

# STEPHEN & MONICA



*Thanks for getting  
to know us!*





# HELLO

*we are Stephen and Monica*

Thank you so much for taking the time to learn about us!

We truly admire your courage and love to consider adoption for your baby. If you choose to take this journey with us, we can promise you will be safe, supported, and respected in this journey. We are praying for you and hope to get to know you better! Through all of this, we hope a lasting friendship can develop. We would be incredibly blessed if we are the family you consider deserving to be your child's adoptive parents.

So far, we have not had children biologically but doctors are unsure why. We feel that perhaps it is meant to be that we adopt as it is always something we have felt drawn to. We hope to share our love with our adopted child and consider adoption a great gift and a tremendous source of joy. We're so excited to be building our family this way!





## Our LOVE STORY

From Stephen: We met in college at Loyola University Chicago where I was an international student from Kenya. Monica had just returned from volunteering and studying abroad in Africa and signed up to help welcome international students and she was assigned to me. Although initially I didn't need any help, we agreed to go out for coffee. We continued to get together and enjoyed going for walks and running along Lake Michigan together. We realized we both loved to travel and take adventures. Our most adventurous trip was going to Yosemite National Park and climbing Half Dome.

It was one of the most exhilarating and beautiful trips we've taken. Monica moved to Tennessee for medical school as I was finishing college so we dated long distance for two years. We would take turns visiting each other and talk every day.

From Monica: Stephen proposed during my second year of medical school when we were visiting my family in San Jose. We went to the Cathedral downtown to have some quiet time and pray together and it was there that Stephen proposed. Afterwards, we went out with my parents and sister to celebrate.



## *Our* WEDDING

We got married at St. Mary Catholic Church in Buffalo Grove. My aunt and her choir members sang for our wedding. The reception was in her backyard overlooking a lake. Stephen's mom came from Kenya (her first trip to the USA) and I remember her warm embrace when we met for the first time at the airport – she gave me a big hug and said “I’m so happy to see you, my girl.” We had trouble finding our rings before the ceremony and I ended up wearing my grandmother’s wedding

ring. (We found our rings afterwards, thankfully!) We had a lot of dancing at the reception, including a few traditional Kenyan dances. We spent a week in Chicago with our families and then traveled to Kenya and Tanzania. We had a small wedding ceremony in the village in Kenya and then spent time in Lamu (an island off of Kenya) and Zanzibar for our honeymoon.

We’ve been married now for ten wonderful years!



# MEET

*Monica*

FROM STEPHEN

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Monica is generous, loving, kind, extremely supportive: she is just the best! She goes out of her way to help others and is always fully present and a good listener. I love traveling and going on adventures together. I couldn't imagine life without her.

Monica loves being with children. When we were in Kenya on our last trip, my nephew and the neighbor children were glued to her side. She loved spending time and playing with them. She is very excited about being a mother through adoption. I know she will be the best mom!



## FUN FACTS

- Monica loves to run
- She loves arts & crafts - her grandparents were artists

## FAVORITE MEMORY

One of the most exhilarating trips was climbing Half Dome in Yosemite with Stephen



# MEET

## Stephen

FROM MONICA

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Stephen is very loving, kind, nurturing, grounded, and spiritual. He has a contagious laugh and loves to be silly and playful.

Stephen is amazing with children. The first time we went to visit his friends in Nashville who had younger children, he was playing games with them and had them laughing really hard. He is very excited to be a father. He worked as a youth counselor at Youth Villages with at risk children who had been through tremendous hardships and trauma. He knew how to make them laugh and loved working with them. He has also mentored community college students and now teaches at a university; his students love his classes. I know he will be a wonderful, loving, supportive father.





## FUN FACTS

- He loves tea so much his family's nick name for him is "Tea-Tea"
- He started a feeding ministry in Kenya providing lunches to children
- One of his dreams is to start a small business and use the profits to help the community in Kenya





## MORE ABOUT STEPHEN



I work as an Assistant Professor of Marketing. I have a month off for winter break as well as the summers off and will be able to take time off to welcome a baby into our family.



I begin my mornings with prayer time and meditation. I love watching movies with Monica, traveling, going out to eat, listening to music, dancing, and playing the guitar.

I look forward to loving our future child: playing with them, mentoring them, and helping them to reach their dreams.



