

Eventual motherhood: waiting on God's perfect timing

This month brings a milestone for my social circle: for the first time, a childhood friend will become a mother.

As Sara's belly swells, the rest of us are helping prepare for the baby who will catapult us into our next stage. It will provide the surest sign we have reached adulthood, which, up to this point, has felt far less established than it once appeared.

At 15, 25 looked like an elixir to every adolescent woe, the perfect mix of freedom and purpose, objectives that now feel farther apart.

We have enjoyed a certain latitude, slipping in and out of majors and dates and jobs. This baby will be the most real and non-refundable commitment we have seen, heartwarming when he sleeps, head-splitting when he shrieks at 1 a.m. and again at 4 a.m.

We decided to help Sara paint the nursery. A trip to Lowe's forced one of those imperative pre-labor decisions, which our heroine made with ease. That Saturday we cracked open a gallon of sky blue paint named after the first time a baby sleeps through the night: Cloud Nine.

As we turned our blank canvas from beige to blue, we reminisced about the dramas of high school, how impossible it seemed to manage a formal dance: whom to ask, what to wear, where to eat, whom to eat with.

Then talk jumped to good grade schools, and Libby pointed out, "Ten years ago we never would've been having this discussion."

Indeed, we are largely transformed from our high-school selves, and now, eventual mothers - one, much sooner than the others.

That is the jarring part: Though our friendships are deeper today, growing up does involve some growing apart, and the milestones that once arrived in sync splinter

into different tempos.

It is a wonder that adulthoods charted in the same sandbox can diverge so widely. Children's names determined in the same tree house are privately amended, and the one you gave half of your heart-shaped "best friends" pendant is now shipping a wedding gift from China.

Ten-year-old girlfriends imagine double weddings, betrothed children and joint summer vacations - a neat correspondence of life events. Yet soon the kids who shared a baseball diamond face a million choices that lead to vastly different fields.

It's hard to not feel behind when you are standing behind an old friend, a bride at the altar. It's hard not to do your own baby math when next year she calls with her good news. It's hard to shake the timeline you once set even when it no longer fits. There is that creeping sense of urgency and absolutes: a timeline, a bottom line, a deadline, a finish line.

But there is no such thing as behind or ahead; we are each on track with our separate paths. God's timing is perfect because it is custom-designed.

The Scripture writers had an abiding respect for the proper season and time. The prophet Habakkuk describes God's plan with patience and perspective, two hallmarks of the Lenten journey. "For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late."

The blessings that come later are not late; they are right on time and they are sweeter.

Meanwhile, God gives us special synchronicities: husbands who become good friends, college roommates who become godparents, moments when it all circles back, and we see his infinite wisdom a little more clearly.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn. She can be reached at christina@readchristina.com.