

LOVE IS TAKING A FEW
STEPS BACKWARD, MAYBE
EVEN MORE, TO GIVE WAY
TO THE HAPPINESS OF THE
PERSON YOU LOVE.

-WINNIE THE POOH



Meet



KATHLEEN

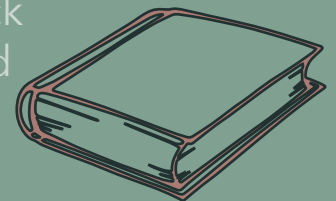
CJ

CHARLIE



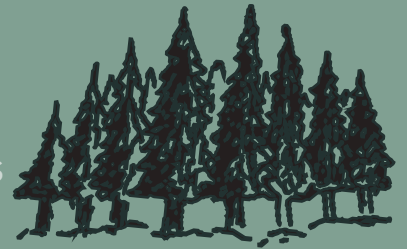


Kathleen is an English professor at a local historically black university. She has taught middle school, high school, and college. She loves teaching reading and writing, and she enjoys interacting with students. She volunteers with organizations around town dedicated to education and the arts.





Charlie is a high school social studies teacher, and he is an engineer in the Missouri Army National Guard. He loves working with students and teaching about history at a local public school. But most importantly, he enjoys being of service to his community, state, and country.





CJ is Charlie's son from a previous marriage, and he lives with us 50% of the time. He's active in Scouts, and he enjoys being on his school archery team and playing the cello in orchestra. His favorite pastimes include Legos, boxing, spending time outdoors, and video games. He loves playing in the neighborhood with all the younger kids who live around us. CJ is also interested in learning how to cook and take care of the house, so he frequently joins his dad in doing household projects, and he joins both of us in cooking meals for the family and trying new recipes.



Our Story



We first met when Kathleen was doing her student teaching and Charlie was in his first year of teaching at the same high school. We lost touch with each other when Kathleen moved away to go to graduate school, but reunited at a Christmas Eve party that a retired high school librarian has annually. Kathleen had been going every year with her family, and Charlie just happened to show up at the same party. As soon as Kathleen walked in the door, Charlie was struck and wanted to know if he knew her from somewhere. It took a little while for them to remember the connection, but after that, they started a long-distance relationship. Kathleen left her job outside of Chicago to build a life and family with Charlie. We've now been happily married for three years, enjoying loads of laughter and plenty of serious conversations.



We love spending time together as a family. We make dinner and eat every night as a family, while talking about the best parts of our days. Most nights, we play games or watch a bit of a movie together before bedtime. And we have family reading time right before bed, often reading aloud to each other, while snuggling and playing with the dogs. Both of us are dedicated to giving back to our communities and to helping others. We also love to travel together, and we even love making little trips in the summer or winter breaks from school.





Charlie's FAMILY

Charlie's mother lives about an hour away, and we spend a lot of time at each other's houses visiting. His mother also enjoys joining us on family vacations. She even went to Disneyworld for the first time at age 73 and rode her first roller coaster with us. She is a retired math teacher and loves spending time with her grandkids. Charlie's sister, Angie, is a therapist and lives in Ohio with her husband, Fabrizio, and our wonderful niece, Francesca. We meet up with them a couple times a year, and they alternate holidays with us or in Costa Rica visiting Fabrizio's side of the family. Charlie has a large extended family, several of whom live close to us, and we visit family frequently throughout the year.



Kathleen's FAMILY



Kathleen's mother lives in the same town as we do, and she loves spending time at our house. She is a retired math teacher and enjoys spending time around kids. Kathleen's brother, Jim, and his wife, Ashley, live just a few hours away and visit regularly. Jim works in video production and advertising, and Ashley is back in school to become an Occupational Therapist. Her sister, Ruthie, is also only a few hours away and works as a full-time, online math tutor. Kathleen has a large extended family spread out across the US who she loves traveling to visit.





Home

We live in a large, lovely four-bedroom house in a little subdivision on a lake. Our community shares a sizable lake and community pool. So we love to spend time fishing, swimming, and taking out kayaks or our paddle boat. The community has lots of fun events for the kids in the neighborhood, including special Fourth of July fireworks, a hay ride in October, and cookouts. Since the neighborhood is pretty enclosed, it's not unusual to see lots of kids playing outside around the neighborhood together.





Friends

Charlie has a few very close friends who live across Missouri, many of whom he knows through his work in the National Guard or through teaching. Kathleen has many friends in the Chicago area and spread across the nation; she loves being on break and being able to take the family to visit her friends.



HOBBIES & TRAVEL

Kathleen loves swimming and kayaking. She feels lucky we live on a lake. She loves taking pictures and making little crafts. She's also an avid reader and writer, and she practices yoga. She is truly blessed to have a job that combines her passions of working with students on writing and reading, and helping future English teachers study how to teach. Because of this, a lot of her hobbies line up with her work. She loves to write about television and movies, as well as literature. Basically, if you have a story, she wants to hear or read it. And her passion for helping others extends from the school realm into serving on boards around town for the arts, and helping others whenever she can.



Charlie loves being outdoors and doing projects around the house. He likes to spend time cutting firewood in the woods and hunting when he can make trips out to our land, which is about an hour away. He exercises regularly to stay in shape for the military, and especially enjoys running. He loves watching the birds on the water off our back deck. He also enjoys reading and spending time with the family.



WHAT ADOPTION MEANS TO US

We started our adoption journey with a desire to bring more children into our family. We thought we might try to go through the state system and foster, and we have been foster parents to two wonderful boys. But we know now it will break our hearts when they go back to their family. This has helped us realize how much we want the permanency of adoption. These boys will take a piece of our hearts when they are reunified with their family, and we are so happy to have helped their family in their time of need. But we now are positive we want children permanently in our home. We have found we have a lot of love in our hearts to share with kids, and look forward to adding onto our little family. Through our work as teachers, we have been able to love and support so many kids over the years, but now we'd be so happy to have our own. We live in a house full of love and play. We are excited at the opportunity to add onto our family and welcome a new little one into our home. Both our families are excited at the thought of new little ones, and many of them live close enough to help us regularly. Our extended families get together several times a year to catch up and stay connected.



Letter to the Birthparent(s),

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about our family. We know how difficult it can be to think about our kids, and we appreciate your thoughtful consideration in finding a family for yours.

We hope we've been able to give you a glimpse into our lives and show you a bit about our fun little family. We know the path to adoption can include some twists and turns, and we hope to be able to work with you as much or as little as you'd like to ensure a smooth and supportive adoption process.

We will be open about adoption with our kids, and make sure we tell your child about the loving choice you made to let them join our family.

With all the love in our hearts, we wish you well on this journey of looking for an adoptive family.

Best,





303 North Stadium Blvd. Suite 200
Columbia, Missouri 65203
Phone 573-356-0025 Fax 888-396-7768
Birthparent Line: 1-888-564-HOPE (4673)

Email: info@AGiftofHopeAdoptions.com
Web: www.aGiftofHopeAdoptions.com