

Contents

Chapter 1.....	Blake's Unexpected Birth, Prayer For Preemies Page 1
Chapter 2.....	One Month Old, First PDA Surgery Page 66
Chapter 3.....	Two Months Old, Heart Banding Surgery Page 102
Chapter 4.....	Three Months Old, Jet Flight To Houston, Eye Surgery Page 145
Chapter 5.....	Four Months Old, Extubation Attempt Page 188
Chapter 6.....	Five Months Old, Pressure Support Trials Page 216
Chapter 7.....	Six Months Old, Hernia Surgery & Extubation Success Page 237

Chapter 8	Seven Months Old, CPAP Support Page 267
Chapter 9	Eight Months Old, Feeding, Growing, Physical Therapy Page 280
Chapter 10.....	Nine Months Old, Nasal Canula Trials Page 294
Chapter 11.....	Ten Months Old, Spoon Feeding, Off CPAP Page 303
Chapter 12.....	Eleven Months Old, Hurricane Rita Then Home For Two Weeks Page 316
Chapter 13.....	One Year Old, Birthday Celebrations & Heart Surgery Page 329
Chapter 14	Thirteen Months Old, PICU Abdominal Issues & PCU Thanksgiving Page 353
Chapter 15.....	Fourteen Months Old, Home For Christmas Page 370

Introduction



Dearest Blake,

You know, you had us worried soon after your conception,
From predictions of an indefinite, threatening malady,
Your dear Mommy's tearful wish on her Birthday for you,
precious baby within her:
"Small but well, we can handle."

Your birth, as unpredictable as the twinkle of a falling star,
The time and reason unknown, but minutes beforehand;
Stunned by your unexpected crisis, some rushed to attend your arrival,
Some fell to their knees in the meadow to pray.

We were all afraid but tried not to show, and we all prayed,
So your dear anxious and worried parents,
Had strength enough, as they entered your delivery room,
Unable to delay the rushed appointment for your birth.

Hand in hand, eye to eye, your loving Mommy and Daddy,
Fought the fear, of losing her or you, in this unforeseen dreadful hour.
Dear Daddy stood beside Mommy, devotion strong as rock,
eyes steadfast with love,
Grasping her hand, convincing her and you to stay with him this day.

The strength of three began this way together,
Each holding on to the other two, in a lifeline circle of love.
Each loving the other two more intensely
than they had ever known they could,
The deep, unfolding love, once two-fold, now three-fold.

You were just one pound and only six ounces more;
The extra ounces a special gift granted by God,
From a loving Grandmother's heartfelt prayer in the hospital chapel,
As you were lifted from your warm womb
into the evening light of your birth day.

We all soon gathered to your cradle side, a great place of wonder,
Wonder of life, health, and the HOPE to live.
The family watched in deepest, fondest awe,
The beginning of you, living within the charm
of your parent's softly sung lullabies.

Just as tiny ripples duplicate themselves and grow larger,
From each hopeful teardrop so sincerely expressed,
The Prayers of hundreds, then thousands, of loved ones
flowed to the Heavens,
With your name, Blake, whispered by all the Angels
watching your love light from above.

Many days and nights were spent by all: family, friends, doctors, nurses,
In endless prayer and praise to God for you, blessed child of God.
Your dear, strong spirit steadfastly showed us many Wonders,
Your tiny, immature body defiantly endured
more than even have we grownups.

Every day, a Holy day, as the sunset reminded us
you held on firmly twenty-four hours more,
Every week, a Birthday celebration, as you grew
and felt our love yet another seven days,
At long last, a month passes, granting us a joyous song to sing again.
You are the Joy of our hearts and we love to Rejoice
over your every sweet success.

Picture this, dear Blake, your First Birthday
honored with God's brilliantly dazzling Rainbow;
Many prayers curving heavenward, many miracles
curving earthward on soft rays of light.
We trust God's promise is like His Rainbow after such a threatening storm,
Tiny Blake, you surely give us reason to know
HOPE at the end of the Rainbow.

