

# Emily AND Evan



AND BENTLEY, TOO!

# Hello!



So nice to meet you! Thank you for spending your time getting to know us! We hope that the stories we share about our lives will connect with you and will provide a window into our little family. We can only imagine how overwhelming and difficult this time might be for you. We greatly admire what we feel is courage and strength in your consideration of adoption. We hope that you feel supported and loved no matter where you are at in your journey.

Know that we are praying for you and your sweet baby, and that God will give you the greatest peace in whatever decision you make.



# Who We Are



**We are a family of Christian faith** and our relationships with God are very important to us. We are connected to church, and remain good friends with people we knew in our churches growing up. We recently got together with some of Emily's friends from her childhood church. When Emily shared our adoption journey, her friends encouraged and prayed for us, and for you and your child. We felt immense peace after the prayer and we were grateful for their support. Your child will be surrounded by family, friends and faith.

**We are a family that encourages one another.** Last week, Emily had an "off week" at work with a project going wrong. Evan suggested that a change of scenery would be a great mood booster, so we had a spontaneous date night. We went to one of Emily's favorite stores, Hobby Lobby, and browsed the aisles. We purchased the cutest stained glass painting set, perfect for our niece's upcoming birthday, and then had a delicious steak dinner at Texas Roadhouse. It was the perfect way to take Emily's mind off of her stress and Emily appreciated Evan's thoughtful idea.



**We love to be playful through goofy pranks.** Emily has been on a streak of jumping out and scaring Evan, so a little while back Evan decided to give a pay back. He waited for Emily to be done drying her hair and hid just behind the bed. When Emily walked in the room, Evan was all too gleeful to jump out and scare Emily half to death. Emily screamed so loud that the dog ran in the room with his toy and wanted to play, too! We burst into laughter and immediately began plotting our next silly joke!

# Meet Emily

Emily has always loved music, and really enjoys going to **concerts and musicals**. When she was young, her Mom and Dad took her to the symphony to experience live classical music. This ignited a passion for the arts. Since that experience, Emily grew up participating in school plays (even a lead role in *Les Miserables!*), and attending musicals that would come to town. Recently, Emily's 11 year old niece became passionate about singing, and she landed the role of "Berta Healy" in her school's musical - *Annie!* Emily was thrilled to attend the opening night show, and was a proud aunt quietly singing along with her niece's solo performance of "You're Never Fully Dressed without a Smile."



**Emily has a passion for serving others.** Recently, she and her colleagues got together and prepared a meal for families staying at the Ronald McDonald house, a charity that supports families with sick children. When dinner time came and the families came in to eat, Emily was approached by a family who told her they were grateful for the Mexican meal instead of the typical bland lasagna. They also shared how impactful this meal was to them as it allowed them to receive good nourishment and quickly get back to their little ones in the hospital.

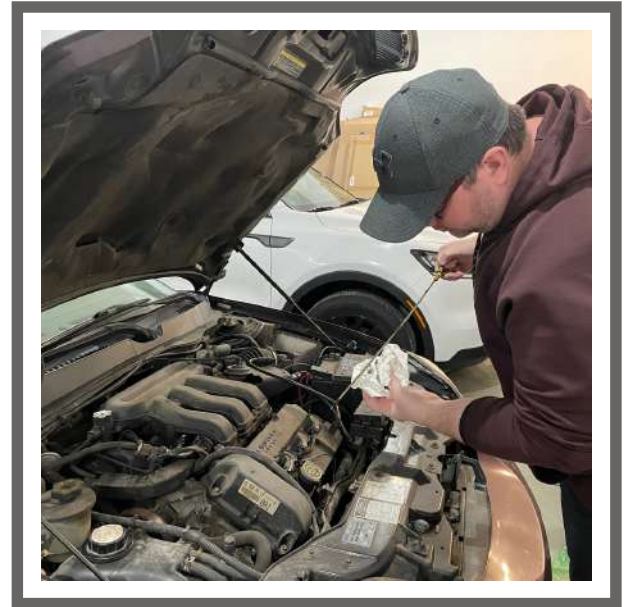
Emily likes to **show her love** for others by giving thoughtful gifts. A perfect example was a wedding present; Emily bought special color-blind glasses for Evan since he cannot see red or green. On our wedding day, when Evan opened the gift, he had the biggest grin and ran to the window to see the trees. Evan was so touched that Emily gave him the glasses so that he could see the lush greenery on their honeymoon. Your child will be shown love **in a personal and meaningful way.**





