

Hello we are...

Mike & Jillian



Graceful
adoptionsTM



Our Hopes and Dreams...

Our hopes and dreams are to expand our family through adoption. To simply bear witness to a child growing up. To experience the curiosity and attention to detail they bring, such as kicking around a soccer ball and then stopping to watch a plane fly by high up in the clouds, or tending to the apple trees then changing focus from the blossoms to the worms who live in the dirt underneath. These are the magical moments we look forward to being brought back into our lives.

We both came from fairly large extended families who provided solid foundations. We grew up with strong morals and values and understood it took commitment and hard work to care for our families. Each of our parents had 3 or more siblings and now we each have more than 20 cousins, most of whom have children, which makes for fun, boisterous family gatherings with the whole gamut of personalities and opinions and stories to share. Our cousins are our best friends and we genuinely enjoy each other's company.

Fate brought us together more than ten years ago and we have been together ever since. Once our careers and financial position were stable, we started focusing on growing our family. Four years ago we were blessed with a happy and healthy son, Max. After trying to conceive a second child for more than a year, and knowing that fertility treatments were not for us, we began exploring adoption. We were narrowing down our choices for adoption agencies when we found out Jillian was pregnant, what a surprise! Unfortunately, we lost that child at 8 weeks. The next month we discovered once again we were pregnant, this time with identical twin boys. We were excited and relieved when we made it past the first trimester. Unfortunately, we lost the twins at 15 weeks.

In the nearly 3 years since that loss we have taken time to grieve and focus on our son Max. We have been a happy and adventurous family of three. We thought we would continue being a family of three; however, our family doesn't feel complete. Now there is no question, we want to expand our family through adoption. We know a child doesn't need to be born to us to be loved and accepted within our families. Our family is waiting with open hearts to welcome a child through adoption.

Mothers who make an adoption plan are no different than us. At a different point in our lives, we might have made the same decision. We can't imagine being in a mother's position to acknowledge that she can't raise her child and then have the trust, peace and grace to select a family. We truly believe every child and mother should have a relationship. We know how intense that connection can be and we would never want to take that away from a mom or her child.

If you select us to parent your child, please know that we want a relationship with you and for you to have a relationship with your child. We don't want you to feel like you are an outsider looking in or someone separate from us. We want you to be a part of our life. And, if you have relatives who want a relationship with your child, we never want to diminish that opportunity. We want to nurture it.

Sincerely,

Mike & Jillian


Graceful
adoptions™

We focus on what matters to make every adoption a beautiful experience.

515.225.6351 / 877.628.1415 GracefulAdoptions.com



Our values and beliefs as parents...



Adventure - The world is full of amazing beauty both in its features and within people all over. Our children will have the opportunity to see these wonders for themselves and they'll be encouraged to interact with the world in whatever way they prefer. It is important for us to break out of our comfort zone and try new things, eat new foods, and learn how others live. Whether it's hiking, climbing mountains, painting a landscape, or enjoying the buzz of the city, our family will continue to have adventures and explore the world around us.



Generosity - We both have benefited from the generosity of others and even though we will never be able to repay everyone, we live our lives in a way to ensure that we rise to the occasion and help others whenever we are able to meet a need. Our children will grow up knowing everyone has something to offer, and we all need a helping hand from time to time. We have sponsored families at Christmas, provided school supplies to children in need, and helped stranded motorists change their car tire. Our actions are often small, and may be quickly forgotten, but we will never stop offering a helping hand when we are able. We hope to set an example to our children that they will always have something to offer others, and to be generous with their time, abilities and resources.



Contentment - We place a greater value on experiences over possessions, and we hope to instill the same priorities in our children. While there is nothing wrong with wanting and acquiring possessions, it is important to focus more on experiences and relationships. We don't want our children to feel a constant pressure to keep up with anyone else, we want them to live the life that is right for them. For Jillian this value has come to play mostly in her career. Jillian enjoys a respectable position at a wonderful employer, and though there is potential for advancement, that would take time away from the family. Jillian is content in her current position that helps provide for the family and allows her the flexibility to be home as needed. She values her family above all else and will turn down any position that would take time away from them.



Optimism - While we're exploring the world, we will seek opportunities to show our children how much good there is and generally, the world is a wonderful place. If we focus on the good, and learn how to mitigate the negative, then we are setting our family up for a happy, positive life. Our children will develop their own ideas on what is worth fighting for and we will work together to make their ambitions come true. There will always be challenges, but our children will understand they are stronger than their biggest obstacle, believing with some hard work they can overcome anything.

Education - We believe education opens so many opportunities and we will always encourage our children to continue learning. Jillian attended college directly out of high school and continued to pursue a Master's degree part time while working. Mike chose to enlist in the Air Force out of high school and completed his associates degree while in the military. Jillian's parents both went to school at night while working and raising a family. Mike's mother went to school to become a nurse and his father studied to be an electrician. We understand there are many paths to success and people learn in different ways. We are prepared to support our children in whichever path they choose. We will encourage them to go to college or trade school but even if they choose another path, they will receive guidance and help at every stage to ensure they will be successful in whichever occupation they choose.

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Our home...

We live in a small town just outside of a large city where everything you can imagine is available. Our town has a wonderful park with a large playground, walking trails, baseball fields, and a public swimming pool. The park is full of families every day. The town center has a pizza shop, a deli, several stores and a library.

