

New LIFE in the midst of a Pandemic

Baby Charlotte's Story

A PEI mother's birth story.

At any time in life, giving birth can have its challenges. Let alone in the midst of a pandemic. Just a few months ago, PEI welcomed a new baby to our Island, a precious child born in the midst of crisis and chaos.

Baby Charlotte is the third of three children to one of our Island families. Her birth story is in sharp contrast with those of her brother and sister, who were born in less trying times. For them, having dad and Grandma at their side during labor and delivery were a given. The trauma of childbirth was softened by the presence of Grandma, whose loving words and handholding lessened the pain and added to the excitement as they were introduced to the world and took their first breaths.

For baby Charlotte and her mother, things were clearly different this time. The pandemic, with its fear and loneliness, its rules and restrictions, prevented Grandma from being at her daughter's side. She was in isolation, passing time until she was allowed to help by looking after Charlotte's brother and sister. They were at home with dad, unable to visit their mother and new baby sister.

Facing labor and child-birth without any familiar human companionship, **Charlotte's mother turned to her faith.** A friend had advised her to find a Bible scripture to focus her attention on — instead of the pain and loneliness. She wrote these words on a whiteboard that she could see from her hospital bed, **"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."** Philippians 4:13

Charlotte's mother says, "Having a baby during the pandemic was the hardest thing God asked me to do. The separation from my family, in which we are so tightly knitted, was agonizing. When you must make decisions regarding your child, you want your spouse there with you, supporting you and helping you to make those decisions. None of this was possible; the sleepless nights in the hospital did not help. Never had I been so physically and mentally exhausted."

Turning to God, trusting in His goodness and relating to the biblical Job helped her to persevere. This experience increased her faith and gratitude for her family, her husband and three healthy children. Looking back on that eventful time, she now feels that God used the time for His Glory. "We rejoice in the hope of the Glory of God. And not only that; we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character and proven character produces hope." (Roman's 5-2)

Baby Charlotte is now home safe and sound with her mother and all the family. Let us remember that many women give birth *alone* during more normal times — due to abandonment, separation from loved ones and many other reasons. Let's do our part to pray and support mothers in need — whenever God opens the door.

