



Derek and Katherine



DEREK & KATHERINE

Hello there!

We are so grateful you're taking time to read through our book!

If we were meeting you in person we'd love to have you in our home. We'd make our way to the living room and would pour big cups of hot coffee and have a heaping plate of our favorite dark chocolate/white chocolate chip cookies on the table!

We know that this is a complicated process as you read through profile books and we just want you to know that we are praying that God will guide you and give you peace. This is a huge decision and we admire the strength it takes to navigate this process. You are an incredible person and we want you to know that we care for you and this precious baby.

We hope this book will give you a snapshot of our lives and help you get to know us a little!

With love,
Katherine and Derek



Our Family at a glance...

We value **relationships!** We are so grateful for the awesome friends and family who are a huge part of our lives.

Adoption is a big part of our family! Our son was adopted, as well as Katherine's two oldest brothers, and her niece.

We live in the **South** and love being outside as much as we can! The mild winters give us plenty of time to hike and the summers mean pool time and cookouts!

We love **Jesus!** It is our hope that we can love those around us well as a result of our love for Jesus and what He has done for us!

Our home is very **laid back.** We are silly, have dance parties in the kitchen, wrestle in the living room, and pull the cushions off the couch to make a trampoline!

Being **flexible** is one of the big life lessons we lean into. We try to embrace plan B or C when things change, as they often do! We value being able to adjust when things don't go according to plan.

We love going on "**adventures**" as Levi calls them! Before kids we traveled overseas quite a bit and hope to again soon! For now, we enjoy weekends in the mountains, road trips to see family who live at the beach, or exploring parks, museums and shops in nearby towns.

We value our **differences.** Our temperaments, wiring and interests are each unique and we want to encourage that in each member of our family.

We are a **team.** Whether it's picking up toys, doing laundry, or making big life decisions we want to make teamwork fun and share the responsibilities.

We love **hosting!** Anytime we can have friends over whether it's a meal, a celebration, or a playdate we love our home being full of people!



Our Story

January 2007 – We met through friends

June 2011 – We got married

July 2018 – We started the adoption process

October 2019 – Levi joined our family

Present Moment – We're waiting with hopeful hearts





Meet Derek!

Derek in Katherine's Words

When I first met Derek I was struck with how funny he was, and how much everyone around him seemed to love him! And those things are both still true! He is one of the kindest and most generous people I have ever known and he loves those around him well! Even before I knew for sure if I wanted to marry him I knew he would be a great dad someday, which again has held true! He is a hard worker both at his job and around the house where he is always fixing or building something. I love being with Derek!



"I am my happiest when I make people around me laugh; whether they are laughing at me or with me!"



In a nutshell

- I'm 39 but I'm still very much a kid at heart. I still love to play and be goofy which makes spending time with kiddos so enjoyable! I'm a project manager responsible for overseeing design and construction for building projects and love getting to see the daily progress of a building being built. I'm always up for an adventure but also love a chill slow day at home!



Favorite things

- I enjoy playing, watching or talking about sports, getting lots of friends and family together for a gathering or meal, breakfast and brunch, hiking, traveling, biscuits (yeah, they get their own spot on my list), exploring new places and cities, being in the mountains.

My perfect day -

- The day would start with a workout or run before coming back and having brunch! We'd enjoy a pot of coffee while hanging out on the porch. After a nap, the afternoon would be filled with watching football while playing cornhole. For dinner, we'd have a group of our closest friends over to grill out and then sit around a firepit while talking, telling jokes and swapping stories!

Things you should know about Derek

- I am an only child so when I married Katherine, I got all the sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews I had always wanted! I have lived in both the big city and the small town and I'm completely comfortable in both. I am super competitive even if I'm just playing a board game.

Meet Katherine!



Katherine in Derek's words

Profile

- I am 38 years old and I am 6'1", or as my sister says – 5'13", haha! I have hazel eyes and brown curly hair that I mostly wear up in a topknot! I am an artist and love every form of creativity – painting, cooking, gardening etc.

