

Mark &
Heather







Hello!

We are Mark and Heather, and we are so grateful for this opportunity to meet you in this space. The path of bringing us together is a long one and we're sure there is a lot that has brought you here as well. We consider it a privilege to have some time with you, whether brief or for a lifetime. More than that, we applaud you and are grateful you chose to give your child life. Even before this moment, we have been praying for you and your child. This is no small thing to embark on and we hope to treat you with grace, love and dignity.

The journey which brought our family here is filled with many emotions. Both of us love children so deeply and have always dreamed of a home filled with the squeals and laughter of children, regardless of race or background. As we've begun to walk into adoption, the thought of raising your precious child has brought incredible joy and humility to us. It would be an honor to include your child in our family, to love and nurture them as we will all our children.

As you continue to get to know us in the following pages, know how valued and treasured you are. You and your story will be known by your child (if you would choose), and we will not cease to thank God for you.

 Mark and Heather

Our Journey

Met in college and quickly became friends around 2015



Started dating at a school in Mexico fall of 2018



Got engaged March of 2019



Were married August of 2019



Moved to Subsaharan Africa March 2021



Miscarried three precious babies in 2022



Moved back to the US September of 2022



Started our adoption journey and found out we were pregnant March 2024



Welcomed our daughter Jovielle into the world November 2024





We have been married almost 7 years, but have known each other since college. When we met, we had an instant connection. Though it took us a while to finally act on it, we both set our eyes on each other and never looked back. A friend of ours described our relationship in college as two boats that had collided without realizing it. Our personalities are very different, as friends and family can attest, but they complement each other to form an amazing team. We both consider each other to be our best friend. Our values, interests, humor and favorite activities line up perfectly.

One thing that initially drew us to each other was our deep faith and desire to live overseas. We pursued this dream shortly after getting married. While the need to address the miscarriages we experienced led us back to living in the US for the time being, we still love to travel, see, and experience new places and people. We hope this will always be a part of our life even as we add children to our family. In addition to travel, we are both very active and are always down for a walk or really anything outside. Yet, some evenings you might find us snug at home enjoying a good book, playing guitar or watching a TV show.

Fun Facts:

- We have been to over 25 countries combined, and almost every state. Heather's favorite country she's been to is Croatia and Mark's is Switzerland.
- Our favorite show to watch together is Andy Griffith.
- The local sushi shop is one of our favorite special treats.
- We learned some Arabic when we were overseas, and also know a little Spanish and French as well.
- Mark stands almost exactly a foot taller than Heather.



Heather



Quick Facts: I am 5'7" and 31 years old. My hair is light brown and I have hazel colored eyes. I have a quick smile and laugh.

What I do: I have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and have had a variety of different jobs throughout my adult life. My favorite job is my current one, being a stay at home mom! I think it is a privilege and joy.

Favorite Things: God // Family // Friends // Sunsets // Coffee // Walks // Camping // Hiking // Travel // Snuggles // Reading // Arts // Popcorn

Mark's Perspective

If I could sum Heather up in two words, they would be “gentle” and “strong”. Her faith is the foundation of what she does and how she lives. She finds joy in both the big and small things of life, and is equally ready for a spontaneous adventure or a quiet night at home. Heather is an extremely thoughtful, intentional, compassionate, and hospitable woman. She can often detect other people’s needs without them telling her. This, along with a warm and nurturing disposition, makes her a fantastic mother to our child, and I am confident this will only increase as our family grows. Her capacity for empathy makes her a great listening ear when someone needs a friend. This kindness also rolls over into her relationships with her nephews and nieces, whom she showers with love. Heather has endured many painful and challenging circumstances in her life. In spite of dark times, Heather remains a hopeful and even joyful person, who makes people around her smile or laugh on a daily basis.





more about

Mark

Quick Facts: I am 31 years old, have brown hair and brown eyes. Some of the first things people notice about me are my height (6'6"), my big hands and size 15 shoes.

What I do: I have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and currently getting my Master's of Divinity. My current job is at a church in our area preaching, serving, and working with young adults and youth.

Favorite Things: God // Family // Church // Friends // Nature // Camping // Fishing // Hiking // Travel // Sports // Reading // Guitar // Seafood

Heather's Perspective

Mark has a unique way of drawing people to himself. Whether he's telling an engaging story from his past or explaining the things he's passionate about, people love to be around Mark. This quality has translated to children as well. He provides a fun and silly environment that makes kids feel invited and loved, yet he structures all his play with boundaries and directions. This does and will make him an incredible father.

