



## Shawn

## Elizabeth

### Job Description:

Founder & President of a Company that Serves the Meetings Industry

Homemaker

### Education:

Bachelor of Business Administration

Two Classes left to earn a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry

### Favorites:

#### Actor

Jim Carrey

#### Actor

Johnny Depp

#### Dream Job

Author/Speaker

#### Dream Job

Mother

#### Sports Star

Emmitt Smith

#### Sports Star

Eddie George

#### TV Character

Jim from The Office

#### TV Character

Jack Shepherd from Lost

#### Video Game

Madden Football

#### Video Game

Guitar Hero

### Children:

None

After 10 years of marriage and dreaming of becoming mom and dad for so long, we are beyond excited to think that dream may soon become a reality. If you choose to place your child with us, you can be sure he will have involved, engaged parents to provide lots of love, encouragement and financial stability. We will give your child an opportunity to travel to interesting places and to get a great education. In our home, your child will find the sound of music, an emphasis on faith, a close-knit extended family, and a community of caring friends. We look forward to seeing a child develop into the unique person God has created him to be, and to guiding and nurturing him along that journey - a journey that began with your love.

### GENDER SPECIFIC - BOY

who face adversity. She may be moved to tears by hearing someone's story on Oprah, or she may have trouble sleeping at night after learning about some struggle one of our friends or family members is facing. And related to that compassion, perhaps, she is a natural born mother. She is the mother of our house, taking care of me and our dog. And when we visit friends who have a baby, she is always eager to step in and hold the child, change the diaper, or do whatever is necessary to love and care for him or her.

**Elizabeth:** I could list a thousand things I like about Shawn but I'll narrow it down to three: Shawn is kind and has a heart of gold. He's also very creative in many different ways - musically (he plays piano), in business (he's owned his business for five years and always has ideas on how to continue growing it) and in life in general (he's a visionary and a dreamer). And last, but definitely not least, he has a great sense of humor. He makes me laugh all the time and all our friends think he's really funny. All the qualities I love about Shawn will also make him a great father. He will be kind and fun but also a wise counselor and the rock a child will always be able to lean on.

### How Adoption Has Affected Us Personally

We have had several friends who chose adoption as the way to grow their families but the adoption that is closest to our hearts is the one of our niece Melissa. She was adopted as a baby all the way from China. She is 17 now and we have seen her grow into a beautiful young woman who is proud of her heritage but also feels completely at-ease being part of her family, who happens to be Caucasian. Her parents (Elizabeth's sister and husband) made sure she learned about the rich Chinese culture and history and therefore, Melissa grew up with a really positive image of her country, race and culture. Seeing what a blessing Melissa's adoption was to our family made our decision to adopt an easy one. We had even talked about adopting some day before we knew we couldn't have biological children. We feel very strongly that adoption is the way God chose to build our family and we are looking forward to be called mom and dad.



Elizabeth with Our Little Nephew

### Qualities We Love, Admire and Respect in Each Other

**Shawn:** I love Elizabeth's perseverance, compassion, and maternal nature. Due to circumstances, her life has never given her the smoothest road to travel, yet she has been strong and determined and has persevered every step of the way. I believe it is because of the challenges she has faced that she is very compassionate toward others

## How We Will Address Cultural Diversity

As a trans-cultural family, we will celebrate all cultures. We will teach the child that every ethnic group is valuable and that diversity is this country's and our family's strength. While we will embrace our differences we will also cherish our similarities, always focusing on the fact that we are a family and family transcends differences.

We also want the child to have a positive image of his race as we know that will influence his self-esteem. We live in a culturally diverse community and will make sure he has positive role models of many races, including his own. There are a number of groups and great activities we can plug in with so he can identify with children who share a similar heritage.



Distributing Christmas Gifts at an Orphanage in Europe



Shawn Making Cookies

Also, his racial background and his adoption will be spoken about very openly in our home. We will respond to his questions and concerns in an age-appropriate manner so he can understand. Above all, we want him to know that our love for him is unconditional and he can be free to be the unique person God created him to be.

## Our Extended Families

**Elizabeth:** My parents were missionaries throughout most of my childhood - as a result I was born in Australia and spent 13 years living in Europe. I grew up with two older sisters and one younger brother. They are my biggest supporters and best friends. I have two nephews and four nieces who are such a joy. The youngest one is 18 months and I know he will enjoy having a little cousin close to his age, as a best buddy. We are an affectionate, down-to-earth and tight-knit family. We love the time we spend together and keep in touch regularly. One of my nieces was adopted from China as a baby, so my family understands adoption well and knows what a blessing it is. They know how much we long for a child and are praying that our dream will soon come true. They are super excited to welcome a new baby into the family.



