

# HOSPITALITY: JUST SHOW UP

by Pam Auble

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*...the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem" .... So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child... (Luke 2:15,16)*

Way back in December of 1996 when we were brand new to Hiram, Amy was a newborn, Andy just turned three and Dave was two days out of knee surgery. Early that morning, baby Amy awoke with an eye inexplicably swollen like an egg. We left her brother to care for Dave and went to see her pediatrician. He explained frantically that this eye infection could quickly spread to her brain and we must immediately leave for the Cleveland Clinic ER downtown Cleveland.

Brain infection. Downtown.  
Alone with my new child.

As always, Amy Auble was amiable, calm and cooperative. Her mom was a mess, wanting the support of our whole family. A call to Dave calmed me enough to safely navigate my egg-eyed beautiful daughter onto the freeway, into the parking deck of the Clinic, through

the maze of hallways and into their medical madness. A few hours later found us still alone but in a room overnight while the staff watched for Amy's body to respond to the IV antibiotics.

And then ... Immanuel... God WITH us.

Joe and Nancy, our friends of nearly 10 years, walked into our room. And they just sat WITH us. There were no perfect words spoken, no comforting gift presented, no medical wisdom shared; they simply came. Their presence made the hospital room feel like heaven: peaceful, restful, safe. God was with us all. My friends became hosts, welcoming me into God's presence again.

In celebrating the birth of Jesus, let us recognize the potential to usher others into the awareness of God WITH us. As heavenly hosts here among the hurting, the frightened, the lonely we might offer genuine hospitality not with gifts, not with words, not with our wisdom, but profoundly with our patient presence. Just show up.