Mark is very well rounded and able to engage in a variety of spheres of life or conversations. Hardworking, athletic, intelligent, gentle, funny and intentional are some of the traits that immediately come to mind. He never fails to make me laugh with his silly faces or funny stories and is also there when I need a listening ear. His nephews and nieces love being around him and uncle has been one of his favorite jobs. Whether he's playing outside, making up games or mesmerizing kids with his "magic tricks", Mark loves being around kids. I love watching him play with Jovielle, teaching her about life and God, singing her sweet lullabies or silly songs on the guitar. As she grows up I know he'll take them on fun adventures too! He has embraced his role of father wholeheartedly.





more about
Jovielle



Quick Facts: I am getting close to 1.5 years old and I love walking all over the place. I have brown hair and dark brown eyes. I am petite (despite how tall my parents are), but I never miss a milestone!

What I do: I get to stay home with my mom every day which I think is pretty special. My day consists of eating, playing, napping and more playing!

Favorite Things: Dolls // Mom and Dad // Church // Cousins // Dancing // Outside // Owls and Puppies // Singing // Books // Cheese // Giving kisses

We love being parents!

As we mentioned earlier, while we lived overseas, we experienced the dark road of pregnancy loss. After losing three precious babies in the womb we then went through a season of infertility. Once we began the adoption process, we found out we had miraculously gotten pregnant! We were overjoyed! Her name, Jovielle, means “joyous morning light” because it reminds us that weeping may last for a night but joy comes in the morning. Her coming makes us all the more determined to follow through with adoption. As God led us to adoption, we knew we did not want it to be our Plan B so we continued pursuing it even after getting pregnant. Being parents has been our greatest joy. We would love for her to have a sibling close in age to grow up with! Throughout the pregnancy, we not only prayed for her, but also for her sibling that will be adopted and we have not stopped. We can't wait to watch them grow up together! Jovielle is so excited for a sibling, she loves to give her baby dolls hugs and give them bottles. Watching her play with her many cousins that are close in age to her gets us excited to be matched with a mom and baby, hopefully soon. Jovie loves to explore and discover things or do anything outside, but gets most excited around other kids. She's such a sweet girl and we cannot wait for her to be a big sister!



Family Values

Love/Faith: We are committed Christians who love God, and fully intend to raise all our children in the Christian faith, with the hope that they will embrace it for themselves when they grow up.

Joy/Gratitude: We believe that life is an amazing gift from God, and we want to be a family that lives in daily thankfulness for this grace.

Kindness/Hospitality: Making people feel welcomed and cared for in our home is very important to us, and is something that every member of our family can contribute to.

Honesty/Forgiveness: Nobody is perfect, and we want our home to be a place where we all can confess when we do wrong, and where forgiveness has the final word.

Creativity/Laughter: We want to be a family that encourages fun, play, and silliness! This not only helps children learn what they love and how they are gifted, but also helps us all remember to not take ourselves too seriously.



Our family rhythms...

- We try to wake up before Jovielle every morning to spend time in prayer together and personal Bible reading. Mark's work hours are flexible which allows him to be around if Heather would need an extra hand or be available for appointments, etc. While Mark is at work Heather and Jovielle typically try to get out of the house by visiting Heather's sister and kids, walking around downtown, attending Bible study with other women and their kids, or visiting Mark at work. Evenings are never the same, we may have people over to join us for supper, eat together as a family of three or go out with friends. We always do a family Bible story and sing before Jovielle goes to bed.
- We try to prioritize our marriage by doing monthly dates out of the house (Heather's parents watch Jovielle and cherish the special time with her) and once a week at home date night (playing games, talking, watching a movie) after Jovie is in bed.
- Every weekend we eat pizza with Heather's family and also eat Sunday dinner with them.
- Christmas holiday is spent in Chicago with Mark's family
- Every summer we do a week long vacation with Heather's whole family
- Our favorite family outing in the winter is going to the local thrift store, heading next to the bakery/mall for some donuts and coffee, then playing games or letting Jovie run around the mall. In the summer, we like to walk to the park or sometimes we'll spontaneously go camping!
- We enjoy traveling to different places in the country and world together, as finances allow in the future we hope to continue that only now with our children.

Heather's Family



Most of Heather's family lives in the same town as us. This includes her parents, as well as her sister's family. Living close to our two nieces and two nephews allows us to play an active role in their lives. With so many girls, we love to get them all in matching outfits! This proximity to family is a wonderful blessing, and allows for many fun get-togethers, including weekend pizza nights; something we can't wait for more kids to join in on!

The rest of Heather's family, though they do not live close by, are nevertheless just a plane flight away. With her brother, his wife and daughter living in Arizona, and her youngest sister in Colorado, we have fun places to travel to enjoy the mountains, or to get away from the cold winter for a while! We love gathering together as a family on holidays and summer vacations, and we both have many warm memories from times past, and traditions we hope to carry on in our own family as well.

Fun fact: All of Heather's family are either current or former teachers!

Mark's Family



Mark's family all lives in neighboring states, so we are able to see them several times a year for holidays and small trips throughout the year. His parents live in the town Mark grew up in, which will allow our children to see where he spent his childhood. All of his grandparents are still living, which is a unique blessing. His older brother recently returned from living in Europe and is now a day's drive away. He recently bought a house close to a park that he's excited to introduce his nieces to. Mark's younger brother lives just an hour away in a nearby city with his wife and two daughters, so we are thankful to have them in our lives more regularly. Mark's parents have really enjoyed becoming grandparents and are eagerly awaiting more to come. We can't wait for our kids to have cousins their same age as his family continues to grow.