Favorite things

- I love having a house full of people to cook for, painting, swimming, playing with kids, exploring new towns, hiking, thrift shopping, hanging out with friends, teaching art classes, deep conversations with friends, gardening and throwing parties!

My perfect day

- We'd grab biscuits from a local shop and head to the mountains a few hours away. We'd hike up to some waterfalls and have a picnic lunch while taking in the view. That night we'd have friends over for dinner or meet up at a Mexican restaurant. Everyone would come back to our house for a fresh blueberry crumble with homemade ice cream on top!

Things you should know about Katherine

- I am from a family of 11 children (yes, you read that right!) and I am the middle child. I love my big family and the traditions and memories we share! I lived overseas for 3 years splitting my time between England and Ukraine where I worked with orphans. I am a professional artist who creates custom paintings. I love the time I spend with my clients face to face as well as time in my home studio where I crank up the music or listen to a podcast while I paint away! I enjoy cooking curry, Greek, or Asian dishes that remind us of some of the special places we've traveled.



One of the first things I noticed about Katherine is how comfortable she was in any setting; big or small, loud or quiet, planned or spontaneous. Everyone knows that Katherine is always up for an adventure! If you asked her, she could easily plan the perfect day but she's also really good at making it up on the fly! She is always looking for ways to help or do something for someone else. She is an amazing problem solver. She is such a fun and laid back mama and comes up with so many creative activities that make every day new and exciting! My favorite days are the ones that I spend entirely with Katherine.



"I feel the most at peace in nature and the most joy spending time with the people I love!"



THE SHORT STORY

We met late one night in 2007 while hanging out at Waffle House with friends!

We dated for a year and a half while living an hour apart. Lots of late night drives home!

We got engaged in February of 2011 on a freezing cold Saturday while taking a walk along the river.

We got married in June of 2011 on a blazing hot day (sorry friends) and had an awesome time celebrating and dancing the night away!



We are so thankful for the foundation of friendship we had from the years before we started dating. We can honestly say we are each other's best friend! We love spending time together in the everyday moments, as well as the big celebrations and events of life.

We're committed to always believing the best about each other, to continue being curious and dating our spouse, to seek Jesus together in all that we do and to provide a home where our children will be surrounded by love.



OUR STORY

A few of the things we love to do together -


We love going to **concerts and shows!** Derek's favorite show is Phantom of the Opera and Katherine's favorite is Les Miserables. Some of our favorite bands are NeedtoBreathe, Johnny Swim, Marc Broussard, and Ben Rector.

We like **playing games.** We have been keeping score for almost a decade with one of our favorite card games. (Derek feels good about his lead.)

We love **good food!** Cooking together or eating at a new restaurant, we love trying different and unique dishes!

We enjoy **volunteering** together. We've had lots of opportunities through our church to mentor younger people. We love building these relationships and getting to invest in some awesome younger men and women!

We love **traveling!** A few of our favorite memories are hiking a fjord in Norway in the snow, kayaking around a remote island in Thailand, and learning to make pesto in Italy!





OUR SON LEVI!

Snapshot

- Levi is 3 years old, has the wildest curly hair and awesome blue eyes. He loves being outside as much as possible. He is at the very curious stage asking “why” about everything! He’s such an active little dude and has great balance. We’re pretty sure he can climb to the top of anything that we will let him!

Favorite things

- His favorite basket of toys is the one full of “diggers”, cars and trucks, and transformers! He loves ice cream, construction sites, swimming, dogs, “cooking”, digging in the garden, Curious George books, jumping off of anything, story time at the library, and pushing the little carts around at Trader Joes!

