

## **The Birth of Oliver**

**By Gail Grenier Sweet © 2006**

What a privilege to see my first grandson born! Charlie called me at about 5:00 in the morning March 1, 2005, and said, “Katie’s in labor. We’re going to the hospital. Do you want to be part of it?”

“YES!” I answered, surprised, delighted, honored.

My daughter-in-law, Katie Sue, is a tall and quiet woman. On that birthing day, I witnessed where she gets her strength: a well deep inside her. From early morning until 4:00 pm when Oliver was born, Katie met every contraction with her own calmness. She closed her eyes, leaned on her husband, breathed long and slow. At one point I stayed behind in the birthing room and she and Charlie went into the bathroom. There Katie rocked up and down on all fours in a whirlpool bathtub to ease her back labor.

Shortly after that, the nurse said, “I think the baby turned when you were in the whirlpool.” With the baby in normal face-up presentation, Katie’s back labor ceased.

As the pains got stronger and stronger, Katie found relief by standing with hands on knees and rocking up and down, doing shallow knee bends. I’ve helped two other women through labor, but this was the first time I really felt, *Wow, I’m watching an animal here.* I felt Katie’s power, coping with intense pain without any drugs.

Finally when she pushed, Katie let loose some mighty and long howls. After pushing for a while, Katie was just about out of strength.

The nurse-midwife said, “Go back inside where you were before,” and “Come on Katie, keep pushing – this is how you get your baby.”

The baby finally emerged and soon rested on Katie’s chest, skin-to-skin.

Oliver Charles Sweet had joined our family and the family of the world.

**The End**