

*Evan  
and Shelby*



# Hello

Even though we haven't met, we think about you daily and hold you in our prayers. We can only imagine the weight of love and courage it takes to consider an adoption plan. Please know this: You are not alone. Whatever you are feeling—grief, strength, fear, love—it's valid. You are doing something incredibly brave.

We have such a deep respect for the love you already have for your little one. This child will always be your child first. And if we are blessed to become part of your story, it will never be lost on us that our joy began with your sacrifice. We will honor that every day.

Our home is full of life, seven children, a loud dinner table, a lot of farm adventures, a peaceful rhythm, and a deep guiding faith. We don't have it all together, but our home is built on love, laughter, and the belief that every child is a treasure.

We are praying for you. Truly. Not just for the decision ahead, but for peace, healing, and the future – whatever that looks like.

With love,

*Evan and Shelby*

# This is Us

**We were just teenagers when we met – young, hopeful, and totally unaware of the incredible journey ahead of us.** In so many ways, we've grown up together. We've built a life side by side, facing each season—joyful and painful—with a deep sense of loyalty and faith in what God is doing in and through us.

Our relationship is marked by adventure. We have said “yes” to a lot of things people thought were crazy: starting our own business, building a homestead, having a big family, foster care, adoption, and more. Through it all, we've learned to trust each other completely. We don't shy away from challenge; we run toward it, hand in hand. Often, we do not have a clear map forward, but we have a deep trust that we will figure it out together.

We've also walked through some very real valleys. We have experienced a couple of scary premature births and lengthy NICU stays, we have navigated the complexities of foster care, sudden loss of close family, economic downturns in Evan's field of work, and faced the emotional growing pains of seven different children. But those hard seasons have shaped us more than anything else. We've learned to communicate better, forgive quicker, lean on Jesus more deeply, and anchor our lives in things that last.

Over time, our love has deepened in true partnership. We've gone from teenagers with big dreams to teammates raising children, leading a home, and building a legacy we hope lasts for generations. Our relationship today is grounded, joyful, and strong—not because it has been easy—but because we have chosen to keep showing up, together.







# Meet *Shelby*

written by Evan

**Shelby is, above all else, selfless.** That was obvious to me from the very beginning, and it's still one of the first things people notice about her. She's humble and grounded. Shelby is also incredibly witty and can hold her own in any setting. She carries herself with confidence, which is incredibly attractive and immediately drew me to her early on. But what I love most about her is how she naturally makes everyone around her feel comfortable.

Shelby is very intentional. She is the anchor of our household, not just by being organized, but by making intentional choices that put our family first. She finds creative ways to enrich our kids' lives – whether it's signing them up for piano or voice lessons, getting them involved in crafts or sewing, or simply taking them to the library to open their world through books and reading. She gives of herself in many ways, and it shows in the way our children and our life at home feel steady, supported, and cared for.





# Meet Evan

written by Shelby

**Evan is the most hardworking, family-centered man I know.** He is deeply committed to us. When we are out and about with all seven of our kids, people often stop to comment, and without missing a beat, Evan will smile and say, "They're my badge of honor." It's not just something he says – it's how he lives. He leads with humility, and everything he does is rooted in his love for our family.

Evan is also an incredibly talented architect. He owns and leads his own firm with integrity and passion. He's respected not just for his skill, but for the way he treats people. What amazes me most, though, is his determination. Evan doesn't do things halfway.

At home, Evan leads us spiritually. He's the anchor of our family's rhythms – prioritizing church, nightly dinners, and family devotionals, even when life gets hectic. He keeps us grounded and reminds us what really matters.

Evan has a gift with kids. He's incredibly intentional about connecting with each of our children in a way that honors who they uniquely are. While he is deeply affectionate and playful, he is also fiercely protective. He has a strong sense of responsibility to shield, guide, and defend our kids – not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually. Our children know without a doubt that their dad will always fight for them and stand by them, no matter what.

**Hollendyr – age 14**

Likes to sing, has played piano for eight years, does musical theater, and has been in six plays—words our family uses to describe her: intelligent, thoughtful, kind, and responsible.

**Wellesley – age 12**

Animal lover, plays piano, loves all things babies, is passionate about midwifery—words our family uses to describe her: nurturing, passionate, determined, and silly.

**Campbell – age 11**

Artistic, loves to sew, has done ballet for five years, plays piano, likes to write—words our family uses to describe her: creative, quiet, and peaceful.

**Patek – Age 10**

Likes playing baseball, is interested in architecture, is skilled in architectural drawing, and enjoys farm life—words our family uses to describe him: funny, protective, helpful, and artistic.

**Elijah – Age 8**

Enjoys all thrill-seeking activities, being outside, and working on the farm—words our family uses to describe him: energetic, athletic, goofy, and strong.