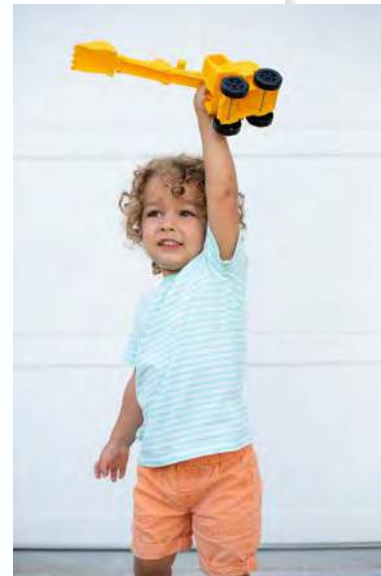
Future big brother

- We can’t wait to see Levi take on this new role. He is precious with his baby cousin who joined the family this summer. Levi is so tender with him and will sit very still stroking his head! He knows we’re adopting and the other day in Target he wanted to buy a toy for “his baby!”



What I love about being his mom!

I love that I get to stay home with Levi and I treasure spending every day with him! I get so much joy out of seeing him grow and learn new things and I love the moments we have together snuggling and reading just as much as the wild and crazy ones! Levi is all joy and it is one of the greatest privileges of my life to get to be his mama!



What I love about being his dad!

Levi is so adventurous and curious! I love how he wants to go “exploring” in the woods with me. He is so full of energy and wants to try everything. It is so much fun watching how excited he gets when he learns a new trick or figures out how something works. He has the best giggle that turns into an absolute laugh-fest when he cracks himself up!



WHY ADOPTION?

Our goal in our kids' lives is to create a culture in our home where they know they are unconditionally loved and to be a safe place for them to thrive.



Adoption has played a big role in our lives. Katherine's two oldest brothers are adopted as well as one of her nieces. We have a wonderful adoption community in our town and a lot of our close friends have adopted.

We always knew we wanted to have kids and we were excited when we started trying to get pregnant. We struggled through some difficult years of infertility and prayed a lot about pursuing adoption. We are so grateful for Levi's birth parents who chose us and it is truly an incredible honor and joy to be Levi's parents!

We've done a lot of training, reading and attending seminars to educate ourselves on adoption. Although we know we will always be learning more, we are grateful for the resources and voices on all sides of adoption that we've been able to learn from.

We believe that loving our children means always being open and honest with them. We always want our children to know that they were adopted and that their birth parents made a plan for them out of love. We have so much respect for you and the journey you've been on and the love we know you have for this child in making an adoption plan for them.





We view our home as a place where we can help people feel welcomed, loved and valued.

We live in a neighborhood where when you walk out the front door you almost always end up talking to a neighbor! We know each dog by name, refill the neighbors bird feeders when they're on vacation, and share blueberries when we've gone picking! There are two little boys who live right across the street from us and Levi loves to race them down the hill on their scooters. The only pests are the deer who like to chomp on our flower gardens!



THIS IS HOME



A few highlights of our home

- Our back deck is a favorite spot for dinner or snacks where we can watch the seasons change and wildlife wander through
- We have a fireplace we love to use in the winter on cozy evenings when we curl up with a cup of Derek's famous hot chocolate
- The living area, kitchen and dining spaces are all connected and we love that we can all be in the same area even if we have separate activities
- Our property backs up to a huge forest that provides a beautiful peaceful view out our back windows



Our home has a large living room that opens into the dining area and kitchen. Off the back of this space is a deck that overlooks the backyard and woods. We have three bedrooms, three baths and a big front room that is Katherine's studio. We have a huge basement that has all sorts of games as well as a workshop.