Elizabeth's Sister with Her Husband and Two Daughters, One Adopted from China as a Baby



Bowling with Shawn's Parents, His Brother and His Brother's Wife

**Shawn:** My parents celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary this year and I'm very thankful for them - for their demonstration of how to persevere through life's hardships, and for the way they have always loved, supported, and encouraged me and my younger brother. I'm very thankful for him, too! We have a special bond and will always be there for one another. We love to play video games together and catch up on each other's lives. When we get together as a family, we enjoy playing games, watching movies, fishing, riding ATVs around my parents' property, and eating good home cooking. The one thing missing from our family right now is children. My brother and his wife are looking forward to being an uncle and aunt and my parents are thrilled to become grandparents. They are all waiting anxiously for our big announcement, and we can't wait to get together around our new baby!

# Shawn & Elizabeth



At a Football Game



Touring Washington D.C. on Segways



Our Dog, Lucy, Relaxing



4-Wheeling

## Our House & Neighborhood

TENNESSEE



Our Home

We live just outside a large city in Tennessee. Our neighborhood is very diverse, with neighbors of various races and nationalities. We live on a cul-de-sac, and when the weather is nice, there are always children outside playing basketball, riding their bikes, playing tag, etc. We are close to a lake as well as several beautiful parks, and in our city, we have a museum of science, a zoo, the YMCA and a lot more, so there is no shortage of fun, enriching activities for kids.

Our home is approximately 1700 square feet with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and a great bonus room above the garage where we love to hang out, watch TV, and play board games or video games. It will be a fun, safe space for a child. All of our furnishings are kid-friendly with fabrics that can be easily cleaned - so kids can be kids! - and we have carpeted flooring for those inevitable tumbles when the child is learning to walk.



One of the Trails We Walk Circles This Lake

## Dear Birthparent(s),

We are excited about the opportunity to share this glimpse of our lives with you - thank you for taking a look and considering us. It's hard to really know two people by looking at a brief profile, but with the words and pictures here, we've tried to give you a good representation of who we are so that if you choose to place your baby for adoption you have the information needed to decide if we are to be the parents or if another family is a better match.

If you do choose us, we look forward to the opportunity of getting to know you. Even though we haven't met, we are praying for you. We can't start to imagine the difficulty of the decision in front of you. May God give you wisdom and comfort as you travel this path.

We are 32 (Shawn) and 36 (Elizabeth) years old and we've been married for 10 years. We first met when we were both members of a Christian music ministry group while in college. We got to know each other by spending time with mutual friends within that group and became really good friends. After just over a year, we knew there was something very special about our friendship and started noticing we were enjoying spending time away from the big group of friends - just the two of us. We were falling in love. We got married two years after we started dating and are still best friends!

As we were putting this letter together we were thinking about how to describe who we are in a succinct way. Perhaps the simplest way is with four F's: faith, family, friends and fun. These are the things most important to us: faith is the foundation of our marriage; we both come from close-knit families and want to continue that with our own family; we love spending time with our friends (those we have now and those we have yet to meet); and we both have a sense of humor - we love to laugh! - and make a point to inject our life with fun. Our household is one of peace, optimism and light-heartedness.

As long as we've been married we've known we wanted to have children. After trying to conceive for several years we saw a doctor and found out we were dealing with infertility. That was a hard reality to face, but we didn't give up on our dream of parenthood. We were familiar with adoption since Elizabeth's niece was adopted when she was a baby, and we also have friends who have adopted, so it was an easy decision to pursue adoption as the path to build our family.

We are so excited to become parents (and our families are excited along with us)! God has blessed us greatly and we are thankful every day, but the one thing missing is a child. We can't wait to welcome, nurture, and raise a child in our family. We look forward to everything from sharing hugs and kisses, to rocking him to sleep, to playing games like peek-a-boo, to taking him to swimming lessons, to teaching him to read, and on and on. You can be sure we will love him unconditionally as he discovers his unique gifts and talents and grows into a young man.

It is important to us that the child understands his biological heritage, and we will begin introducing him to the concept of adoption at an early age through children's books that tell stories of adoption (and other such age-appropriate resources). We envision a natural, gradual process of the child coming to knowledge of the adoption. If you place your child with us, we will make sure he knows how much you love him and how that love was the reason for the hard decision to place him with us. We want to make sure the child grows up with a positive view of adoption and has warm, loving feelings toward you.

If you decide to place your child with us, we would love to maintain contact through letters and pictures throughout the child's life. We will also totally support his decision to meet you one day. Your child will always know the story of his adoption.

Thank you so much for considering us. We wish you the best and hope for the opportunity to meet you.

Sincerely,

**Shawn and Elizabeth**

