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WATCHING OUR BABY LEAVE THIS LIFE

After the first ultrasound, the doctor told us there was a chance that our new baby had Down syndrome. My husband and I didn’t expect to hear this, and my vision for the future changed immediately.

All through the pregnancy, I was filled with questions and concerns about what to expect. But we prepared carefully for our baby’s arrival. When the day finally arrived, I felt in my heart that someone beautiful and special was about to be born.

We named our baby boy Santiago, and shortly after his birth we learned that he had not only Down syndrome but also several serious health complications that affected his heart,

liver, and lungs. Immediately, the doctors and nurses connected him to an artificial respirator and a heart–lung machine. As the days went by in the hospital, my husband and I began discussing how we were going to raise Santiago alongside his brothers. It was then we realized how much we needed our Heavenly Father.

Our little “Santi” improved enough to be disconnected from the artificial respirator. When he began to breathe on his own, it was as if he was saying, “Mom, I’m going to be strong and do my part.” He squeezed our fingers in his tiny hand. He was strong, but his heart could not hold up. He went into cardiac arrest, and a short while later,

he returned to his Heavenly Father.

I never dreamed I’d go through something like that. To wait for your child to arrive with so much anticipation, to make so many plans for him, and then to watch him leave this life is one of the most painful things a father and mother can go through.

My husband and I went to the temple after Santiago’s burial. When we entered, we felt comforted. I knew someday I would know my baby and enjoy him as his mother. I’m grateful for temples and for eternal families. Now it is up to us to live in a way that we can be with our little Santiago again. ■
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