

Joe & Bethany





— Hello —

Hi. We love you. Even though we don't know you yet, we admire and love your heart for putting your child above all else. We love you for who you are as a human being, for where you've been in your life, and where you are going. We want to ground everything we say, and more importantly, everything we do, in the love we have for you, your baby, your family, and your culture. Know that regardless of your decision to choose us, choose someone else, or to parent, we continue to love and hold you in our hearts and prayers.

If chosen, know we will love your child abundantly. They will be grounded in faith, they will know and enjoy the love and companionship of older siblings, they will live a calm and quiet life in a welcoming small town, and they will have every opportunity for quality education and opportunities for hobbies, sports, activities, creative pursuits, and wherever they choose to follow their passions. They will live nearby engaged grandparents and visit with cousins and have a circle of friends with caring families. They will know the unconditional love of family pets, including dogs and a cat. They will live nearby farms, but be a short drive to urban areas. They will be exposed to other languages, cultures, art, food, nature, and travel. All of this will be built on a foundation of Jesus' love, prayer, and our unwavering parental love and commitment to helping shape them according to God's perfect vision for who they are intended to be.

We want to have an open, honest, and transparent relationship that is centered on love and your child's best interests. We can't wait to include you in our family!



Joe & Bethany

OUR STORY

How We Met

We first met, but didn't date, when I (Bethany) was 13 and Joe was 18. We attended the same Christian school, and were both involved in orchestra and track—Joe's mom was also one of my teachers. Joe was the violin section leader and track captain, and I thought he was the cutest boy I had ever seen! He was absolutely my first crush. He politely put up with me following him around his senior year. Fast forward seven years, I was in college and Joe was working and we found each other on Facebook. Both of us had gotten out of serious relationships and decided to meet for coffee. I wanted to hear about Joe's photography work and he was interested in joining the military and wanted to know about my experience with Army ROTC in college. Our coffee turned into an eight hour date that never ended.

We knew by date #3 that we were going to get married. We dated for a year before Joe joined the Army and went to Basic Training in Georgia, while I stayed in Minnesota to finish college and my Army scholarship commitment. We got married later that fall, and I joined the Army the following year. The Army moved us all over—Georgia, Missouri, New York, Arizona, Afghanistan, and Tennessee.

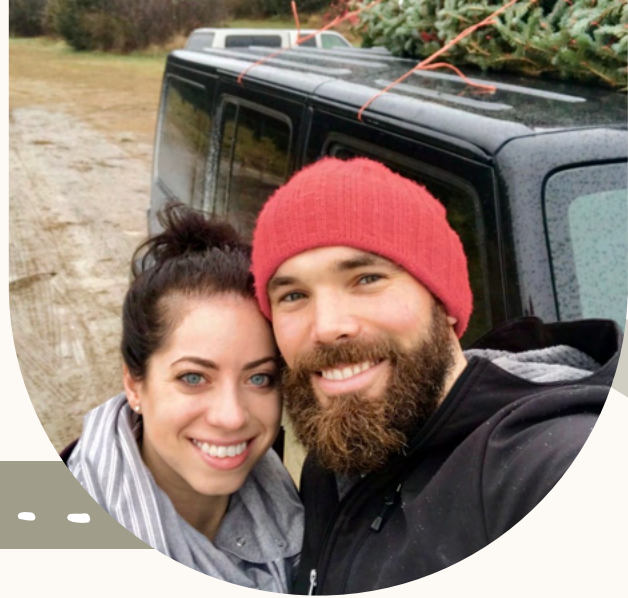
We've been married for

13

amazing years



Our Marriage



We have been married for thirteen years. We got married in our early twenties, we joined the Army together, and we moved all over America together. We've been deployed to Afghanistan together, and we've decided to move home to Minnesota to raise our family in a small town. Our marriage is strong because we've had to live apart, once in a war zone, and we've had to communicate through these hard times. We had to find ourselves and our identity again after we left the military and decide who we wanted to be both as individuals and as a couple. It's been a long but rewarding journey in faith, and we're so grateful for where we have ended up as a family.