Our house sits on a private tree lined road on 2 ½ acres of land. It is a quiet, peaceful area where everyone is willing to lend a helping hand when needed. The closest neighbor has a small barn and nice pasture with three horses. We will walk over and pet the horses and feed them carrots and apples on occasion. There is a small group of local children who routinely ride their horses down our road. When we are outside they will ride over to us so we can pet their horses.



It is a perfect setting to raise children. We dreamed of one day having a large yard with room to run and play, and also woods to explore, and three years ago we finally achieved that! The spring after we moved in we purchased a beautiful swing set complete with 3 swings, two slides, a climbing wall and enclosed fort. Jillian’s brother and some friends and their children helped us and we spent the day putting it together, and of course testing it out, before we let the kids climb on. The swing set is used nearly every day.

Since we enjoy being outside as much as possible, and we also enjoy tasty food, most nights you’ll find us grilling out on the back deck. Our fenced in backyard provides a safe place for dogs and children to play while we cook. We sit on the deck and enjoy dinner while talking and enjoying the serenity of the backyard.

- Both non-smokers

Hobbies:

Adoptive Mother:

Hiking, gardening, sewing, bicycling, baking, traveling

Adoptive Father:

Hiking, backpacking, cooking, playing golf, mountain biking, traveling

Professions:

Adoptive Mother: Lead Research Analyst

Adoptive Father: Security Specialist

Education Level:

Adoptive Mother: Master’s Degree

Adoptive Father: Associate’s Degree

Our life is relaxed and flexible. The interior of our home reflects our life, it is calm yet playful. It is furnished in a way to allow everyone to be comfortable. The family room is a place for people to gather and talk, play games and watch movies. This is where most of the toys are so we are frequently on the floor playing. There are at least a dozen toy trucks and a wooden train set, among other toys on the floor that are well loved.

Our son Max goes to preschool two days a week and the other three days Jillian is home with him. On their days together, Jillian and Max play, paint, explore the local parks and museums, visit the library, or have “jammie days” at home. On days when Jillian needs to work, Mike and Max get the same quality time together. By prioritizing our family in this way we ensure that everyone has true quality time together. A new child will receive one-on-one attention from us both, as well as time with the whole family together.

Our child will spend the first six months or so in a bassinet in our bedroom. We feel this is valuable time to bond and be responsive to their every need. Only after he or she is sleeping well and attachment is strong, will we transition our child to their own bedroom. As our child grows and discovers their own interests, we look forward to helping them develop. Do they want to learn about bugs or princesses, astronomy or art, cars or fashion? Do they love reading or building? Great! We look forward to learning about those things too!



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Our family...

We never believed in fate until we met more than 10 years ago. Jillian was in the Air Force Reserves and assigned to a medical squadron in Maryland and Mike was active duty Air Force stationed at a base in Montana working in security forces. We both were sent to Texas for training and stayed in the same dorm. A few nights into Jillian's training there was a cookout where she saw a new guy who had just arrived. While enjoying the cookout and talking we slowly discovered that Jillian already had met Mike's sister. Jillian and Mike's sister were friends in basic training but had lost touch in the three years that had past. We spent nearly every free minute together over the next two weeks until Jillian's class ended and she returned home. The day after Jillian left, Mike called her and said he was going to be getting off active duty and he wondered if her company was hiring. Jillian put in a good word for Mike and the next week he was hired. He moved near Jillian a few months later and the rest, as they say, is history!



We are the perfect balance to each other. When Jillian is nervous, Mike's steady faith brings peace. When Mike is indecisive, Jillian's patience allows him the time he needs. There is virtually no conflict in our lives. We communicate well and are always able to reach an agreement. If there is one thing that we can credit for our rock solid marriage is our ability to rely on each other, while also being able to function independently. While we always prefer to be together, the deployments early in our relationship helped us see that when one person is going through a tough time, the other will be there to provide comfort and support.

We live a simple, happy life and are so eager to expand our family. We have a four-year-old son, Max, who is very excited to be a big brother. He is quiet and shy and will love to have a sibling to share his life with. The swing set is ready to go and Max is eager to push his little brother or sister on the infant swing. During a typical weekend you will find our family at a nearby park, playground or hiking on the Appalachian Trail. Mike began backpacking around the age of six with his mother, father, sister, uncles and cousins and continued for many years until moving away for the military. Now we do the same. We travel with a small set of construction trucks in our bag along with water and snacks and will often stop to dig and play in the dirt while enjoying each other's company.

We have many traditions we look forward to sharing with our children. Every spring you can find us at opening day at the local fruit farm where we pick as many strawberries as we can fit in the wagon. Throughout the spring, summer and fall we return to get our fill of blueberries, watermelon, apples, and pumpkins. Visiting local farms will continue to be a tradition in the family and we look forward to our kids growing up with an understanding of where our food comes from and enjoying the flavors of fresh produce.

Holiday traditions such as a trip to cut down a Christmas Tree, or travelling to New York City to see the lights and Christmas shows are just some of things we look forward to sharing with our children. In the summer there will be trips to the lake, mini golf, and visits to the ice cream stand. We look forward to developing traditions our children will enjoy and are excited to get to know a new family member, and help them discover new things and watch their personality develop.



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