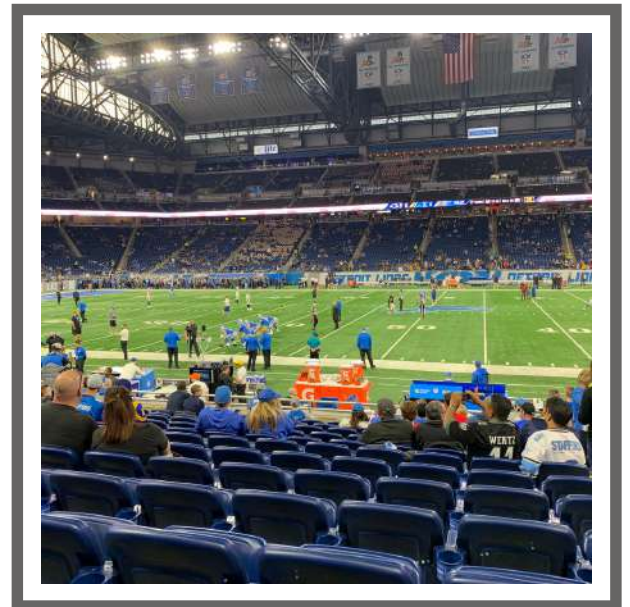
# Meet Evan

Evan is **skilled at working on cars**. While in High School, Evan had an interest in cars and how they are repaired. He took classes and passed the tests required to become a certified mechanic as a teen. Many years later those skills came in handy as Emily's brakes would randomly quit working on her car. She had taken it to multiple repair shops but none of them were able to locate the cause of the problem. Emily was so nervous to keep driving her car, but Evan did some troubleshooting and discovered that a hose was the issue. Emily was elated that her car was able to be fixed after months of worrying.



Evan has a **deep appreciation for the military and military history**. He especially loves to read books and watch documentaries on World War II. A life goal of his is to visit all five of the aircraft carrier museums located around the United States. On a recent trip we were able to tour Mighty Mo, otherwise known as the battleship USS Missouri. We spent hours walking the various decks and compartments and even stood on the very spot where Japan signed surrender papers to end WWII. Evan was in awe of the huge ship filled with historical memories, and was thankful for those who made great sacrifices for our country.

Evan is a big sports fan, and especially **loves soccer and football**. He grew up playing soccer and he was always the fastest kid on the field. One game in particular, his aunt was watching him play. He could hear her cheering and shouting "Run, Baby, Run!" from the sidelines. He may have been the fastest on the field but he wasn't able to run fast enough to escape the embarrassment. Nowadays, Evan enjoys watching anything from the Super Bowl to his niece's five year old softball team. Your child will get the opportunity to take part in activities they are passionate about.



# Our Story



Our journey first began online. **We talked and video chatted for a few months before we finally decided to meet** for our first date. Evan lived 3 hours away from Emily and happened to be coming nearby for a work trip, so we thought it would work out great. We decided to meet in a little town called Frankenmuth, which is home to the world's largest Christmas store. We spent hours walking and talking through the store, and took a walk over a covered bridge. Evan used the bridge as an opportunity to try to hold Emily's hand, but Emily was too nervous to hold hands on the first date. We were definitely smitten with each other from the start.



