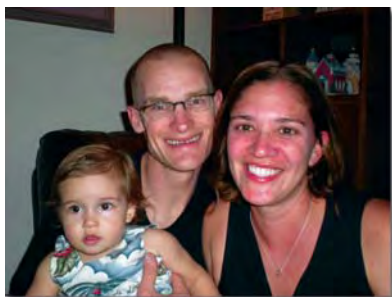


Reflections

Acts of Grace Foundation • Small Deeds, Big Difference

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A note from the Founder



Marlena, Joe, and Elle Diedrich

Days after we lost our baby, Grace, I spent a lot of time reflecting. The sadness was overwhelming; a piece of my heart was gone. I knew our family needed a positive outlet for our grief in

order to move forward in our lives.

While in the hospital on bedrest prior to the girls' arrival, my husband Joe and I thought of dozens of ideas to make the stay a little easier. Shortly after returning home with our beautiful daughter Elle, we decided to turn those ideas into action. What better way to remember and honor our inspiration . . . our precious daughter, Grace?

Acts of Grace Foundation (AoGF) is inspired by Grace Diedrich. Our mission is simple, yet challenging: *To transform a small deed into a big difference for pregnant women on hospital bedrest.*

Reflections is a quarterly publication about AoGF, featuring impactful stories of how the Foundation is living out its mission by addressing the needs of high-risk pregnancy patients at Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center (Denver, CO) and SkyRidge Medical Center (Lone Tree, CO).

In each issue you will have the opportunity to read articles from both volunteers' and patients' perspectives, providing a better understanding of why even the healthiest women may find themselves on hospital bedrest during pregnancy. *Reflections* will also keep you posted on the growth that is occurring with AoGF.

On behalf of the Foundation and the AoGF Board of Directors, I welcome you to *Reflections*. We hope you enjoy this publication and appreciate your continued support.

Marlena

Marlena Diedrich
Founder, Acts of Grace Foundation

Giving . . . and getting more in return

Where were you on Christmas Day? Many of us were with family and friends--opening gifts, traveling to see one another, or cooking that famous Christmas dinner.

While many of us were enjoying our holiday traditions in the comfort of home, there were expecting and new moms on the third floor of Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center (P/SL) spending the holidays in a cozy room with a family member, and in some cases, with their miracle baby(ies)!

I was blessed with the opportunity to deliver some Frasier Fir trees and holiday gift bags to these moms on December 25th and left P/SL with a heart full of joy! My husband graciously donated part of his Christmas Day to drive to P/SL with me and help me distribute

gifts. I was greeted by a mom's smile in every room I visited. I was also able to meet several brand new babies that had arrived safely into this world amidst the care and concern of their mothers' high-risk pregnancies. I left feeling completely honored to have been able to bring just a touch of joy to all of those lives!



Martha Baldwin is a member of the AoGF Board of Directors and committed volunteer.

After the visit, I tried to put myself in one of the mom's shoes: spending Christmas Day on bedrest in a hospital that is hundreds of miles from where I live--with monitors beeping, continuously reminding me how delicate and miraculous the birth of my baby is going to be. The women that I visited are experiencing what no mom should have to. For that, they are heroes in my eyes and are continuously in my prayers.

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A mother's story of hope

At 23 weeks pregnant I had my second ultrasound and the tech gave us a huge surprise . . . we were having monoamniotic twins (twins that share the same sac)! I was admitted to P/SL at 25 weeks for observation to avoid a cord accident.

This transition was difficult, because we live on the eastern plains of Colorado (Stratton, CO) and have a 15-month-old daughter, Daphne. I had never been away from her more than 4 hours. I was scared being 3 hours away from my family, but they were able to come up every weekend and call every night.

Unfortunately, my babies' heart rates were monitored for several hours every day due to decelerated heartbeats. There were several scary episodes when the nurses considered (or actually administered) an IV in preparation for an emergency c-section. Thankfully, my babies bounced back with normal heart rates and it would be another week before a similar situation would occur.

Trista and Taylor were born on August 18, 2008 at 33 weeks gestation. While they spent

almost 40 days with the wonderful nurses in the P/SL NICU, I moved to the Ronald McDonald house for the duration of my time in Denver. I am so grateful for the help we received during this difficult time. When I reflect on our experience, many emotions arise. I have many fond memories of my 54-day stay at P/SL. I enjoyed going to the pool and networking with other moms who could truly relate to my experience. Also, thanks to the **Acts of Grace** BINGO Night, I was able to meet new friends and have fun every Thursday night. I really looked forward to "outing" every week--it was a great outlet

for fellowship and communication with other moms who knew exactly what I was going through.

My family and I would like to thank **Acts of Grace Foundation** and its volunteers who selflessly helped me smile at a time when I needed it most.

Cristy Davis
P/SL Patient



Taylor, Trista and Daphne (center) are happy to be home in Stratton, CO.

How Can YOU Help?

What can you do to bring joy into the lives of these moms and their families?

- ◆ Collect and donate unused hotel toiletry items
- ◆ Make and donate your famous cookies
- ◆ Volunteer for bingo nights or craft nights
- ◆ Make a monetary donation

There are many ways to support Acts of Grace Foundation.

Find out how you can get involved at www.actsofgracefoundation.com

RIGHT NOW, we are set up with **Good Search and Good Shop**. If you search or buy anything on the internet, **Acts of Grace** will receive \$.01 for each search and a percentage of every purchase. **Pass it on!**

Go to www.goodsearch.com and enter **Acts of Grace Foundation** as the charity you want to support.

Did you know?

The antepartum unit at P/SL gives an "**Antepartum Queen**" crown to the current woman that has been on the unit the longest

Acts of Grace has donated over 100 new and used books

Acts of Grace has donated over 80 flower arrangements

Families that visit outside a 60 mile radius of Denver are invited to stay at **The Ronald McDonald House** for as necessary

At Sky Ridge Medical Center, a patient can order steamed salmon with mango peach salsa from the cafeteria

Acts of Grace is able to provide moms with a hair cuts and styles upon request

Airlife transfers 90% of moms with high-risk pregnancies to P/SL and Sky Ridge Medical Center

The record for the longest stay in P/SL's Antepartum unit is 70 days