



Mark and Kara



Dear Birthmother,

First of all, thank you for taking the time to read our letter. We are excited about the prospect of growing with another child in our home and are thrilled you would take the time to consider us. Within these few pages we will do all we can to help you understand who we are as a family.

To begin, our names are Mark and Kara and we have been married for about 14 years. Both of us grew up in small towns with loving families and had strong involvement in church, sports and other community activities. We then met in college in the fall of 1999 and have been together ever since.

Today so many years later, our family also includes two energetic boys that we are tremendously proud of. We are close with both sets of grandparents and get together with family several times a year.

In regard to employment, Mark has been in full-time pastoral ministry for nearly ten years and Kara is a social worker in a local hospital. In the spring of 2016 we received an answer to prayer as Kara was able to shift to a part-time role in order to be more available for both Mark and our two sons.

It may come as no surprise that our Christian faith is an important element of our lives. We are actively engaged in our church; not only because it is Mark's place of employment, but because we truly feel it is important to be part of a family of believers.

Aside from church-related activities both of us also live quite active lives. Each of us has run long distance races and continue weekly exercise. Kara enjoys crafting, painting and reading. Mark enjoys video games, computers and hiking.

The conversation to adopt is one that we have been having since before we were married. Both sides of our family as well as all our friends are in full support of our desire to adopt and are excited for us to have an opportunity to bring another child into our home. We cherish diversity and are open to any race or gender for adoption. We desire to teach our children about their heritage and cultural backgrounds.

We want you to know that our home is a fun, lively, loving, energetic place where we aim to love God and people as much as we can. Please know we are praying for the child and birth-mother God may bring to us, and we would be incredibly honored if such a sacred opportunity might come through you.

Sincerely,

Mark and Kara





About Us

We met the very first week our freshman year at college. Things began with us becoming friends and over time it was clear to Mark that he wanted more. Mark essentially chased Kara the remainder of that year until in the spring of 2000 when she went on a date with him. After that date the rest of the story continued into the present.

What initially drew us to each other our freshman year are the things that continue to fuel our relationship: devotion to God, playfulness, laughter, care and love. We believe that in order to create the most safe, loving, God-honoring environment we first need to be dedicated to our faith personally, then pour into our marriage intentionally.

Therefore, we set aside time regularly to go out on dates and simply be together. We often end up doing things such as explore new restaurants, go for bike rides, watch movies or just find a way to be in the peace and quiet together.

The conversation about adoption is not a new one to us as it has been a point of discussion since before we were married. Mark was adopted as an infant and the discussion has long been a desire of ours to welcome a child into our home. We have been praying for years about the right season and time to pursue this journey.

Of the things we are most proud of, our two sons top the list. At ages seven and three they are full of life, energy, curiosity and excitement. Whenever we can, we love to offer them new and exciting experiences. We take individual dates with them. We love to go to big things such as aquariums, baseball games and museums. However, sometimes the exploration is much more low-key as we dig in the dirt outside our own home, catch fireflies, find worms, do crafts with Kara, go for hikes or just hold out sparklers. We love watching their minds learn and take in new pieces of our world.

Friendships are a big part of our lives as well. There are several families we get together with weekly as well as friends we have made over the years. Our children have lots of interaction with other kids and with families of all backgrounds and cultures.

About Mark

Since we met, Mark has been a constant companion and listener to me even before we were married. Once I figured out that I wanted to be with him and marry him, I began to see how God would lead us as a couple. He is fun-loving, quirky and slow-to-anger.

His demeanor remains calm and even when he becomes frustrated, I know he loves me. He is my best friend and our friendship is one of the most important aspects of our marriage. He is great at surprises. He surprises me with gifts and he surprises our boys with activities and new explorations. Mark is very generous in his time and in giving of himself to help others. His family is first though, which is impressive to me about him. I am so thankful that he can say 'no' if we have a family activity scheduled and keep his priorities.

