

# Christmas at the

# Hospital

**By Kathy Johnson Gale**

(Based on a true story)

*Have faith, have hope, live like his Son, help others on their way (Children's Songbook, 34–35).*

Stacy's seventh Christmas was one her family would never forget. It was unforgettable because it was almost so very, very awful.

One autumn day, Stacy's family had gone for a drive to see the colorful trees. When a truck suddenly came into their lane, Dad swerved to miss it and hit a tree instead. Dad and Mom were fine, and so were Adam and Will. But Stacy was hurt. Dad called for an ambulance to take her to the hospital.

Stacy woke up in the hospital with a bandage on her head and her leg in a cast. She would need to stay in the hospital for a while until she got better.

Stacy shared a room with three girls named Jenny, Tamika, and Kelly. Kelly could get out of bed, so she played games and read stories with the other girls.

Stacy was glad to meet new friends in the hospital.

*Stacy only wanted one thing for Christmas.*

Every day the doctor checked on Stacy. Her leg was healing well, and soon the nurses removed the bandage from her head.

One day Kelly went home. The girls hugged and said good-bye.

"I'm glad you're well, Kelly," Stacy said.

"Thanks. Now you and Jenny and Tamika get better too," Kelly said.

Eventually Stacy was allowed to get out of bed. Walking with crutches was hard, but once she learned to get around on her own she made friends with children in other rooms. There were many children in the hospital, all with different injuries and illnesses. Some were there only a short time, while others had to stay for many months.

In December, Stacy was finally able to go home. "I'm glad I get to go home, but I'm going to miss everyone so much," Stacy told her parents.

As Christmas drew near, Stacy's cast was removed, and she worked hard to walk without limping. One night Mom and Dad asked Stacy what she wanted for Christmas.

"There's really only one thing I want," Stacy said. "I want to take presents to the children in the hospital who don't get to go home for Christmas."

Mom hugged Stacy. "Is that really what you want? You don't want anything for yourself?"

"That's really what I want," Stacy said.

Mom and Dad explained the plan to Will and Adam and added that there wouldn't be much money left over for family presents.

"That's OK," Will said. "I think it's a good idea."

The family went shopping and picked out toys, games, and books. Then they wrapped the gifts and piled them in the car.

On Christmas morning, Stacy and her family drove to the hospital. Stacy grinned as she passed out the gifts. Some of her friends had gone home, and now other

children were in their beds. Stacy had a gift for each one. Seeing their excitement when they opened their gifts filled Stacy's heart with joy.

"How do you feel?" Mom asked as they left the children's wing.

Stacy hugged her. "This might sound funny, but I loved Christmas at the hospital!" ♦



I went caroling at the hospital with my family. I saw a woman who couldn't walk. I wanted to sing my favorite song for her, so I asked my family to sing "Angels We Have Heard on High." After we sang, I felt good to see her so happy.

**Audrey G., age 7, California**