The Proposal



We got married at a country church on the edge of a state park. We wanted our wedding to reflect our love for each other, our friends and family, our small town, and the natural beauty of the changing fall leaves in the woods around us. During the ceremony, a farm dog came and sat in the church door and just watched the entire wedding, like he was an invited guest. Our reception was in the town we currently live in, at an old converted theater. The theater marquee outside said, "Dreams do come true." We took a mini honeymoon to northern Minnesota by Lake Superior, but four years later we took our dream honeymoon trip to Iceland.

IF WE HAVE THE HONOR OF RAISING AND LOVING YOUR CHILD. *We promise to....*

01 HONOR YOUR CHILD'S HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF ORIGIN

Your child will love and be proud of their heritage and culture of origin. Our whole family will celebrate not just who they are, but their entire culture as part of our family. We will ensure that your child is comfortable navigating and living in their culture of origin.

04 SHARE YOUR CHILD'S ADOPTION STORY WITH THEM

We always want your child to know their story, and that our love as a family connects us all. We promise to always be open and receptive to all their questions, to answer honestly with respect and grace to you, and to encourage whatever questions and feelings they have about their story.

02 ALWAYS SPEAK OF YOU WITH DIGNITY

We love you, and we want your child and our whole family to know and love you too! From the perspective of an adoptee, we have such a profound respect and thankfulness for the strength of the decision you make.

05 ALWAYS DEMONSTRATE OUR LOVE AND OPENNESS WITH ACTIONS

Our family believes in 'Deeds not Words', and we want to always show you, your child, and our entire family that we embrace love by being open to each other, our differences, our similarities, and committing to be a family together.

03 CREATE A HOME WITH A SECURE, SOLID BASE OF SAFETY AND LOVE

We promise to make sure your child knows our love is unconditional, that we support and love them just the way God made them, and that they can always feel safe and secure in our home and our family.

06 PROMISE TO GIVE YOUR CHILD A LIFE FILLED WITH INTENTIONALITY, ADVENTURE, AND SUPPORT

We are a live out loud family! We thrive on diving in, taking on challenges, finding adventures, being outside, and experiencing life together!





OUR HEART FOR ADOPTION



AS AN ADOPTEE, I HAVE A
TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF RESPECT,
GRATITUDE, AND AWE FOR YOU IN
CONSIDERING TO PLACE YOUR CHILD
WITH US. YOU ARE TRULY A VERY
STRONG PERSON AND YOU REFLECT SO
MUCH GRACE IN THE LOVE YOU HAVE
FOR YOUR CHILD.



Before we dated, we separately felt that adoption would play a role in how we built our family. We discovered this early in our time dating and I feel like this openness spoke to each of us about how we understood love and families. Our conversation continued after we were married and even more as we had biological children.

MY ADOPTION STORY...

I (Joe) am an adoptee. My brother and I were both infant adoptions from different families. I've known this much since I was very young and understand a lot of the experiences of growing up as an adopted child. My brother and I have very different personalities and look dissimilar, though we sometimes act exactly the same! We have been close our whole lives, only two years apart in age, had many friends in common, and shared a lot of conversations about being adopted throughout our lives.

My brother and I were from closed adoptions, so as an adult, when I connected with my biological father and four siblings, it brought such richness and expansion to our family circle. I found many answers to questions I didn't know I had, and am so thankful we are in each other's lives now. They're lovely people. Gaining a much larger family has been such an unexpected yet amazing thing that I never knew could happen! We would absolutely want to have an open adoption if that is something you would like as well, and we would love you and your child as part of our family. In taking a chance to be vulnerable and open, we found so much love and inclusion and it has been the most wonderful blessing.

THE HEARTBEAT OF OUR FAMILY

1

Faith

Our faith is the rock of our family. We have found that when we prioritize God as the center of our lives, everything else falls into place. Family - Growing our family's love and joy is our true calling. We love each other unconditionally and with a 'no quit' mindset.

3

Finance

Our values around finance are more than just fiscal management: it is being good stewards of all the resources we have. It is responsibly using the gifts we have been given, taking care of those around us, and living sustainably within God's calling for us in life.

2

Fitness

This isn't beach body fitness! We see pursuing holistic fitness of mind, body, and spirit as integral to developing the talents God has given us and who we are each called to be.

4

Fun

We love creating memories with our family that they will treasure as they grow. We love that our home is a place filled with joy and laughter.



