

# Mike & Heather



Hi, and thanks for reading our letter!

We know that you are seeking a loving, stable family for your child, and we want more than anything to welcome a child into our home and provide our son or daughter with unconditional love. We've been best friends for eleven years, and married for four. Our struggles with infertility have brought us even closer together, and we are excited to have the opportunity to build our family through adoption.

## Our Home

We live in a townhouse in a safe, quiet neighborhood just 2.5 miles from the beaches of Santa Monica, California. We chose our location because it is close to the things we love—the ocean, the mountains, museums, and parks—and removed from the hectic pace of downtown L.A. We look forward to taking our child to the beach to build sand castles, taking them to the pier to ride the Ferris wheel, and going to the park and colorful playground just minutes from our front door. In the evenings we can take family walks through the peaceful, tree-lined streets of our neighborhood.

There is often music on at our house—we love everything from jazz to rock to country—and we've been known to have spontaneous dance parties in our living room (and yes, we know that we probably look ridiculous). We can't wait to have our child dancing with us.

## Our Work

We are both college professors, and we think that teaching is the best job in world. Education is very important to us, and we will make sure that our child always has access to great schools and teachers. The flexibility of our work schedules is perfect for raising children—we plan for one of us to be home with our son or daughter almost every day of the week. Both of our colleges offer day care centers near campus, which means that even on the few days when we both have to work, we can take our child with us, have them close by, and check in on them during breaks.

For us, family comes first, and though we love our jobs, we prioritize spending time together. Even on busy days, we make time to eat dinner together and talk. Our child will know that they are our top priority, as we gather as a family around one of Heather's pasta creations or Mike's amazing banana pancakes.



Kayaking in New Jersey



Meeting a (very friendly!) cub at a bear rescue in Michigan

## Our Hobbies & Interests

We're both very active, and we enjoy being outdoors, whether it's at the beach, in the mountains, or at one of the parks near our home. One of our favorite activities is hiking, and we're ready to strap on a baby carrier and take our child on those trails with us!

In addition to our more outdoorsy activities, we're members of several local museums, and we regularly attend art exhibits and events. We also go to a lot of concerts—it's great to hear our favorite bands play live (as we sing along, of course).

Over the years, we've gotten to work with kids a lot, too. Heather has taught dance to five-year-old girls, worked in a day care center, and taught summer writing programs for elementary and high school students. Mike has coached 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade basketball, taught kindergarten, and worked with high school students in a number of different programs. Both of us have volunteered as mentors with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and we found it incredibly rewarding to hang out with kids who needed positive role models and someone to spend a little extra time with them.



Hugging at the top of a steep hill in Bern, Switzerland

We also love to travel, and we've taken many wonderful trips together—to Virginia Beach, Montreal, Niagara Falls, Portugal (where we honeymooned), and Switzerland. We look forward to traveling with our child one day, and seeing the world together as a family.



Mike enjoying a boat ride during our honeymoon in Portugal

## About Heather

I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with my parents and four brothers. I am close to my whole family, and have a special bond with my younger brother, who was adopted at age nine. My parents encouraged me to try many different activities as a kid—gymnastics, dance, piano, violin, soccer, photography—and I want my son or daughter to have the same opportunities to try out new things and discover what they love.

My parents still live in Pittsburgh, along with my grandmother (she's 96!). They travel to visit me and my brothers, and they are active in their grandchildren's lives—my dad takes them to the aquarium and to baseball games, and my mom plays game after game of Go Fish and helps build giant Lego towers. They have seven grandchildren already (so our child will have seven cousins to meet!), but they will be delighted to have another. Each year, my entire family goes on summer vacation together, usually to the beach in North Carolina or New Jersey. We play on the sand, go mini-golfing, watch movies, and crack each other up. It's a highlight of the year for all of us.



Heather on the Oregon coast. These rocks are where Mike proposed!

Mike and I met and fell in love in Pittsburgh, and I've always known he'd make a great dad. Kids love Mike. From the moment our nephews met him, they were climbing all over him like a jungle gym, showing him their favorite toys, and recruiting him for games. I've watched Mike interact with kids for years—as an uncle, a coach, and a teacher—and it's easy to see that he genuinely loves being with children. He tells funny stories and plays games, but he's also patient and caring. He'll be a dad who's always there for his child, whether that means showing up to the school play, helping with homework, or just listening.



Uncle Mike helping our nephew Jonathan shoot a basket



Aunt Heather with our niece, Bethany

## About Mike

I grew up in McMinnville, Oregon, and my parents still live near there, as do my sister and brother-in-law. Though my immediate family isn't large, my extended family is huge—my father has 10 siblings, and I have 34 cousins!—and we all get together regularly for potlucks and holidays at my grandparents' farm. Christmas is a big event for our family. On Christmas Eve we gather around and listen to my grandfather read *The Littlest Angel* (a Christmas story), and then we climb into an old-fashioned horse-drawn wagon and go caroling by candlelight.

My parents are still waiting for their first grandchild, and are eager to shower our daughter or son with love and attention. My sister and brother-in-law are thrilled with the thought of being an aunt and uncle—they look forward to reading our child stories, baking cookies at Christmas time, and taking a trip to Disneyland.

On my first date with Heather we went to lunch and stayed at our table talking for hours after we were done eating, long after the waiter had come to clear our plates. Listening to her that first afternoon—and in every conversation since—it's obvious why I fell in love with her. She cares about people more than anyone I have ever met. Whether she's reaching out to a friend going through a difficult time, contributing to charities, or volunteering as a "Big Sister", Heather does whatever she can to help people who could really use something positive in their life. This caring instinct will make her a terrific mother. Our child will have a mom equally enthusiastic to take them to dance class or to the ball game, who is always available for a late night conversation or word of encouragement, and can help them to see the beauty in empathizing with the people around us.



Mike at a pumpkin patch

## Our Thoughts on Parenting

We believe that our role as parents is to recognize and nurture our child's unique gifts, and to help them be the best person they can be. To us, that means encouraging them to try new things and pursue their interests, helping them to understand how special they are, and being there to cheer them on, no matter what. We will teach our child to treat others kindly, to be honest, and to grow from their mistakes.



Aunt Heather hanging out with our nephews Brian, Andrew, Jonathan, Matthew, and Kevin



Andrew using Uncle Mike as a jungle gym

Our child will grow up attending a Christian church in our neighborhood, where Heather also helps lead the music on Sundays. This church is a welcoming community with people of many different ethnicities and from many different backgrounds. It has a thriving youth program and a team of people devoted to children's education. Our child will hear about how much God loves them while they build friendships with other kids.

Our child will always know how much *you* love them, too, and we are happy to maintain contact with you over the years if you wish.

Thank you very much for letting us introduce ourselves! We look forward to talking with you.

Love,

*Heather & Mike*

For more information, or if you'd like to meet us, please contact our adoption attorney, Doug Donnelly, at [Donnelly@AdoptionLawFirm.com](mailto:Donnelly@AdoptionLawFirm.com) or toll free at 800-350-5683.