The first date went so well that we decided to schedule our second date for the very next day. We settled on a hockey game since we both love sports. It was super crowded at the game and Emily knew she wanted a second chance at holding Evan's hand, but was too awkward to tell him. She asked Evan to grab her hand so they wouldn't get separated and **he was none the wiser to her ulterior motive**. While at the game, Evan's mom texted to see what he was doing and he told her that he was on a date. She didn't believe him so he had to send her a picture of Emily. Emily loved how great of a relationship that Evan seemed to have with his mom, and was totally down for the playful joke. Word traveled fast through Evan's family and he surprised them all since it had been a year since he'd been on a date.

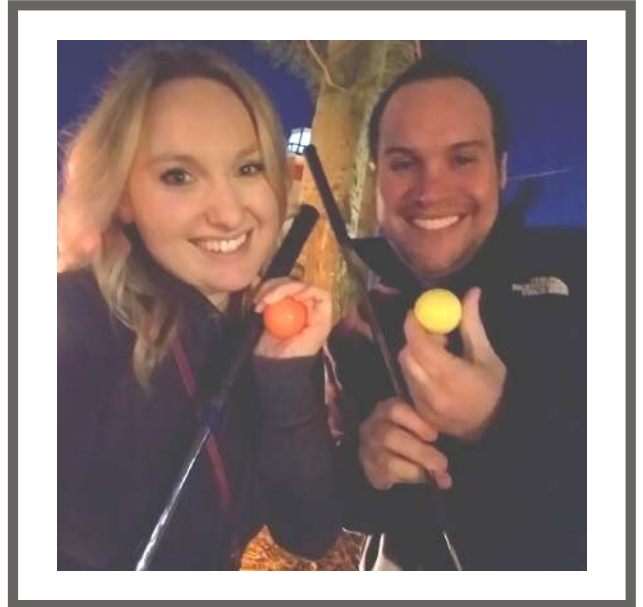


When we were married, we knew that we would grow our family through adoption. Emily was diagnosed with infertility at 15, so she knew that her dream of being a mom would be realized through adoption. She was thrilled when Evan was just as open to pursuing adoption too! **We are hopeful to join you on your journey.**



# What We Like to Do

We love **playing games** together. Some of our best memories are playing mini golf. The running joke in our house is that Evan cannot seem to beat Emily's put-put skills (or lack thereof). No matter what course, Emily always seems to beat Evan. This summer, we played mini-golf with Emily's family at a local course. At one hole, Evan kept whacking his ball across the course and into the water. On the 5th attempt, we gave him a pass, otherwise we would have been there all day! We laughed at poor Evan's wet shoes and commiserated together with some frozen yogurt. Your child will learn to have fun regardless of winning or losing.



We love going on adventures. As a surprise to Emily, Evan booked a no-door helicopter tour over the mountains. **Emily had never been more scared** in her life. She had her eyes mostly shut, and had a white knuckle grip on **Evan**, who **appeared to be having the time of his life**. He thought it was pretty cool to hang outside of the helicopter, while Emily enjoyed looking at the waterfalls and lush greenery between peeks. While this was a once-in-a-lifetime thrill, our typical adventures involve kayaking on a river, or going to a nearby zoo.

One of our favorite ways to relax is by popping up some popcorn and putting something on the tv to watch. For Evan, an action movie and for Emily, a good romantic comedy. Most evenings, though, we love to **binge watch a tv show**. Recently, Emily suggested watching *Friends*, and although we've watched the whole series probably 20 times through, Evan graciously obliged because he secretly loves it too. He says that his favorite episode is "The One with Ross' Tan."



If you choose our family, your child will be welcomed and loved by two great-grandparents, four grandparents, six aunts and uncles, and **seven cousins**.

# Our Family



Our family parties are **bursting with laughter and joy!** At last year's Memorial Day party, we surprised our nieces and nephews with 100 water balloons to have a fight and we had a blast. One niece especially loved sneaking up and breaking a water balloon over her Uncle Evan's head. He laughed really hard and quickly grabbed the hose to spray some water at her. Your child will never have a dull moment at our family get-togethers and will create silly memories with lots of cousins.