MEET Bethany

Loving

Kind

Loyal



My Career

I work as a risk manager for a company based in Minnesota. I work mostly from home, but commute to our office one to two times a week or as needed. I'll have time off after the baby arrives, and plan to take some additional time to enjoy our new family and bond together. Childcare will be split between Joe, grandparents, and an in-home nanny while I work. I'm an early riser, so I enjoy morning time with littles before work. I'm fortunate to have a boss and team that have larger families and also prioritize their families over work.

I like coffee, books, running, travel, and being with my family!

Between work, my free time is divided between spending quality time with my husband and children, and some self-care. Joe and I try (not always successfully) to have some date night time where we do a dinner out together or go to evening church while the kids stay with grandparents or a favorite babysitter.

When I'm home with my family, the kids and I like to cook and bake together. In spring and summer, we go to our town's farmers market on Saturdays and get locally made pastries and eat them by the river, or go for a bike ride or walk. In the winter, we get creative with indoor activities.

IN JOE'S WORDS...



Bethany is an amazingly beautiful human being, inside and out. She models 'taking the high road' in all aspects of life: by holding us to our values and standards, by contemplatively helping others through thoughtful leadership, by a calm demeanor and measured responses, by always looking for new ways to love our children, our family, and those around her. ***She has a very positive outlook on life and an amazing way of connecting with people.*** She reads personalities much better than I do and often people gravitate to her as a natural leader when she is in group settings.



I love her because she has always called me to be closer to God: in her example, her faith, her willingness to love, her values and willingness to act on them, and her simple consistency in all things. One time when we were dating, we attended a church that was in a theater with folding chairs and had donuts and coffee in the back. It was primarily music and much different than churches that I was used to attending. She is not always confident about her singing voice, but the way she closed her eyes and sang praise songs that day was a beautiful glimpse of the love she holds in her heart and it has never left me.

Bethany is very patient, consistent, and creative with children. Her patience really shines when kids are emotionally distraught and she's able to consider the many, many factors that are likely contributing to their emotional disruption. She's able to communicate with them in a way where they feel heard and that they have a voice for their feelings. Her general consistency about most things parenting helps our children feel safe and that there is structure to their lives. This is something that is sometimes hard for me but I can see how our son thrives when he understands the 'plan' (structure of the day) or expectations (like brushing your teeth every day after wake-up), or consistent sleep routines.



She is able to be creative with kids in a wonderful way that often just requires a little imagination or openness to create something together. She helps them feel included in all sorts of home projects but also in simply decorating our porch with sidewalk chalk art.



MEET

Joe

Positive

Honest

Energetic



My Career

About a year ago, I decided to take on the role of the flexible parent in our house. Bethany was presented with an amazing opportunity with her company that we couldn't pass up; it was a chance for her to pursue a dream role and for me to really invest in our family and our littles. I am primarily a stay-at-home Dad and keep a very small woodworking business on the side when time allows. I love getting to spend so much time with our son and daughter at their young ages and it absolutely fuels my need for creativity.

I love trail running, woodworking, photography, and motorcycles. Our son and I play soccer, we have fun fishing and indoor rock climbing, we shoot archery and take photos together, and we love riding local mountain biking trails. As a family, we go hiking, whenever possible with our dogs too, enjoy exploring new places, and playing at our many local parks and playgrounds, and our town swimming pool.

Ideally, for me, free time is best spent either with family or alone, relaxing outdoors somewhere, grilling in our front yard, walking in our town, or adventuring together somewhere new!

IN BETHANY'S WORDS...



Joe is an incredibly gracious, generous human. He finds his primary identity as a husband, father, and Christian. He is creative, a lover of nature, and gifted at most things he tries. He is quick to forgive, and focuses on peoples' better qualities, even when their worst ones are most prominent. He learns from others, including those who aren't like him and seeks differing perspectives on life and philosophy.

He is a talented artist and finds purpose and meaning by being outdoors. He can pick up a guitar and play anything by ear. He is an athlete and loves athletically training others not just for health, but in body and mind, and spirit. He is often happiest working with wood or splitting logs by hand at his parents' house.

He is our family's 'flexible parent' (stay-at-home dad) or House Chief Operations Officer (COO). He is so confident in who he is, and his identity, that he easily brushes off generational bias against men being the primary parent, and refocuses others on his calling to be the best husband and dad for our modern family. In the summers, he takes the kids several days a week for 'Dad School' and loves planning their adventures.

