

DOWN HOME: Precious sound: tiny heartbeat

July 16, 2010

Lindsay and Aaron heard a heartbeat.

And all our hearts leapt for joy.

Early this year, I told you about the happy news Joanna and I received at Christmas. Lindsay, our older daughter, was pregnant with her first baby and our first grandchild. Despite the fact Jo and I aren't really—can't really—be old enough to be grandparents, we were ecstatic.

But then, soon after, I reported the sad news that Lindsay lost the baby. All of us were devastated. Long before we would've counted little fingers and toes and stared into tiny eyes, we loved that child. And so our hearts broke when we learned we never would cuddle that baby, hold it in our arms, coo sweet blabber in its ears and make fools of ourselves for the sheer pleasure of making it laugh.

By God's grace, you helped us through it. So many friends from far and near reached out to all of us. You assured us you were praying for Lindsay and Aaron and all our family. Many of you told us your own stories—how your own miscarriages broke your own hearts and how, thanks be to God, you later gave birth to babies. Now, many of those babies have grown up, fallen in love and blessed your lives with babies of their own.

For a person who makes a living collecting and ordering words, I feel at a loss for the vocabulary to describe how deeply and profoundly your expressions of encouragement and promises of prayer touched and strengthened our lives. So, please accept the simplest yet most heartfelt statement of our gratitude: Thank you.

Forgive me for not saying that sooner. We just weren't ready to talk about it. You probably can understand why we were so cautious about telling you the good news as soon as we learned Lindsay was pregnant again. In those early weeks, despite prayer and resolute optimism, this second pregnancy seemed tenuous. We felt most comfortable holding it close to our hearts.

Lindsay's doctor has been sensitive and positive. From the start, he told her he didn't discover any reason why she would not be able to carry a baby to term. He's been monitoring her progress, and her body has responded as it should in a healthy pregnancy.

We breathed a collective sigh of relief when Lindsay passed the point in this pregnancy where she lost her baby the first time. And we all rejoiced when Lindsay and Aaron visited the doctor's office and heard the heartbeat.

So, with each passing week, our anticipation of this child's birth multiplies. I predict Jo and I will feel like we're ready to be grandparents by the time she or he enters this world.

As Christmas approaches this winter, our family will rejoice to celebrate our Savior's birth. But you'll understand if we'll be a bit distracted as we look into the New Year and the arrival of a baby whose birth was not foretold by prophets, but who will be adored by our family.