∞♥∞

Chapter 1
Blake's Unexpected Birth
Prayer For Premies



Blake Michael Johnson
Born: October 16, 2004
1 lb, 6 oz. - 13"

♥ October 23, 2004 at 11:30 AM CDT

Welcome Family and Friends! Thanks for visiting and leaving messages at Baby Blake Johnson's Internet CarePage at CarePages.com. We hope this web site will be helpful in keeping you all up to date on Blake. Sign up for a member name and password. His CarePage name is **BabyBlakeJ**

Blake is one week old today!! So let's recap last week. He was born on Saturday, Oct 16, which was 14 weeks premature. Due to complications, doctors felt it was necessary to deliver him for his sake and Kim's. She had something called **HELLP** syndrome which happens for no apparent reason with multiple symptoms occurring rapidly. She had high blood pressure, **Hemolytic anemia**, **Elevated Liver enzymes** and **Low Platelets**.

Within 6 hours lab work revealed how serious this situation was for Kim. The only resolution was to deliver our baby by c-section. Severe cases like Kimberly's are life threatening to both mother and fetus. Blake was intubated to help him breathe and had several other lines attached for drawing blood and giving feedings and medications. He spent several days resting and doing quite well.

Mom was discharged from the hospital on Wednesday. Blake had the breathing tube removed Wednesday for a while but had to have it put back in. This is normal for a preemie at this age. He does not need much ventilator support at this time. He also began receiving nourishment (breast milk) which he seems to be tolerating very well.

Our son Blake is handsome. He is tiny and slender with proportionately long arms and legs. Also, his second toe is longer than the others, just like mom's. At birth he weighed 1 lb 6 oz, and was just 13 inches long. The past two days the nurses have placed him on his belly and he looks so comfortable and peaceful.

We will try to keep you all updated as things progress. Blake is at Brackenridge Hospital in Austin in the Neonatal ICU. Please keep him in your prayers and look for information to come about a **PRAYER for PREEMIES Ribbon** campaign. We love you all and are so thankful for your prayers and support.

We have definitely felt everyone's thoughts and prayers sending love and HOPE.

Chad & Kim & Blake Michael :)

♥ October 25, 2004 at 09:57 PM CDT

Blake has good news to share with everyone today although it started out kind of rocky. There was news this morning that Blake may have had some sort of infection developing so blood cultures were taken for testing. Blake was put on antibiotics but as the day progressed, signs of infection seemed to clear. Way to go Blake!!

NICU staff proceeded with the plan for the day which was to remove all of Blake's umbilical lines and successfully place a PICC line through his foot. The PICC line (a thin, threadlike tube) runs all the way to his aorta and will remain in place for quite a while to allow for IV fluids and medication to be infused. This line can stay in long term unlike umbilical cord line.

He also had the settings on his ventilator lowered to allow him to do more of the breathing on his own. It's possible that doctors will try to remove the breathing tube on Tuesday and place an oxygen supply over his nose for support. The goal is to get him off the ventilator sooner rather than later to avoid damage to his lungs from prolonged use.

This is a big step for Blake which could be long-term or last only a few hours depending on his strength to maintain breathing on his own. Mom and Dad are doing well and ask that you continue to pray that each day brings more positive results for Blake. Look for more pictures to come in the photo gallery.



♥ October 25, 2004 at 10:59 PM CDT

Hello everyone, I want to start by thanking everyone for all your thoughts and prayers for our son, Blake. Can you believe we have a child? We are trying to get use to it. Everyday it seems a little more REAL. He is just beautiful. He did gain 1.8 oz on Sat, Oct 23rd. I helped change my first diaper on Sat. His little bottom is soooo cute. Best of all we saw his entire back and it just looks so HEALTHY--no Spina Bifida. Thank GOD!

Chad & I have been praying with him everyday. We petitioned to have his name in the St. Jude Shrine in Chicago, IL and a candle will be lit in honor of him. I was already on the list for prayers by my neighbor Kathy, so we decided he needed to be on the list. Michelle gave Blake two prayer books and Kristen picked the first prayer she wanted us to read to him. He seems very relaxed and at