*My dream for my children is to be happy and use their gifts to serve others.*

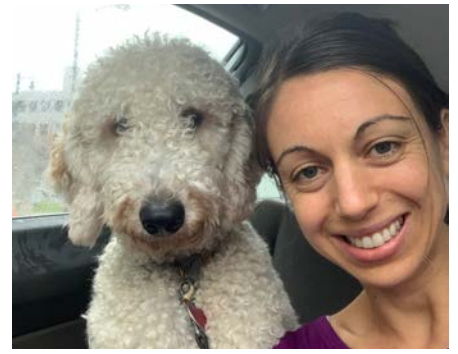
## MORE ABOUT MONICA

I work as a family physician. I love partnering with my patients to improve their health and wellbeing as well as teaching medical students and residents. I work in the clinic Monday through Friday, so I am home in the evenings and on weekends. I am grateful for my job because it allows a nice work life balance. Our family is planning to help with childcare while we are at work.

In my free time, I love to run, travel, read, spend time with family and friends and in nature.

I look forward to nurturing and loving our future child and growing with them. I look forward to discovering their gifts and helping them discover their calling – how they can use those gifts to serve others.

*My dream for my children is to discover their passion, knowing they are unconditionally loved.*





## OUR TIME TOGETHER

We love running along the Mississippi River together in the mornings, spending time in nature (going for hikes in the nearby woods on the weekends), traveling, watching movies, playing games, and playing with our dog Kylan. We love cooking together and exploring different ethnic cuisines. We like exploring nearby state parks that have cabins as getaways on long weekends.



We have a tradition of going to Yosemite each winter with Monica's family. While there, we love to spend our time hiking and relaxing and playing games in the evenings.

We have a miniature goldendoodle, Kylan who is 2 years old. He is very gentle, playful and affectionate and great with kids!

*We love adventuring  
together!*

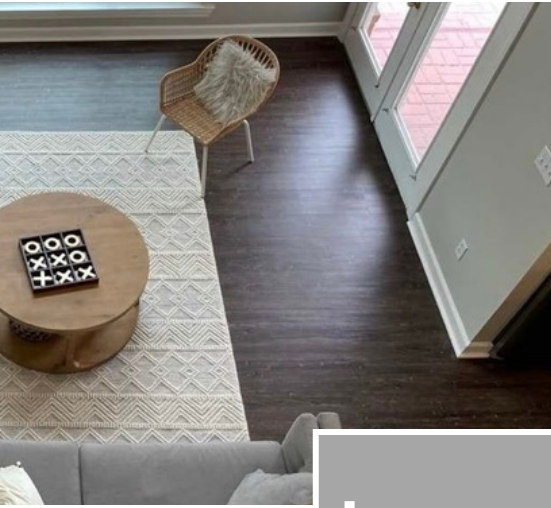
# HOME

*where we are  
together*

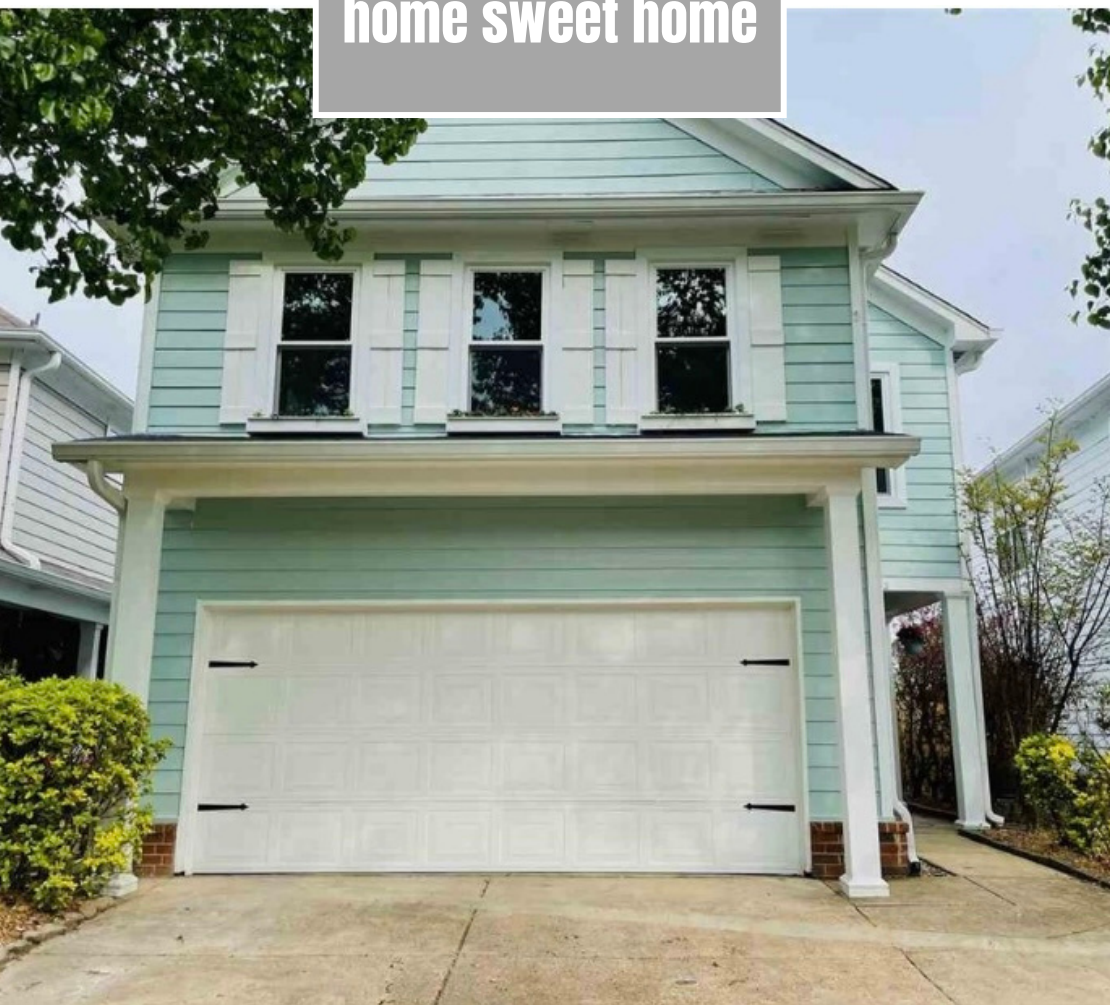
We live in a two story, three bedroom house. We have a view of trees and a river from our backyard, so it is very peaceful. We have a large backyard that overlooks a common wooded space where neighbor children have a trampoline, hammock, and outdoor play areas.