AS A DAD...



Joe is absolutely the fun, silly, and involved parent who is always finding something exciting to do. He wakes up every morning thinking of what epic adventure we can have next as a family. Joe loves everything about the natural world. When he was a kid, he would go out in the woods and find snakes to bring home as pets. Later, he learned how to keep and breed beautiful multicolored Beta fish. He loves all plants and flowers and being in the woods. Joe loves showing our children the beauty of being outside, and the freedom that being in nature brings. He's always planning how we can bring our kids to local woods, or go hiking a few hours north by Lake Superior.



This summer, he made a 'Dad School' poster with a list of activities and hand drawn pictures so our son could feel included in choosing and planning their days together. The most popular 'Dad School' options are mountain biking, indoor rock climbing, swimming pool, canoe trips, fishing, archery, and quiet playtime at our local library. Joe is intentional, caring, protective, and puts the needs of his children first. I know he is going to have such a bond with our future child as he raises them to understand their adoption story just like him.

Meet

BECKETT & IVY

Beckett is 5 and Ivy is 3. Beckett has a big personality, and thrives on attention but has a love of leadership. He shines when he gets to be a helper. He loves animals, is empathetic, enjoys math and spatial puzzles, and thrives in focused activities like bike riding, rock climbing, and fishing. He plays soccer and does a kid's gymnastics program in the winter. Beckett wants you to know that he likes to rescue bugs and insects.

Ivy is a quiet artist who loves creating things and caring for her baby dolls and stuffies. She is a nurturer at heart and loves the natural world. Ivy is my shadow and is always first to know when someone needs a hug. Ivy's gifts are strength and resilience. She has strong opinions, knows her mind, and will not be persuaded easily. Ivy is a joyful little soul who cannot wait to be a big sister! She also does gymnastics in the winter and will do either soccer or horse riding lessons when she is older.

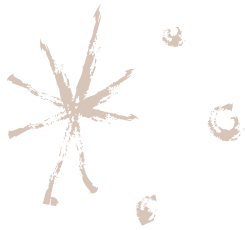
Ivy loves all things babies and cannot wait for a new baby. She already has such a heart to be a big sister and a helper! The other day she asked why it is taking so long for her baby to be here.

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BEING PARENTS HAS BEEN OUR GREATEST JOY! WE TRULY LOVE THE FAMILY LIFE OF RAISING AND LOVING OUR FAMILY. WE CANNOT WAIT TO LOVE YOUR CHILD EVERY MOMENT OF THEIR LIFE NO MATTER HOW HIGH OR HOW LOW THEY FEEL. WE WILL NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM!

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WE LOVE BEING PARENTS

We desire to build a connection with our children that they know they can come to us with anything and we will be there for them. We want to love and appreciate them and parent them for their specific needs and gifts. We're human- we mess up and make mistakes, but we take time and effort afterward to apologize, repair, and reconnect.

We love being outdoors and being active! We bring the kids on runs and bike rides and enjoy hiking together. Several times a year we go to northern Minnesota near Lake Superior and spend time just sitting by the lake and going on hikes in the Superior National Forest.

In 2022 we made our first family plane trip and went to Charleston SC! We stayed right on the beach and went in the ocean every single day. A huge trip highlight was spending a full day at the Charleston Aquarium where the kids got to feed sharks! We cannot wait to see what your child ends up loving and becoming passionate about and then incorporate those into our family as well.



HOME SWEET HOME

We live in a newer home in a subdivision across from dirt roads and farms. We have a one-story four bedroom three bath home with an open concept upstairs and a below-ground basement with a family room and bedroom/office and bathroom. We were drawn to the house's open kitchen and light-filled rooms! We have a fenced in backyard with a small patio, and live within walking distance to a park with a playground.

We love to do art and reading at our kitchen table that Joe made by hand—it's the centerpiece of our home. Our home is filled with creativity. When we're at home, it feels like we're making things together as a family, whether it's at the kitchen table, or cooking in the kitchen, letting the kids make a playground with the couch cushions, or working out and playing together in the front yard!

