



My Faith Story.org

U.S.A.
English Subtitles



April Lupus Johnson
Salt Lake City, Utah, U.S.A.
English
August 24, 2025

*Death/Grief
Parenting
Peace
Physical and Emotional Disabilities*

About This Story

April and Caz faced a life challenge few ever experience—the loss of their second daughter at birth. Although they were firm in their faith, they had to dig deep to find the courage to carry on. Through it all, April especially saw miracles that brought her great joy even in the midst of her sorrow. Knowing the eternal nature of life, she felt the presence of her tiny daughter's brave spirit and found strength to move forward.

Hi. I'm April Johnson and I am from Salt Lake City, Utah. I'm a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and I have a Faith Story.

I was pregnant with my second child. I went to my ultrasound, my check-up. And the doctor said, "Sorry. I'm not even going to look at you. You need to go see a specialist." Because, what he did see wasn't normal. And so we went to a specialist, and ran lots of tests, and it turns out that our baby had severe birth defects. And as they're reading me the list of everything that's wrong, I said, "I need to know what this baby is so I know who I'm praying for. And knowing the gender is going to help me connect a little bit deeper with this child."

And so we found out that it was a baby girl. And the cool thing was that we already had her name picked out. If we

were having a girl. And her name was going to be Autumn Faith.

She had an Omphalocele, which is where the organs grow outside the body. The doctors took us into like a therapist's room right after the ultrasound. And I didn't understand why I was there until she said, "You know, it's not a matter of if your baby's going to die, but when."

I had a lot of people say, "I'm so sorry. I wish I could take this away from you."

And my husband Caz and I at the time were like, "Why not us? Why not?" And so we just kinda took that side of things, and that I get this angel child, and that must mean something about me and my motherhood, and what a gift for her.

The cool thing was when I left the hospital when we found out, walking to my car, feeling her spirit and her presence, and knowing that she's bold. And that she's brave. And just intuitively knowing that, was such a gift for me.

Tuesday, July 27th, 2011, we went in to get started in the birthing process for Autumn.

Somewhere deep inside, I just knew that Caz and I wouldn't have to argue about who was winning. I also knew that birthing her would kill her. What I was created to do. And so, there was obviously conflict. There was also tension. There was joy and sadness in the room.

Leading up to it, I didn't want to know when she would die. And so I asked to be taken off all monitors. 'Cause the whole day I had her little heartbeat on the monitor.

And so I birth Autumn and I could see the look between the doctor and the nurse. And I knew that she wasn't alive. And this spirit and this feeling came over me of such gratitude and I knew that my Savior knew me.

And so Autumn Faith was stillborn. And she was the cutest little purple...(We call her our Avatar baby because she was purple) And she had a head full of hair.

They said, "Just a minute. Let me wrap her," because of her Omphalocele. Because her organs were on the outside of her body. And so they wrapped her and handed her to me. And it



was just the most beautiful thing.

I didn't get the miracle that I wanted, that I'd prayed for, that she'd be healthy and she wouldn't have anything wrong with her. But I did get the miracle of holding my baby.

I was worried that I wouldn't get enough time to like, heal. And I was surprised. I just got to keep her with me. And so I just tucked her kind of in my shirt and slept with her on my chest, and I just knew her. Not because she was able to look at me or talk to me, or anything like that. But I felt her spirit.

It was just this beautiful, sacred, sacred moment that I knew my prayers had been answered. And I knew that my Savior knew me, and that I mattered to Him.





It was about two months after Autumn had died, and my two-year-old Oakley and I were driving from Salt Lake to Lindon, which, anyone

who knows the area, knows that we go around the point of the mountain on the freeway.

We were driving, and my little two-year-old says, "Hey Mom. Autumn's in the sky."

And I said, "Yeah, you're right." (Like these were very common conversations that we had.) "Yup, Autumn's in the sky with Jesus."

And she says, "No. Mom, Autumn's in the sky right there."

And I'm driving and like, "What do you mean, you can see her?"

She goes, "Yeah, I can see her. She's in the sky."

I say, "Well, what is she doing?"

And she says, "She's looking at me, mommy."

And you know, I'm like trying to look out the window, looking in my rear view mirror, and I'm just seeing this little tiny girl just staring out the window. And I said, "Well...you should make a face at her or something."



And it's one, a miracle that I made it around the point of the mountain because I was staring in my rear view mirror the whole time, watching this interaction of my daughters.

But Oakley goes, "laa laa laa" out the window. And then she just giggles that stomach-wrenching, deep giggle that you can't fake. And you can't redo. And she just laughs and laughs and laughs and laughs. And then she looks out the window and she sticks her tongue out, and then she laughs and laughs and laughs and laughs.

And I can't see her. I can't see her. But I knew this was happening by watching. And I always say, "A two-year-old taught me that heaven's real." Because nobody can take that experience away from me. Nobody can tell me that that didn't happen. That it was to real, and so alive, and I knew that the veil is open for those little people in those moments when we choose to see it, or we're open to see it. And I always tell Oakley, "You're the one that taught me that there's life after this, that we exist and that we can communicate on both sides."

I had a lot of really beautiful miracles of experiencing Autumn after she died. That it's not just believing in heaven anymore. It's "I know that Heaven exists."

The cool thing about being woman is that we are the portal for our babies from heaven to earth.

And so they're connected to us in every way. And that's not just spirit, but that's flesh and blood.

And so, we get the gift of being connected whether our baby is within us, without us, alive or dead.

They are ours, and we will forever be connected.

I'm so sorry that you have to experience this. But I know that it will transform you if you let it. If you choose to let your pain be your fertilizer for the future (that's what I say).

It's such a miracle. And our pain is the miracle. It's what





shapes us and calls us forward. It's the only way to our potential.

I usually say that I believe Heaven's on the other side of hell. And you have to walk through it. And you're not alone because I've done it. So you can do it too. And my heart is with you.

I know the peace that surpasses all understanding. I've felt the rest of our Savior. And where I've felt it the deepest is in my pain. Being yoked in His mercy and His grace. And I know that He lives. That He loves us, and that everything that is wrong and painful is the source of light and joy.

I now stand in awe of the hardships that I've been through because I know the beauty that they've produced. And that is joyful. That is good.

I know Heaven's real. I know that God answers our prayers. And that we have a choice. We have a choice always to choose light, and to be light, and to hold to the hope of eternity.

And I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.