Our city in the Southeast is very diverse. There is a large Kenyan community here which we are involved with. We live along the Mississippi River with parks and a lot of hiking trails and beautiful scenery. They are also a lot of fun outdoor music and arts and craft festivals for families to take advantage of.





home sweet home





# *Dreams* **FOR OUR FUTURE**

We love where we live. We love to travel. We hope to adopt two children. It is our dream to continue to do projects in Kenya to support the community there such as building a well to ensure access to clean water.

We believe in teaching our children early on about values of love and service of others. We would strive to be supportive as they find ways to use their unique gifts to serve others. We believe in teaching kindness, such as saying please and thank you and teaching respect to other people.



Most importantly, we believe in teaching our children to respect themselves. Our church community is very supportive and a place of strength, community and joy for us. There is a very active children's program called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at our parish which is based on values of experiential education, instilling a sense of awe, contemplation and enjoyment of God.

We believe very much in the value of public education, as we both went to public schools.

We are grateful for the experience of learning from others from a wide variety of backgrounds. We promise to support our children's dreams whether that be going to college or another path they choose.

We value prayer, quiet time, spending time with family and friends, being loving, kind compassionate and caring. . We love traveling to spend time with Monica's family in California and Stephen's family in Kenya as well as exploring new places.

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# *our extended* FAMILY

We are both very close to our extended family. We see Monica's family several times a year, usually during the summer and over Christmas and New Years. We try to visit Stephen's mom once a year in Kenya. Stephen's brother Tony lives nearby. Our families are very excited about our plans to adopt!





## MONICA'S FAMILY

Monica's parents, Gail and Tom, are retired and have been married for 35 years. Her sister, Hilary, works for the Innocence Project.



## STEPHEN'S FAMILY

Stephen has a large family with his mom, Lucia (his dad Charles passed away), and ten siblings. This means 18 cousins for a little one who joins our family!

*Thank you...*





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**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR  
TAKING THE TIME TO READ  
OUR PROFILE BOOK AND TO  
LEARN ABOUT US.**

We truly respect your courage and strength. Know that if you choose us to parent your baby, your child will always know of your incredible courage, strength, and love for them. We are praying for you and sending our love and encouragement. We would be so grateful and blessed if we are the family you consider deserving to be your child's adoptive family.

*Stephen and Monica*

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JOIN IN THE PROCESS OF RECOVERY, A RECOVERY OF OUR TRUE SELVES, CAPABLE OF GIVING LOVE AND RECEIVING IT, OF CREATING LIFE AND NOT DESTROYING IT, OF ACHIEVING PEACE WITHIN AND WITHOUT AS WE CELEBRATE ALL THE POSSIBILITIES THAT THIS LOVE OF LIFE AND SELF OPENS TO US.

- *PASTOR DONALD GUEST*

