included ANYONE that would say a prayer for Stacey. Stacey had people that didn't even know her pray for her. People would ask their friends who would ask their friends to put Stacey and the baby on their prayer boards or include them in their prayer groups. I asked the people I met in Tanzania while on a mission trip to pray for her. And, every time a health crisis happened, I would immediately put out the word that “we need prayers now” and, with absolute certainty that God was listening, we gained immeasurable strength from these prayers.

While the circumstance was extremely difficult, my favorite visual image of Stacey was during one of her most vulnerable moments. She was in the hospital receiving a brutal magnesium treatment to lower her blood pressure and prevent seizures. She was lying there so weak and yet I was overwhelmed with love. You see, she was covered with a beautiful prayer shawl that was knitted for her by the members of our church community, and I was by her side, praying for her, too. I felt surrounded by the love and the prayers that were said while the shawl was being knitted. It was so powerful to experience that someone who did not know her, who did not know to whom this shawl was going to, prayed for her with every stitch– and now it was on her, my child, wrapping her in God’s love and comfort.

***“Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.”***

**MATTHEW 6:8**

Rushing to the hospital after getting the call that Stacey was going into emergency surgery, I had a LOUD conversation with God. I told Him that I wanted both of them. I didn’t want one or the other. I was going to be greedy. I know that God knows what we need, but we also have to ask - so ask I did. And, my prayers were answered. Indeed, God is so very good.

While it was still a long road, with continued prayers and support, we made it through. After finally holding Elsie (I had to wait 5 long months to hold her), I can honestly say that I would go through this whole life-changing event again – her life is so worth it. I look forward to seeing what God’s plan is for Elsie Eliana (God has answered).

***Note:*** *Stacey’s story is unique and individual – it is shared to exemplify courage, sacrifice, the power of prayer, and miracles. If ever the life of the mother is in jeopardy, prayerful conversations need to take place with family members, medical professionals, and one’s local pastor to determine the right path for that individual and her baby.*