Derek ♥ Ashley

Hello!

We are Derek and Ashley and have been together almost 8 years now. We grew up in different cities and met by chance. Derek was guest speaker at Ashley's church, and she thought he was cute, but she doesn't remember what he spoke about because of that distraction! Derek asked Ashley out shortly after that, and we went on our first date in Derek's hometown. Ashley met his ENTIRE immediate family on the first date. Derek's brother Matt suggested a double date the following week, securing a second date for us. Falling in love happened almost at first sight and we were engaged within 3 months of dating. Derek has served as a youth and associate pastor, and Ashley has served as a children's pastor, and daycare employee. Together we have worked with kids in many capacities including volunteer work and have loved every moment. We are best friends and strive to encourage each other through every stage of life. Some things we enjoy are going to church, hanging out with our families, date night trying fun desserts, going to Disney as much as we can, and time spent at home, watching Netflix hanging out with our pets.

Favorites

	Ashley	Derek
Education	Pursuing Associates of Health Information Management	Associates in Industrial Instrumentation
Occupation:	Medical Secretary	Automation Supervisor
TV Show:	Victoria	Lethal Weapon
Favorite Dinner:	Chicken and Waffles	Lasagna
Disney Character:	Hitch Hiking Ghosts from Haunted Mansion Ride	Peter Pan
Hobbies:	Reading/Bubble Baths	Playing guitar or working on classic cars
Childhood Memory:	Listening to country music with my grandma	Traveling out west for 2 weeks with my family and Grandparents.
Quote:	*"I never look back darling, it distracts from the now."* – Edna Mode from the Incredibles	*"Keep your heart in all diligence for out of it springs the issues of life."* - Solomon from Proverbs 4:23

About Derek *(by Ashley)*

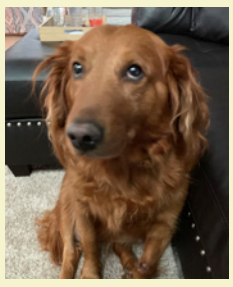
Derek is the most patient person I have ever met. He is so slow to anger, it's a talent. He can calmly work through any frustration and make you feel loved the entire time. He naturally encourages everyone he talks to, looking for their best qualities and potential and draws it out of them. His time as a youth pastor carries over in this way. He is painfully smart and reads articles on any topic for fun. Derek is that person you can't help but like, his personality is magnetic. He has pushed me to be stronger and better from day one of our relationship, and I have grown so much for knowing him. He works so hard and has continually educated himself, putting himself through college while working 3 jobs. He is also the type to drop anything if you need him, no questions asked. Derek loves music, and enjoys playing bass guitar, regular guitar, and a little piano. He is a car guy rather than a sports guy and works on the 2 classic cars we have. Derek makes me laugh everyday with the random songs he sings, and I laugh even harder when he tries to cook!

About Ashley *(by Derek)*

Ashley is my life, when I say that I mean she is what people remember when they meet us. She is the energy in the room getting people moving and having fun, I suppose this is a carryover from when she was a children's pastor. Ashley is one of the few people that wants to work out a compromise to improve a situation rather than stating this is what we are doing. She is absolutely a leader she is always looking to do ministries and events for people to get together and empower them through life. She constantly carries herself in a subdued strength for another person's sake. She's the type that could take command and do an excellent job, but she will let others lead until she is asked. Its awesome because she wants everyone to shine and be the most they can be, she uplifts others by hindering herself…she's beautiful.

Our Home

Our home is so cozy. Ashley really enjoys decorating in the ever so popular farmhouse vibe. She also really loves going all out for holidays through the year. Our house has 2 bedrooms with the possibility for a third. It includes one full bath, and a half bath. Throughout you'll find tons of pictures of us and our family. We have a nice sized yard, with parks close by. We are pet parents with two dogs and a cat. They are all so kind and snuggly and love it when people come over because they get more treats! We live in a small town with extremely nice neighbors who have cut our grass for us when Derek broke his ankle, and have brought us dinner when we moved in. We live close to the schools, hospital, and some shopping.



Our Family

Our family is beautifully blended, both of us were raised similarly. Our parents raised us in church, providing a wonderful balance between church and family life. Encouragement to try new things, be involved in school, and always be kind were foundational in our upbringings. We both have 2 brothers, and 3 sisters in law between us. We still like to have fun with our brothers, giving our parents the feeling that we never grew up! We have a niece and a nephew on Derek's side, and love getting together and seeing what they are into now. It's so fun to play with them! Holidays are great because we get to celebrate them twice since our families are in two different cities. Vacationing together when we can is one of our favorite things! Time is precious, and we have learned that through losing loved ones. The time we have now is important to make memories and to make "our people" feel loved all the time. During hard times, leaning on our families has provided great strength. We value the support system we have and can't wait to welcome a child into it.

Ashley's family at Christmas

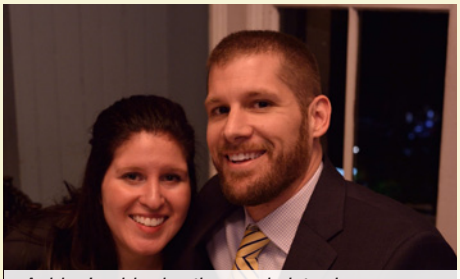
Derek's brother and his family (our niece and nephew) on vacation

Ashley's younger brother and girlfriend on Halloween

Derek's parents and grandparents hanging out at family dinner

Ashley's mom and dad on Thanksgiving

Derek's family at Christmas



Ashley's older brother and sister in law at a wedding

Derek's younger brother and sister in law on vacation

Ashley with her mom and grandma (this was grandma's first selfie)

Dear Birthparent,

Thank you for reading through our story, we hope to talk with you or meet you soon. We are a couple that chases dreams together, and this is one of them. We want nothing other than to complete our family through adoption. We are open to a child from any background or ethnicity, and plan to fully love and support them with all we have. We have established a solid relationship over the last 8 years and have worked hard to provide a beautiful home and steady income in preparation for this moment. We have the full support of our whole family, and our friends. Our hearts are open.

Sincerely,

Derek + Ashley

WHY ADOPTION?

We have loved and adored working with children for so many years. Through ministry or working at daycares, we have found so much joy in loving children. They are so much fun, and it feels good to be needed by them. We always had hopes for adopting because of how much we have loved children that were not biologically ours. We found out that we had “unexplained infertility” and have only been pregnant once. We lost our daughter halfway through the pregnancy. We are nervous to try again, and believe adoption is still the path we want to take. It’s always been on the table and a topic of discussion. We strongly feel led by God to this path.