

We've always been an ordinary Amish family. We love our home, our church, and each other. John and I were married in November of 2005 and a year and one-half later we were blessed with our first son Aiden. Aiden was followed by Thomas two years later, and rapidly following him, came Micah only a year later! What a busy time, three young sons in three years. After many sleepless nights and harried days the baby stage was over. My boys were older, and we hoped and prayed for another baby.

God heard our prayers and five years after everyone else, He gave us Ian.

Ian Jacob was born December 3, 2014 at my midwives home birthing center in Juniata County, PA. Everything went well and we were so happy to bring him home to meet his brothers. He was a good baby and the first ten days passed uneventfully except for the usual issues that are to be expected with brand-new babies.

Little did we know, our lives were about to change... One Saturday John came into the house and said there'd been a voicemail from someone named Donna at the Clinic for Special Children. My heart plummeted! Of course we knew about the clinic as friends and also my younger sister both had babies that were patients there. We had no idea we would soon be part of the wonderful circle of help and support known as the Clinic. Donna informed us that Ian's PKU test returned showing glutaric aciduria Type I also known in the Amish community as GAI. I cried and cried, hugging my baby feeling like everything was falling apart. We were so happy! Ian was such a good baby and finally nursing so well! What was our next step?

John immediately made some phone calls, and arranged for us to travel to Strasburg from our home in Newburg, PA. I remember being surprised that we had to meet with Dr. Strauss the next day. It was a Sunday after all! That was a long Saturday evening, spent pondering the very basic facts we knew about GAI. Fears and questions swirling like fog.

The next morning we traveled the hour and one-half to Strasburg the ride seeming endless, with tears threatening constantly. As we made our way down the long lane to the Clinic, it seemed homely and familiar, though we had never been there. We were met at the door by a very competent nurse (Donna) who started easing a tiny bit of our fear with her easy manner and reassuring words.

Dr. Strauss came into the Clinic to meet with us that morning and I'll never forget the time he spent, explaining every detail of Ian's condition. Reassuring us that it was manageable, albeit very serious. We walked out the door that Sunday morning armed with facts, formula for our baby, and the sure feeling that everything would be ok.

Then came the months of keeping Ian at home, away from crowds of people and trying to keep germs away. Because for Ian and other infants with GAI a simple

Childhood illness can send them to the hospital, a stay of several days usually. As dehydration or high temperatures can cause irreversible brain injury. Ian had quite a few hospital stays, but even those were made easier knowing his care was overseen by his kind doctors and nurses at the Clinic.

Ian only left the house that first year to travel to Strasburg for his monthly appointments with Dr. Strauss, where he always took time out of his busy schedule to listen to all of our doubts and fears. And answered and reassured all of our questions.

Ian is now almost 5 years old, a healthy, happy little boy who adores his Daddy and loves books and Legos. Who without the Clinic's help and support could have quite a different story.

Our gratitude for the Clinic overflows each time we go there, for helping us keep Ian safe and healthy.

Dr. Strauss and his team are still tirelessly working, learning more about GATA and many other genetic conditions. Please help keep children like Ian happy, healthy, and cared for.

God bless you for your kindness,

The Lapp Family

John, Laura, Aiden, Thomas, Micah, and Ian