Making Memories

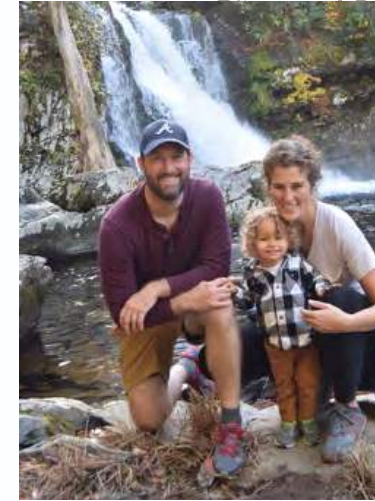
Seasonal Traditions

Spring

- Picking fresh blueberries and strawberries at nearby farms
- Planting zinnia seeds so we have flowers to share with friends all summer long
- Visiting the amazing local Botanical Gardens in full bloom

Summer

- Long weekends with Katherine's sister who lives on the coast
- Homemade ice cream for any summer celebration
- Brunch at Katherine's parents' house on the 4th of July with all the cousins



Fall

- Heading to the mountains with Derek's parents for a weekend of hiking
- Tailgating and football watching parties
- Picking out pumpkins and carving up some silly faces to sit on our front porch

Winter

- The charming local Christmas market complete with campfires and hot cider
- Candlelight service at our church on Christmas Eve followed by chili and caroling with friends
- Cookie decorating with the cousins

Katherine's Family

Children have always been a huge part of my family! Growing up as the middle child of 11 siblings I feel like I had the opportunity to be close to both the older and the younger ones! We have a ton of traditions as a family and love holiday celebrations but I think our favorite might be 4th of July. Some of the siblings will run a local 10K race and then we'll all gather at my parents house for a big brunch and hang out at their pool the rest of the day!

Some of the things we all enjoy together are playing games, good food, the beach, teasing, pool time, any sort of competition with a ball, parties and celebrations (there's always a birthday with 26 grandkids!). Last year we celebrated my Grandfather turning 100 and he's still to this day cracking jokes with his great-grandchildren!



OUR FAMILIES



Derek's Family

I was an only child but my cousins played the role of siblings much of the time! I have a big extended family who are all super fun loving and always up for a prank and pitching in and working together! My parents live just a few miles away from us and we see them a couple of times a week! Levi thinks Grammy and Gramps hung the moon, and he loves going to their house and swinging, digging holes in their garden, or eating popsicles on the back porch.

My family loves walks on the beach, eating out and cooking fancy meals, hikes in the fall in the mountains, traveling and telling stories. And oh do they have some hilarious stories!



Before you go...

If you should choose to join your life with ours through this precious child there are a few things we wanted to share with you specifically.

We commit to

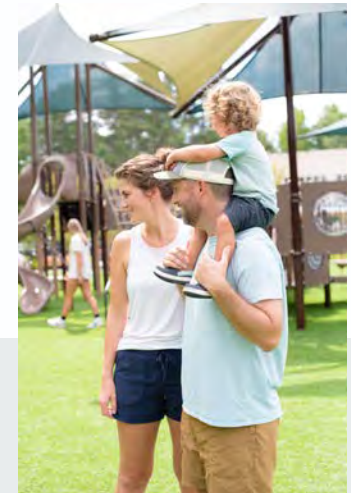
- Always honor the role you play in this child's life and speak lovingly of you in our home
- Communicate to our children openly about their stories
- Teach our children about the love their Heavenly Father has for them
- Fearlessly protect, encourage, and love each of our children

We are filled with hope for our family's future and we are excited that you might be a part of our story.

Thank you for taking the time to read through these pages. I am sure the amount of information you're processing is overwhelming and we want you to know that we are praying for you to have peace in your decision making. Whether you choose us or another family, we pray God's blessings over you and this little one, that you would feel the assurance of His love and care today.

You're amazing and loved!

Derek and Katherine



"You do not have to have it all figured out right now. Think of the flowers of the fields. They have no concept of tomorrow and yet still, they grow. They still bloom how they were meant to. Through sun and rain, they change. Day by day, they do not look the same. They spring forth in due season, even without knowing the reason. This is true for you, too. You don't have to be able to make sense of every single thing around you or explain every part of yourself to know that you belong. As sure as every wildflower in a thousand-acre field has a place, so do you. There will be moments for you to sort through ideas and plans for tomorrow, but there will also be moments for you to be still, right here, in the sun and rain, knowing that through all that is known and unknown, you will bloom all the same." - MHN