



TO OUR AMAZING FAMILY AND FRIENDS

You are the most important people in our lives — you have held us and carried us as we've journeyed through these past two years and there truly aren't words to describe how much we appreciate every single one of you.

When the tornado of hormones, lack of sleep, and wild emotions of any birth is combined with our experience of loss and the presence of grief, the chance for miscommunication and misunderstanding is high. Knowing this and because we love you, Lane and I hope to set some expectations for what the time around Lora's birth may (or may not) look like.

With my blood pressure dancing the line of too high, the exact date and time of Lora's birth is a little up in the air. It was originally scheduled for Friday, January 18th at 7:30am in the Mother Baby Center at Abbott Northwestern Hospital (the same place Norah was born), but if my BP continues to be an issue, Lora may make her arrival a little sooner.

If you choose to be in the waiting room, our plan is to have Jen (our doula) meet you after surgery to share photos of Lora and give you an update on how everyone is doing.

After the surgery and initial recovery, we hope to be up for having a limited number of people visit that evening, but we will lead that decision.

We don't know what to expect on Lora's first day earthside, but we will honor whatever it becomes. We want to give ourselves space to get to know this new little human, take care of ourselves physically, and navigate a very complex and intense emotional experience.

We may want to show Lora off immediately and invite everyone up as soon as we can. But it's also very possible that we may not be ready to have any visitors that first day. If that happens, please understand that the decision was made to allow space to address the needs of our newly expanded family; it has nothing to do with you, our appreciation for you, or our desire to have you there supporting us and our sweet girl.

After that first day, we plan to allow visitors the rest of our hospital stay.

THREE NOTES ABOUT VISITING

1 - It's OK to talk about Norah and Mom. We are choosing to honor them throughout our stay in various ways and any conversation about them will be welcomed with open arms (*but I can't guarantee there won't be tears, because, hormones*).

2 - Keep in mind that it's cold and flu season. A little bug in an adult can translate to a big illness in a tiny body. Both Lora and myself will need to steer clear of any sickness for a while. If you feel under the weather or have been exposed to someone that is contagiously sick please hold your visit until later.

3 - When it comes to holding Lora, wait for us to offer instead of asking. The simple act of holding our baby carries a significant weight for us and will be complex to navigate.

Holding Norah in any sort of natural way was nearly impossible due to the number of cords, IVs, and her intubation. The only time we were able to fully and comfortably hold her was after the breathing tube was removed and she was actively dying, after she passed, and then for the last time at the funeral home.

Norah went straight from the safety of her daddy's arms into the arms of Jesus.

The last time I handed my baby girl to someone else I was handing her to the funeral director. The weight of her little body in my arms is a sensation I will continue to long for until we are one day reunited.

Lane and I have both refused to hold another child after Norah until it would be our own. Holding our living daughter will be an incredibly holy and powerful experience for us, one that we may fiercely protect for a while.

Please know that our potential refusal to let you



hold Lora will ease with time. It has nothing to do with you, and everything to do with the miracle of our second daughter's life.

We can't wait to meet this little girl and see what God has planned for her.

Because of Norah, we know that it will be more incredible than we could ever imagine.

Thank you for being a part of it all.

XOXO

Joanna, Lane, & Norah.

WAYS TO HELP OUT AFTER LORA IS BORN:

Go grocery shopping or run errands.

Give us a call or text and see if we need anything from town.

Delivery! If you thought of something you'd like us to have or even want to send a meal, Amazon Prime and other delivery services are a great way to get it to us while also letting us sleep.

Make us a meal. Be it fresh, frozen, or delivered, any time that we don't need to spend planning or prepping meals will be so appreciated. Neither of us are overly picky - I don't like fish, mushrooms or olives and Lane will basically eat anything. While we love desserts, this fresh little babe and her healing mama will need all the healthy goodness we can get! **Note - I will be completely cutting out dairy after Lora is born.** Lane possibly had some stomach issues as a baby and we both are sensitive to dairy as adults. We're hoping that starting Lora with a clean slate will help make any sensitivities quickly obvious when we choose to introduce it.

Just start cleaning. Feel free to help us around the house, even if we don't ask. Taking out the garbage, running the dishwasher, cleaning up the kitchen, doing some quick vacuuming, starting a load of laundry, or folding some clothes - all will help immensely.