Emily's family plans a yearly trip all together to be **adventurous** and to create new memories. Last year, we went up north to the Traverse City area of Michigan, known for its sand dunes and beautiful forests. We decided to go kayaking on a 13 mile river that led into Lake Michigan. We had a blast splashing each other with our paddles and trying to dunk Emily's sister into the water. She decided to be nice and let her sister stay in the kayak because she didn't want to be dunked herself. Your child will experience new adventures with family.



Our family is **close-by**, and **supports one another** in everything we do. When we moved into our home last year, our families spent their evenings and weekends helping us pack, move and settle into our space. As we were unpacking our home, Evan's sister walked over with a spaghetti dinner for us to eat. It was a wonderful "Welcome to the Neighborhood!" meal. We are so grateful for their love and support, and we try to live by that as well. We make a point to get together for frequent meals as a family. Your child will be supported by their family through both the ups and the downs of life.



# Our Traditions



One of Evan's favorite Christmas traditions is a **white elephant gift exchange**. It's all for fun because you never know what you're going to get. The most memorable "gift" that Evan can remember is a pair of very **oversized leopard printed undies**. Those undies have become a staple at Christmas and every year everyone wondered who was going to get them. One year, Evan's brother happened to pick that special "present." In a desperate attempt to get a new present from the stash, he quickly threw the underwear on over his clothes and modeled them for the group. He ended up stuck with the underwear and we got a good laugh!



Every year since Emily and her sister Ashley were little, on **Christmas Eve**, they'd receive a **book and an ornament** for the tree. The book was usually a cute picture book to read together the night before Christmas, and the ornament always represented something that happened to one of the girls that year. Last year, Emily's ornament was a little house to represent moving into a new house. She loves being able to look at dozens of ornaments that bring back forgotten memories. We'd love to learn about your favorite traditions and incorporate them into our celebrations for your child.



We have little traditions that we love to do each week, like "**Pizza Wednesdays**." Emily's favorite food is pepperoni pizza and she looks forward to this day every week. Last week, Emily was excited to order her favorite; Jet's Pizza. She used to get the deep dish pizza from Jet's as a kid, and her dad always made sure there was a corner slice left for her. It's the little things in life that bring us joy!

# Our Home

We live in a ranch style home at the end of a cul-de-sac in Michigan. We enjoy **relaxing on the couch** in our living room **looking out into the wooded back yard**. This particular evening, we enjoyed the beautiful sunset over the trees. We love that we live in a state that experiences all four seasons.



Our neighborhood is filled with **lots of young children** of varying ages, with little ones living right next door. Four of our nieces and nephews also live in our neighborhood, so your child will grow up with cousins close by. One day, the kids rode their scooters over to the house to visit. Emily looked outside and saw that Evan was riding around pretending to do cool tricks by jumping over hurdles. He was having a competition with his nephew and they were giggling non-stop.



Our neighborhood is in the middle of farmland and is connected to a **nature preserve** that has several hiking trails. They lead through the woods and down to a deck overlooking a river, where there is **a family of American Bald Eagles** living. One day we were kayaking on the river with our nephews and looked up in the trees to find a female bald eagle perched in her massive nest. We were so excited when we noticed two baby eagles and quickly paddled back to tell the boys to come take a look. Your child will have many opportunities to explore nature.





# Our Community



Located just five minutes from our home are the elementary, middle and high schools that your child would attend. The school district is ranked highly in the state for college preparedness. Although we are not currently involved in the schools yet, we regularly attend our niece and nephews' school sporting events and band concerts. Recently, we went and cheered on our nephew at his swim meet. Evan's **entire family showed up in support**, like they do **at every school function** the kids have. We watched him set a new personal best time for his least preferred stroke and we were so proud to see his accomplishment.