OUR HOUSE IS A PLACE
OUR KIDS CAN PLAY,
EXPLORE, AND HAVE FUN.



OUR COMMUNITY

We live in a small river town in Minnesota. We still have a historic downtown with rows of family owned businesses in beautiful brick buildings from 150 years ago. We have a river walk, a farmers market, two colleges, tons of parks and greenspace, an amazing library, and a welcoming community that values art and creativity. Our town always has something planned- in the summers it puts on live music in each park for families, and in the fall we have a huge celebration of our town's history with a three day carnival and fair. In the wintertime, the town has a Christmas Market with horse drawn sleigh rides. Our town is rapidly growing in diversity and has a large Hispanic population but is becoming much more diverse as more families have moved here for the school district or jobs at the colleges.



TRADITIONS



We have a tradition of watching The Grinch on repeat starting the moment we set up our house for Christmas. We also love watching White Christmas with Bing Crosby as a family. We attend our Christmas Eve service at church and read the Christmas story as a family. On Christmas day, we open gifts and stockings before my brother's family comes over to celebrate.



The kids will tell you that Halloween is their favorite holiday (candy and costumes, duh) but my favorite holiday is Christmas! Every year, we go to a local tree farm, pick a tree, Joe cuts it down, and we put it on top of our Jeep. Now that the kids are older, they help me decorate the tree with family ornaments and heirlooms from my Grandma. We also get to bake traditional cookies from both sides of our families- Italian pizzelle cookies from Joe's side and Belgian waffle cookies from my side. Christmas and winter is a good time for us to make the house feel warm and cozy to appreciate all the gifts the winter season has to offer!



We would love to hear about you and your family's traditions and how we can incorporate them into our celebrations!

Every year we try to vacation on the northern Minnesota shore of lake Superior. We stay in the same area, go hiking, throw rocks in the water at the beach, and have donuts. During peak fall color leaves in October, my family follows a 30+ year tradition of driving around a lake area in Minnesota and Wisconsin and visiting local shops and having a picnic. We end the trip with ice cream and food at a creamery that was a cow milking parlor and ice cream stand and recently became a fun restaurant.



WHAT WE VALUE

First and foremost, we value living a full life filled with authenticity. We care more about memories than money, more about quality time than things, and more about family than climbing the corporate ladder. We always want to push forward so our children are fully provided for, but know the true balance of life so we savor each moment with our kids and family. As you get to know us more, you will see we aren't perfect...but real people who love others deeply. We are a family who treasures and values the season we are in raising our kids. If we do get the complete honor of raising and loving your child, we promise to continue to build a life for them where they feel seen, heard, celebrated, and cherished. They would enter into a family that already values quality time together above all else.



Our Amazing Family

We feel incredibly blessed to share close relationships with our extended family on both sides. Bethany is an only child, but her parents Pat and Pam (and their little dog Victor) live 45 minutes away in her childhood home. It is near a major metropolitan area where we both went to junior high and high school. Pat and Pam both were Army Officers. After leaving active duty, Pat had a career in medical device sales while Pam became the flexible parent.

Joe's parents are Jim and Donna who live five miles from our home out on a country homestead that Joe's Dad and Grandfather built and where Joe grew up. Joe's brother, Mike, is also adopted from a different biological family. Mike's wife, Sheila, works in childcare and has a background as a family therapist. Their two children, Gus and Charlotte, are our nephew and niece and are similar in ages to our children. They live an hour away in Wisconsin and we make an effort to get together with them every few weeks. Jim was a 40 year college professor specializing in Ancient Greece and Rome and Donna was a 40 year high school and elementary music and religion teacher. Mike works hard to help America's Veterans through his role at the VA.



WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO HAVE A FAMILY WHO LOVES AND SUPPORTS US IN ALL THINGS. THEY ARE SO SUPPORTIVE OF US TO GROW OUR FAMILY THROUGH ADOPTION AND WILL BE THERE SUPPORTING AND LOVING YOUR CHILD AS GRANDPARENTS IN EVERY SEASON.

FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

Both of our parent sets were transplants to Minnesota from eastern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and western Wisconsin - completely coincidental! Bethany's Dad has a huge extended family that has remained mostly local while her Mom has a sibling in Montana. Most of my extended family lives in Ohio or Florida now.