Mark gives the best hugs and his compassion is also what drew me to him. He can calm me or the boys down when we get too excited or too frustrated which is a gift. He does funny voices to make us laugh and has a great sense of humor. My hope and prayer is for our children to know how much they are loved by their daddy and to watch him as an example for themselves and their families in the future.



About Kara

When I first saw Kara she simply caught my eye by how cute she was. Her playful disposition and warm heart came out shortly after and it was not long before I could not get this beautiful girl off my mind.

I chased Kara our entire freshman year simply because I was utterly crazy about her. The more we grew in friendship the more I wanted to be her significant other. Once we did finally become a couple dating was a breeze because essentially I was just spending time with my best friend.

Today Kara is still my best friend. We have a lot of fun together. She is my number one encourager and support in ministry. She sometimes sees things in me long before I do; like my need for a break or motivation.

What I am consistently amazed by is Kara's gift of compassion. In her work she often goes above and beyond to care for her patients and has been consistently recognized by her co-workers as being outstanding at what she does. Kara has an incredible knack for showing grace and compassion in times when others may need it most.

Kara also is a fantastic mom. Kara goes above and beyond to ensure our boys have what they need and know they are loved. As young boys go, they adore her. I pray that through Kara they would learn the model for what a godly wife looks like for later in their lives.

Our Family

Mark's Family

Adopted as an infant I am the youngest of two children and my parents remain in the same house I grew up in. Even as we have gotten older my older sister and I still maintain a good relationship. Given she still lives close to my parents we are able to see each other many times throughout the year. On my side we have two teenage nephews that our sons absolutely adore. Whenever we can they are excited to see their cousins for lots of fun and exploration.

Kara's Family

Growing up, I have many memories of playing board games, cards and sports at parties and the house being filled with laughter and joy. My parents are retired now and travel at least every other month to see us and their grandsons. My older brother and his family live far away so we see his family including my sister-in-law and his three boys about once or twice a year. It is always so much fun for all the boys to be together.



Our family celebrates a Wild-Kratts themed birthday.



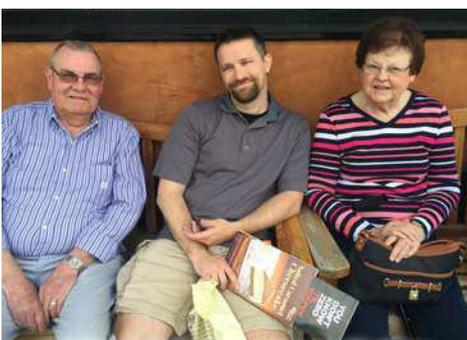
Kara has a strong relationship with her parents



Our staff-elder Christmas party



Laughing on a double-date with friends



Mark and his parents speak often



Our boys adore their older cousins



Kara gets ready to run with her friend Rachel



Mark and his staff are all good friends



Kara with some of 'her girls.'



Sometimes learning happens in the kitchen

Our Home

Given our plan has always been to adopt, we wanted to find a home that would allow our family to grow. God has blessed us with a two-story five-bedroom home including three bathrooms and a partially finished basement. We live at the end of a cul-de-sac and are blessed with the largest fenced-in backyard in the neighborhood providing our boys with lots of space to run, play and explore. There are also several other kids in the neighborhood offering lots of social interaction and play.

The community we live in is a tremendous place to raise a family; with a fantastic school system and many parks. In our own town we have access to many restaurants and stores and we are within easy driving distance to larger cities. All in all, just about any opportunity we may be looking for is available to our family.



Details about Us:

Mark		Kara
5'9"	Height	5'5"
Blue and Gray	Favorite Color	Turquoise
Cheesecake	Favorite Dessert	Dirt (Oreo Pudding)
Portland, OR	Favorite Vacation	Grand Canyon
New Years	Favorite Holiday	Christmas
Lord of the Rings	Favorite Movies	Willy Wonka (old version) Sound of Music
Bourne Trilogy		
Princess Bride		



Getting ready to take in a show.



Everyday silliness



Taking cookies to neighbors is an annual tradition



Our energetic pair

Left: Our boys after swimming
Middle: celebrating a birthday with family
Right: Kara cuddles with her boy