**Collins – Age 8**

Likes to be outside, craft, and play with babies—words our family uses to describe her: affectionate, crafty, and hardworking.

**Teague – Age 5**

Loves to read books, play outside, and snuggle—words our family uses to describe him: witty, smart, sweet, and calm.

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# *Our Hearts for Adoption*

**Elijah came to us at age two in the most unexpected of ways.** We were not a licensed foster family at the time, but someone we knew was fostering him and felt strongly that he would be a beautiful fit for our family. At the time, we already had five children— including one the same age as Elijah—so the call caught us completely off guard.

But in true “Evan and Shelby” fashion, we prayed, listened, and said, “yes” enthusiastically and wholeheartedly. Within 48 hours, Elijah was living in our home. Though he was placed with us through foster care, from the very first day, he felt like ours.

Our hearts are for children and for family. Adoption is not a second-best story to us; it’s a sacred one. We treasure every child, no matter how they come to us, and we are hopeful and humbled at the thought of welcoming another child through adoption.



We feel incredibly blessed to live in what we believe is the most special corner of our city. It's a beautiful farming and agricultural community known for its rolling hills and open prairies. The area is beloved for its seasonal charm: pumpkin patches, fresh pumpkin donuts, apple cider, Christmas tree farms, fruit picking, petting zoos, and farmers markets all bring people together throughout the year.

Our community is more than scenic; it's the kind of place where neighbors drop whatever they're doing to help out, whether it's lending a hand with a project or rounding up a runaway cow (yes, that has happened to us more than once!). There is a true spirit of community here that we deeply value.

While our home feels peaceful and tucked away from the hustle of city life, we're still just a short drive from everything we need. We're close to town, church, and all our kids' activities. We're also only 30 minutes from the top of a mountain area, where we spend snowy winter weekends skiing and summers hiking the mountain trails as a family.

We're so thankful to raise our children in a place that gives them space to roam, a connection to the land, and a community that shows up for one another.

# Our Happy Place

**Our home is our sacred place – a space that was truly years in the making.** From the very beginning, we dreamed of a home where our children could grow up wild and free, with land to explore, a garden to tend, and animals to care for. We wanted to build a life where responsibility, beauty, hospitality, and wonder could come together, and our home reflects that vision in every way.

We knew we wanted a farm to teach our kids about hard work and nurturing, and to give them the joy of things like baby goats in the spring. We wanted to grow our own food and create slow rhythms around the land, and we hoped to be the kind of home where cousins, neighbors, and friends always felt welcome. We believe hospitality is a form of worship, and we designed our house to be both inviting and practical for a large family and all the people we love to gather.

With Evan as our architect, we poured our hearts into the design. We moved in three years ago, and it's becoming everything we hoped for and more.

Our home has 8 bedrooms and 4.5 bathrooms – every child currently has their own room, and there is a large playroom just for fun. But the heart of the home is the open-concept kitchen, living room, and art/music space. It's where the magic happens – daily life, creativity, laughter, learning, and connection.

One of our very first design priorities was making space for a massive dining room table. Family dinners are a non-negotiable for us. This table is more than furniture; it's where we do schoolwork, where we pray, where we laugh, talk, and gather with extended family. It's my favorite spot in the whole house.

Outside, the kids have endless space to explore. There's a large garden, an in-ground trampoline, a swimming pool and a hot tub (kept warm even for swims during the first snowfall), a chicken coop, and a barn. Every corner of the property holds both purpose and play. We continue to dream about how to use this land to bless our family, our community, and hopefully another child in the future.

# Our Life Together

We both love being outdoors – hiking, skiing with the kids, working on the property, or taking long walks together to dream and talk. We enjoy hosting people at our home for meals and holidays. Our favorite nights are the simple ones: kids running around, dinner at the big table, and maybe a puzzle or a swim under the stars. We love scheming up our next big project or trip while hanging out together.

## *In Our Family and in Our Home We:*

1. Honor Jesus Christ in all that we do
2. Take chances and chase big dreams
3. Prioritize family – and extended family – above everything else
4. Believe siblings are our best friends for life
5. Eat dinner together every night
6. Practice slow living and stand against the rush of the world
7. Choose real-life adventures over screens
8. Show up for each other always
9. Believe our kids are capable – and invite them into everything we do
10. Build barns, raise animals, and plant gardens – on purpose
11. Believe hospitality is holy, and our home should be shared
12. Live simply and give generously
13. Pursue passions even when they seem impossible
14. Value learning through real life, real work, and real moments over textbooks
15. Choose gratitude – and find the good, always
16. Honor our elders and value the beauty and strength of a multigenerational approach to life





We have worked hard over the years to create a meaningful balance between spending holidays with our extended families and building our own special traditions as a family of nine. No matter where we are, our biggest priority during the holidays is simple: time together.