My biological father has his mother, six siblings, and four additional children (my half-siblings!), all of whom I very much consider family. He and his children live in northern California but we all keep in touch and try to visit about once year.

From Joe: My Mom actually taught Bethany's seventh-grade ancient history classes. Bethany's Mom and Dad were the assistant track coaches for both Bethany and I when we ran track. We both had some ideas for what our families were like, both personally and values-wise, before dating and our families have been a source of strength throughout our marriage. We are god-parent's to my brother's two children, who are similar in age to our son and daughter, and they live less than an hour away. We sometimes have shared holidays, like Easter, where all three families get together!

From Bethany: Since I'm an only child, we see my parents frequently and spend lots of time at their house that is about 45 minutes away. During Covid, both my mom and Joe's mom asked to be Beckett's daycare. They loved having that special time with him four days a week for almost a year!



FAMILY TIME
IS OUR
favorite





Education

Education is so important to our family. Joe and I both have Master's degrees, and Joe's dad has a PhD and is a retired professor, but we want our children to choose options that are best for them, as long as they maintain a life-long love of learning, an open mind, and willingness to persevere. We support college, the military, or a trade school, as long as they have a plan.

Ivy is in a Montessori school/daycare and we plan to send Beckett to public school for Kindergarten. We have an amazing public school system with both traditional options, Spanish immersion, and nature-based schools. In the future we hope to send the children to a local Catholic school, but we are open to all options based on what is best for each child's needs.

WE WILL ALWAYS PUT OUR CHILDREN'S NEEDS ABOVE ALL ELSE. WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO GROW UP FINDING OUT WHAT THEY ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT AND THEN HELP THEM REACH THOSE GOALS. ABOVE ALL ELSE, WE WILL BE OUR CHILDREN'S GREATEST ADVOCATE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFE.

We are Catholic and attend Mass every week. Our children will eventually either attend Catholic school or go to faith formation classes Wednesday nights to prepare for their first communion. We split our time between our local parish church in town, and driving an hour to a larger, more diverse church. We love both for different reasons. We want to show our children that faith is something you live- it's an action. It means loving and helping other people, and seeing God in different places.

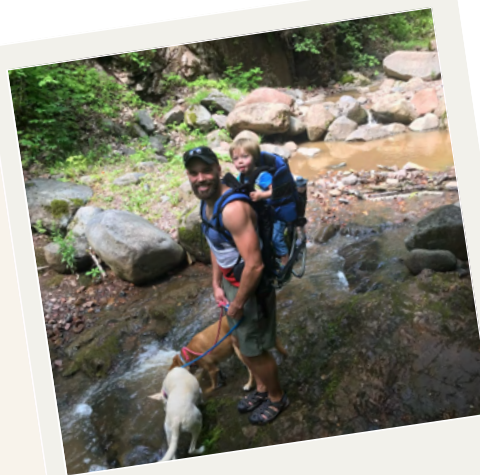
What We Believe



Hopes & Dreams

We love our town, but are open to moving either to a historic home in our same town, or to an older home in a larger, nearby city for more diverse Christian school options. We love Minnesota and hope to stay here. It truly is an incredible place to raise and grow a family. We also hope to buy a cabin near a lake for family vacations, and take our kids traveling across America and to national parks. Far in the future, we want to show them Europe and the world the way our parents showed it to us! When we think of our future we think of you as well. We will keep our promises as your child grows up and always make you a part of our family. Our dream as parents is to watch our children grow and be there for them in each and every season of their life.

WE WANT OUR CHILDREN'S LIVES TO BE FILLED WITH INTENTIONAL MEMORIES, LOTS OF LOVE, AND A LIFE WHERE THEY CAN GROW AND LEARN. OUR CHILDREN'S PASSIONS WILL ALWAYS BE A PRIORITY.





From Our Heart

To Yours

My goodness, we love you and are holding you in our hearts as you make a decision. We support whatever decision you make– you know what is best for you and for your child.

If you choose us, we will always speak about you with love, care, and dignity. You will always be a presence in the baby's life even if you are not physically there, but we hope to have you present through pictures, texts, phone calls and visits.

We are so grateful that you already love your baby and are grateful for you for taking the time to read about our family.

WITH LOVE,

Joe & Bethany







J&B