



AP

**TENDER TOUCH:** The Rev. Steve Clifford reaches into an incubator to touch Ruth, one of four children to be born to him and his wife Cheryl, also a minister, Wednesday in Akron. The couple received eggs for an in vitro fertilization procedure from Mrs. Clifford's sister.

## Clerics have quads (with help)

AKRON (AP) — Quadruplets were born to a husband-wife minister team who received eggs for an in vitro fertilization procedure from her sister.

"God is good," the Rev. Steve Clifford of Canton, a minister of the United Church of Christ, said Wednesday night.

His wife, Cheryl, 48, also a UCC minister, delivered quadruplets by Caesarian section Wednesday at Akron City Hospital. The babies, two boys and two girls, ranged from 2 pounds, 13 ounces to 3 pounds, 10 ounces.

Robert Steven, Ruth Marie

and Heidi Lynn were doing well and could go home in several weeks.

Paul, the biggest at 3 pounds, 10 ounces, was taken to Akron Children's Hospital because his lungs were not fully developed. He was in serious condition today, the hospital said.

The babies were eight weeks premature. Clifford witnessed the births between 2 p.m. and 2:03 p.m. Wednesday and called them "incredible and fascinating — a miracle."

Cheryl Clifford's sister, Heidi Kuchta, 28, of New Hartford, Conn., donated the eggs that were fertilized with Steve

Clifford's sperm and implanted in his wife's womb.

When they decided to have children, the Cliffords had difficulty conceiving.

"There was no diagnosed reason for infertility," said Steve Clifford, 41. "There was nothing obviously wrong, except that it's harder for older women to conceive."

Doctors told Mrs. Clifford that she would have a 3.5 percent chance of conceiving through in vitro fertilization if she donated the eggs, and a 20 percent chance if the donor was younger.