For Thanksgiving and Christmas, we alternate celebrating with each side of our extended family. Both sides are filled with cousins, laughter, board games, and so much food. It's always loud, joyful, and full of connection – just the way we love it.

As a family, we've also created traditions that are just our own. During the Christmas season, we like to pile into our massive car to look at lights with hot chocolate, go ice skating, and bake (and eat!) lots of holiday treats. Each of our kids participates in a "secret sibling" gift exchange, and they love decorating their individual rooms with their own personal holiday style. One of our favorite traditions is going to cut down a Christmas tree together – though getting all nine of us to agree on one tree is probably our most memorable challenge every year.

Our holiday traditions continue to grow and evolve as our kids get older, and we're always looking for small ways to make the season more meaningful. Whether we are with grandparents or gathered at home, our holidays are centered on gratitude and the joy of just being together.

# Meet Our Families

Family is at the center of our lives. We're so thankful to be surrounded by grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins who show up for each other, pray for one another, and help create such a strong, joyful foundation for our children. We do life side by side with each of our families.



# A Few Fun Facts About Our Family

1. Our favorite family vacation spot is Maui, Hawaii.
2. All seven kids snow ski.
3. We had 15 baby goats born on our farm this spring, including some who we bottle-fed for months. The kids helped birth them and were responsible for the feedings.
4. We milk our dairy cows.
5. Four of the seven kids play the piano.
6. We love a good road trip.
7. Tacos are our favorite food.
8. We keep the pool heated in the winter so we can swim in the snow.
9. We all swam with dolphins in the Cayman Islands.
10. We attend Seattle Mariners games every summer.



# A Bit More About Us

One of the most special things about our marriage is the trust we've built. We have taken a lot of risks together—probably more than most people—and somehow, instead of getting nervous, we get more excited. Whether it's growing our family, starting a business, jumping into foster care, or moving forward with a new adventure, we jump in with complete trust in each other. People often think we're a little crazy, but we love that about our story.



Evan is an early riser who loves a good challenge. He is passionate about architecture and enjoys sketching and designing even in his downtime. He also loves endurance sports; he has competed in Ironman races, runs across the Grand Canyon, and is always planning his next adventure. When he's home, you'll find him building something needed for the farm, training for his next goal, or hanging out with his kids.



Shelby thrives in the rhythms of home and family life. She loves gardening, reading, baking with the kids, and curating a home environment that's peaceful, creative, and welcoming. She has a passion for natural living and healthy cooking, and also enjoys planning and creating the best educational curricula and opportunities for homeschooling. A quiet morning coffee, chickens, and a good book are her kind of heaven.









# A Glimpse into Our Goals

**Our biggest goal in life is to raise children who know they are deeply loved by us, by their extended family, and most of all, by Jesus.** We are committed to raising our children in the Christian faith and pray daily for each of their individual relationships with the Lord.

As parents, we aim to raise capable, compassionate, faith-filled children who are rooted in family and equipped to step into the world with confidence and purpose. We value education, but we believe learning happens everywhere – in books, in the garden, at the dinner table, and through real-life experiences. We will support our kids in pursuing college, trades, or entrepreneurial paths; whatever suits their calling best.

Professionally, we plan to continue following the unexpected paths that life and passion open. While Evan currently leads his architecture firm with excellence, he is also someone who adapts and explores new directions as his interests and opportunities evolve. We enjoy buying real estate and improving neighborhoods. Now that some of the kids are getting older, one of our goals is to bring them into our work in more intentional ways – giving them a front row seat to the creative process, the hard work, and the adventure of building something meaningful. We want them to experience firsthand what it looks like to follow a calling, take risks, and lead with integrity.

Ultimately, our biggest goal is to create a legacy that lasts far beyond us – a legacy of faith and strong family bonds. We talk often about not just raising children, but future parents, spouses, and community leaders. We want to be active and present not only in our children's lives, but in the lives of our future grandchildren, supporting their marriages, encouraging their parenting, and walking alongside them through every season. We dream of a family that remains deeply connected for generations to come.

# Before You Go

As you close this book, we want to thank you again for the time and heart you took to read about our family. We hope you felt the love, faith, and intentionality woven into every part of our lives.

We know this decision is heavy and holy. Should you choose us, we make these promises to you and your child:

- We will speak of you often and honor you with gratitude.
- We will raise this child to know they are deeply loved by you and us.
- We will nurture their story with gentleness, never hiding where they came from.
- We will raise them in a home centered on Christ, family, and unconditional love.
- We will celebrate who they are and who they become, cheering them on through every stage of life.
- We will stay rooted in faith, committed to one another, and constantly growing in grace as parents.

Our greatest hope is that this child will grow up confident in their worth, steady in their identity, and filled with love from both of their families. That's the legacy we promise to build.

Respectfully,

*Evan and Shelby*



