

**Stacie's story** (Ian Glade's birth 6/7/09) *Second baby for this mom, water birth at home. Second natural birth, first home birth.*

Labor began on a Friday night...actually one week before I lost my mucus plug, and I was uncomfortable with light rushes on and off most of that week. Friday was no different, although I did have my mother in law watch my 3 year old (Gabbie) so I could get some rest during that day "just in case". What a blessing that was! Gabbie went to play with some friends that night and wanted to have a sleep over so everything fell into place for her.

I was unable to relax in the evening so my husband and I watched a movie and I dozed on and off. Between midnight and two I said OK...I think this is it but I'm going to try to rest. Making love was not happening I was having too many rushes so I settled for a massage and paced around the house a bit. I leaned on my Ian and rocked back and forth in an almost squat (standing up) and was feeling really good. We thought my rushes were about 2 min. apart but it felt like a long time in between, I wasn't ready to call anyone yet...I kept saying "just one more and I'll call". I knew this was "it" but didn't know how much longer it would be or really how long I had been in true labor so I wanted to be alone with my husband as much as I could be.

Between 2-3am I thought ok let's call the midwifery team (2 midwives and a doula). My good friend, Celine, who has been to several births came too, we called her first.

My rushes were good and strong but I was still talking and joking in between. I went into my bedroom and only wanted Ian or Celine during the rushes but came out to socialize in between. I alternated between standing and rocking, down on my hands and knees or leaning in a large pillow on my couch during the rushes and in between. I drank A LOT, and went to the bathroom to sit on the toilet a lot too. That felt good.

I just kept going with the rushes and everyone around was telling me what a good job I was doing. Everyone was in good spirits and it was a wonderful time to spend together. When it got intense Deirdre came into the hallway where I was rushing and asked if I wanted to use my birth tub. I said I thought it was still too early and didn't want to poop in the water. She suggested I give the water a try and could always get out, she also said of all the births she's attended (over 300) she's only had to take a woman out once because she pooped so much in the tub.

I got undressed and got into the water. It felt nice but at this point nothing was providing much relief. I would stand up and get back down. Roll around in the water and get on all fours. Lean back and then sit up and lean on the edge. I kept looking around at everyone's face thinking "Someone help me"..."this is so intense".

I finally asked "How much longer" and felt that I had reached my threshold. Deirdre said she didn't know but she could check me. A little lip of cervix was all that was left to open. I prayed loud "Lord Open me up!" and chanted "Oooooopen" over and over through

the rushes. Opening my mouth wide saying "Open" helped me focus on my cervix opening and I knew God was with me.

I wasn't liking labor too much at this point and began to pray out loud,

"Lord give me strength" and "bring me my baby".

I asked to be checked and still had a bit of cervix left "I don't want to do this anymore" I said. "I want to get out of here and go somewhere."

Robin was calm and said, "You *are* doing this, and you're doing great, and no matter where we go this is going to happen"

I said with certainty "I can't do this, nope, I don't want to anymore."

"Wherever you go you'll have to do this, you're safe here and doing great...if we go somewhere you'll probably end up doing this in the car"

I decided then that I must be close and said I wanted to push...I started to push and at first it didn't seem like much was happening. Then I felt my baby start to come down, it was so intense and I prayed out loud "Lord bring me my baby". My body floated to the top of the water and I clearly needed something to bear down on. Deirdre suggested to Ian (who during my pregnancy said he didn't want to) to get into the tub with me. His body felt so strong and safe and he held me while I pushed.

"Am I close" I asked

"A couple more pushes like that and he'll come shooting out across the pool" Deirdre said. ( I could have laughed but I was very focused) I knew I was pushing hard and didn't want to tear. Robin and Deirdre guided me through some grunting so I wouldn't push so hard. Then Robin said "Reach down and touch your baby" At first I didn't want to I was too nervous...but then I did and I felt his little bulging, soft, slimy, hairy head. I thought it was just my vagina bulging at first because of all the hair...but it was my baby ready to be born.

I pushed hard...I wanted him out and this OVER! Out he came, Deirdre caught him and brought him up to me, as she was handing him to me I noticed his red, swollen scrotum wow! A boy. I was so happy to have a baby boy! He cried and cried and was so beautiful, I wanted to get out, push out the placenta and go to bed and nurse him!

He weighed 9 lbs even...born in my bedroom, in the birth tub at 5:45am probably about a 5 or 6 hours of intense labor and a couple of days of the light stuff.