Our community is **rich in Dutch heritage** and every year it hosts a **Tulip Festival** that is attended from all over the country. Evan grew up attending the festival and marched in the Tulip Time Parade playing the trumpet in high school. Every year, Evan's family gets up early and places their blankets and chairs on the parade route for the best spot. The most recent parade was so much fun because we got to see our niece and nephew march. They were probably embarrassed as all of us shouted their names while they passed by! Your child will get to learn new cultures and maybe they'll march one day, too!



Our community sits right on the shoreline of Lake Michigan, and we have countless memories growing up **going to the beach** with our family and friends. Last summer, we went with Emily's parents and walked the pier leading out into Lake Michigan. Feeling spontaneous, Evan, Emily and her dad decided to jump off of the pier into the freezing cold water in their clothes! The water felt so good during the hot summer day, but we quickly realized that we'd have to traipse back to the car and sit in wet clothes until we got home. It was worth it! Your child will experience the pure fun of **jumping waves in Lake Michigan**.

# Bentley

We **grew up having pets** to take care of, from dogs and cats to gerbils and lizards! Bentley, our “Benty-boo”, is a 12 year old poodle mix that Evan rescued. One day back in 2013, Bentley showed up at Evan’s sister’s house. He was covered in burrs and his hair was completely matted. Try as they might, no one could get in touch with his owner. Evan had been considering getting a larger breed dog at the time, but was convinced to take in Bentley by his niece, who said “just because he’s a small dog doesn’t mean that he’s not a manly dog.”



Bentley is the ultimate snuggler and **absolutely loves kids!** He spends lots of time around all of our nieces and nephews and he gets so excited when they come to visit. One time our nieces and nephews were over and they were playing fetch with Bentley. Bentley was running around chasing the ball so much that we thought he was going to wear our floors out. When they were finished, our youngest nephew plopped on the couch and Bentley settled in right next to him for his afternoon nap.

Bentley can be **quite the little trouble maker**. He is a sweet little cuddler, especially attached to Evan, so when we leave to run an errand, **he lets us know that he's displeased** that he was left by himself. One particular time we returned home from the store and found that he had pulled out all of the tissues from the box one at a time and scattered them throughout the house. As frustrating as that can be, one look at his cute face and his wagging tail makes us forget all about it...until the next time, of course!





# Our Weekday Life

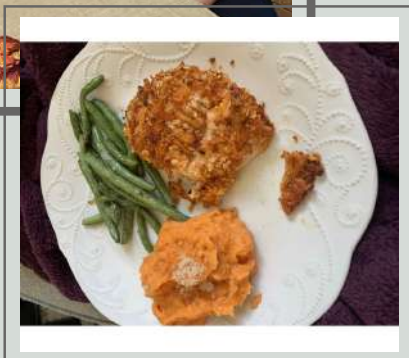


Emily currently works as a billing coordinator for an electric power company. Emily works a **hybrid schedule**, so while most days are in the office, she also gets to **work from home**. Emily can take off work as needed with a **flexible** schedule should your child need extra care.

Evan is a project manager for a gas and electric power company. He primarily **works from home** and is able to **flex his schedule**. He will be able to spend lots of time with your child.



We make it a priority to have **dinner together every night**. We recently purchased an air fryer to try out new, healthier recipes. Last week, Evan tried to make some chicken quesadillas and the machine started to beep at us with a problem. When he opened it, the air had blown the top tortilla right off of the quesadilla and the inside of the fryer was a cheesy mess. While not all of our recipes are a hit, we both love to try new flavors and cuisines. Your child will grow up spending daily quality time around the dinner table.



# Thank You!



Thank you for taking a peek into our lives and for considering us as your child's adoptive parents. If you feel led to select us, please know that we will always honor you in our home and in our family and we will speak of you often. We want you to know that your child will grow up in a home full of love, lots of laughter, and plenty of puppy kisses. We want to assure you that we will respect you and your level of openness and contact with your child. **We would love to be a part of your life and to include you in ours and your child's.** We pray that as your journey progresses you feel peace and hope in your decision.