Like Heather's family, Mark's family spent many summers going on road trips, which allowed for him and his brothers to grow strong friendships that remain to this day.

Fun Fact: Most of Mark's family has their degree in Social Work!

Our Community and Home

We live in a small town in the Midwest. While it is small, it has a friendliness to it that we love and lots of family-friendly amenities. Our town is extremely safe (ranked top 10 in the state) with many families moving here for the very hope of raising a family. We recently were able to purchase our very first home! It is 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms with a main floor, basement and fenced in backyard. The large windows let in lots of sunlight, sometimes we don't turn on the lights all day. Our neighborhood has many families with kids and across the street is Heather's grandma's church. We've loved walking around to places and enjoy being close to downtown.



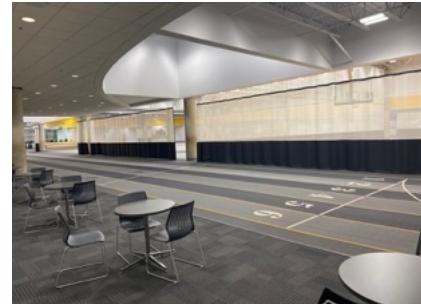
We also love experiencing all four seasons!



Hometown Pride!

A few reasons why our town is a fantastic place for a family:

- several parks and walking trails
- university, which provides us with sporting events, a recreation center, and many other exciting events and opportunities
- shopping mall
- excellent indoor/outdoor waterpark
- seasonal activities like a corn maze in the fall, ice skating in the winter, town festivals in the spring, and camping in the summer
- delicious, authentic Mexican food (we have large Mexican and Guatemalan populations)
- several excellent schools
- public library with many activities for kids
- local bakery with yummy baked goods



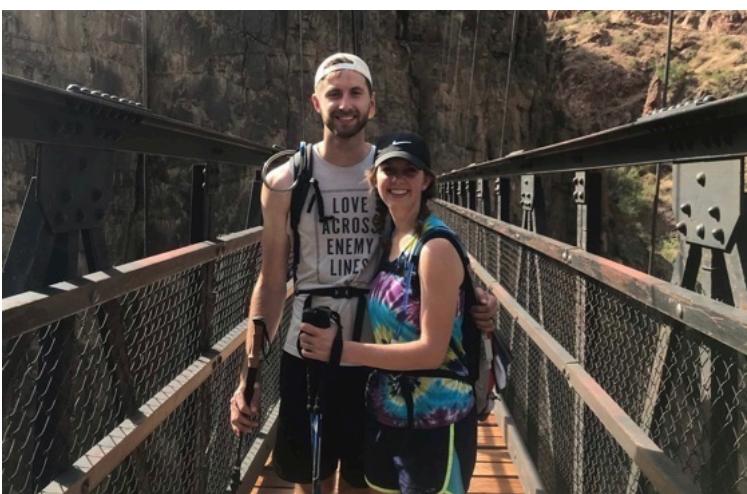
Our People

We have been so blessed by many wonderful friends, some who live nearby, and others in faraway places. For those who are close, we often have meals or game nights together. In the warmer months, we may have a driveway bonfire, play sand volleyball or even go camping for a weekend. These times are filled with laughter and fun, but also meaningful conversation as well. Our further-away friends are still just a phone call away, so we try to keep in touch with them as we are able. All of our friends have been very loving and supportive of us as we walked through miscarriage, infertility and committed to adoption, and have lovingly welcomed our daughter into their own lives. We could not ask for better friends!





Our church is an extremely warm and welcoming place, booming with families (several of whom have also adopted). It also provides support for children to go to the local private schools. They are amazing at rallying around their people, and we are thankful to have their support and encouragement as we try to grow our family.



Before you go...

Thank you for taking the time to get to know our family!

Our home is one filled with laughter, deep conversations, forgiveness, silliness and love. **We have so many who are behind us and for us in every aspect of life**, we love our community of family and friends. Inviting others into our lives has been a joy for us, whether being involved with extended family or walking alongside our friends in intentional ways. Having lived overseas for a portion of our life, we have come to realize **home can be established wherever you are with the people you love most** and this is what we have set out to do. We open our home to you and your child should you give us that honor. **Please know that we want what is best for your baby**, and if that means not adopting him or her, then we understand. But if you do decide to entrust your child to us, we give you our word before God that **we will take him or her as our own flesh and blood**, and will pour out our lives daily so that he or she can flourish and grow. You can also be confident that your baby will be welcomed warmly by our family, church, and community.

We pray and think of you as you bravely walk this path!

Love,

Mark, Heather and Jovielle

Before we knew you,
we loved you...

