



Birth Stories

Kaitie's Birth Story, "The Birth of Caroline 2020"

To preface my birth story, I must explain my love for pregnancy and birth. Since I was a little girl, I was drawn to all of it. My mother had six children, and I can remember going with her to her prenatal appointments and ultrasounds while she was pregnant with my younger brother. I loved reading about the stages of development in pregnancy, and soon I was hooked! I was in awe of the natural process that our bodies go through, and I dreamed of having a natural birth experience one day. I eventually went on to school to become a Sonographer. OB ultrasound is my favorite part of my job. I love that I get to be a womb window for so many families.

When I became pregnant with my first son in 2017, I really hoped to deliver with a midwife, but the hospital he was born at did not have one. I had a good birth experience with him, but the entire time I felt like there was something missing. I liked my doctor, but the appointments were quick. I often left with a lot of unanswered questions. I suffered from post-partum anxiety, and I told myself I would never go through that again.

When I became pregnant with my second child in 2019, my previous doctor had left which forced me to switch to a new provider. At every appointment, my heart was telling me it wasn't the right fit for me. Once again, appointments felt impersonal and fast. In March of 2020, the pandemic started, and I was 27 weeks pregnant. With many unknowns, I was told there was a possibility my husband wouldn't be allowed at the delivery of our child. I felt God was speaking straight to my heart to finally make the switch that I wanted all along. A close friend of mine had delivered her babies with Heather and Alison at Trillium Midwifery and loved her experience. I wanted to know more about them and their services... The pandemic caused a lot of anxiety for me, and it was an emotional pregnancy. I immediately sent an email to Heather and Alison. They responded right away that they would be willing to meet with me and my husband that same

night. I could hardly believe how fast their response was! Now for the next challenge... to convince my husband that this was a safe idea. 😊

There is something so special and comforting about Heather and Alison. My husband was instantly put at ease after meeting with them. They answered all of our questions. They are knowledgeable about pregnancy and birth, and we left every visit with them feeling like we made the right decision. I enjoyed all of my pre-natal visits, and I never wanted to leave, seriously!

On the morning of June 8th, 2020, I was 38 weeks and 6 days pregnant when I received a text from Alison checking in to make sure I hadn't had any labor signs as she was going to be out of town for the day. I originally replied, "Everything is good here. Baby must be happy where it's at." Minutes later, I went to the bathroom and realized that I had lost my mucus plug... I texted her back "I literally can't make this up, but I just lost my mucus plug." She called me and we discussed that labor would probably start within 24 hours. Since contractions hadn't started, I agreed that it wouldn't be a big deal if she left town. Honestly, I was in complete denial that my labor might be starting soon. I had gone 2 days overdue with my first son and endured an extremely painful 36 hour labor, so I thought I had a long way to go.

I didn't have any contractions throughout the day but very strong Braxton Hicks. At 4 pm my husband and I took our two year old on a walk. It was a very hot June evening. Temperatures were reaching 90 degrees. The walk soon felt like a horrible idea haha! When we got home, I lost a lot more of my mucus plug. Very light contractions started around 5 pm. We finished dinner, and I tucked my son into bed for what I realized would probably be the last time as an only child. At 7 pm, I called to check in with Alison and tell her how my day had gone. The last I had spoken to her was that morning. She said I should try and go to bed early that night and call her when contractions were 5:1:1. At 9 pm, I tried to lie down to sleep, but I could tell that wasn't going to happen. I labored in bed until midnight practicing my Christian Hypnobirthing.

By midnight, things were picking up and fast! I called Alison and told her my contractions were 3 minutes apart. I planned to give birth at their birth center which was a 30 minute drive for us. She thought it was time I come in. We were greeted by Heather and Alison at the birth center around 1:40 a.m. I was still slightly in denial. I expected that I may have another 24 hours to go. They checked me, and I was 6 cm dilated and very surprised but relieved. In my head, I was thinking there is no way labor could go this fast.

At this point, my memory gets a little fuzzy, but I think I got into the birthing tub around 3 am. I could literally feel God's presence in the room. I felt surrounded by so much love between my husband, my mom, Heather and Alison. So far, I felt so in control of my contractions. I continued to pray in between each contraction for God to give me strength to get through this labor un-medicated. I spent a lot of time in prayer throughout this pregnancy. With each contraction, I would mentally offer up my sufferings. I kept getting visions of Mary going through labor un-medicated, in a stable, with baby Jesus and processing what that must have been like. All of these thoughts made my labor feel serene and peaceful.

I was definitely feeling the urge to push with every contraction while in the tub. I tried to remain relaxed. But once I was ready to push, it felt very INTENSE. I can remember Alison and Heather's soft voices encouraging me. Thankfully, the pushing went quick. I pushed for 7 minutes in a squat/lunge position in the birthing tub, and our baby was born at 4:10 am. Alison caught her and helped place her on my chest. My husband announced that our baby was a girl! She was born just 2 ½ hours after arriving at the birth center. My mom was able to attend the birth and my sister took photos of the birth and barely made it in time. Haha! They were both blown away by the experience.

I am so grateful for the support I was given by Heather and Alison both during the pregnancy and post-partum. It was my dream birth experience. It will remain in my heart forever.

- *Kaitie*