



Not Just a Blanket

BY JULIA A. WAGNER

I shifted my weary body on the thin hospital cot and opened my eyes. Glancing at my husband, who was still asleep, I quietly slipped my feet into my shoes. The events of the night before hovered in a haze over my mind. Words like *heart defect*, *surgery*, and *code blue* were blurred with worry and concern for our 10-day-old son. The doctor had told us how lucky we were that Jacob was still alive.

How I had prayed and pleaded the night before as tears coursed down my cheeks and carried me into sleep. I thought of our tiny son in his incubator, surrounded by tubes and wires. How I yearned to take him in my arms, to feel his tender weight, and to whisper reassurances in his ear. How I had pleaded for comfort for each of us, but especially for him.

I stepped into the bathroom and splashed water on my face, shocked at how red and tired my eyes looked. I washed my hands with the pungent antibacterial soap, the scent lingering in my nose, and walked down the empty corridor to the pediatric intensive care unit. I picked up the phone hanging on the wall and listened for the receptionist inside.

"Hello?"

"Julia Wagner to see Jacob."

"Come right in," the cheerful voice replied.

The doors slowly swung open. As I walked in I saw a nurse busy checking our baby's vital signs. "He's doing well this morning," she said.

I crossed to his side and saw, gently rolled and wrapped around him, a beautiful blanket in all the pastel colors of Easter. "Oh!" I whispered.

I had not thought to be audible, but the perceptive nurse turned to me and said, "Many groups and organizations donate blankets for the babies in the intensive care unit. This one came with a card."

I accepted the card from her hand and read, "Made with loving hands for your baby by the women of the Four Corners Ward in Salem, Oregon, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

I was filled with love and gratitude as I realized the answer to my prayers. The Lord had wrapped our son in the arms of His love during that long and dreadful night. I thought back on the times I had helped make blankets in similar Relief Society service projects, thinking, "It is just a blanket. How can a blanket help and comfort tiny babies and their families in such great need?"

How wrong I had been. I looked at that blanket, like arms wrapped around my boy, keeping him safe, and I envisioned the Savior's arms. I knew He was watching over and loving us. ■

Note: Jacob Wagner had open-heart surgery when he was 14 days old. He is now healthy, thriving, and bringing joy to his family.