



rob & kirstin



## Dear Birth Parent

Thank you for taking the time to learn about us as you search your heart for the best way forward for you and your child. We know you face an incredibly difficult decision, with hope and grief all mixed together. We hold you in our hearts, with a wish for wisdom and peace to go with you on your journey. We have dreamed of becoming parents for a long time and adoption feels like a natural choice for us. When we picture the future with our child, we see days spent learning how to grow vegetables on the urban farm that Rob tends, or exploring the woods and building forts at the retreat center where Kirstin works. We see train trips to visit grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in the Chicago area and in Idaho. We see meals shared around the dining table, four-season play time in the nearby parks, and we see books—tons of books!—read alone and together, opening up worlds of wonder and imagination. We see ourselves teaching our child about the loving, difficult choice their birth parent made so that they grow up knowing fully how loved they are by so many people. We are praying and trusting that the way to grow our family will become clear, and we wish you clarity as well.



## Our Story

We started dating as sophomores in high school in Lansing, Illinois, and got married on New Year's Eve six years later. We've now lived in the small city of Three Rivers, Michigan for 17 years. Kirstin sings in a community choral group called the Brandenburg Concert, which offers several free concerts each year. Rob follows Chicago sports teams throughout the year and is a community development geek, constantly exploring ways of making our city a great place to live for all people. Together, we enjoy making and listening to music, biking, traveling, taking long walks around our neighborhood, and watching all kinds of films, especially at the historic theatre across the street from the apartment. As teenagers planning a life together, we could not have imagined how our love for each other would grow and deepen, and we can't wait to share this abundance of love with our child.

## About Rob

**As a child:** I earned the nickname Curious George from my family because I got into everything. One of my favorite childhood memories is when I drew my own line of football cards and started a “small business” to sell them. My curiosity about an endlessly fascinating world filled with amazing people is still a driving force in my life.

**Today:** I run a community development organization that owns an old elementary school, which we’re turning into a hub for creativity and friendship in our community. I’m an urban farmer, a community organizer, an event planner, a designer, and an entrepreneur. A constant soundtrack of great music and a steady stream of good books keep me energized and learning.



## About Kirstin

**As a child:** Besides my family and friends, nature has been a great love of mine. Some of my favorite early memories are falling asleep in the grass under the huge oak trees in the back yard of my parents’ first home and making furrows in the soil with my bare feet to help my dad plant a back yard garden.

**Today:** I’m grateful to work full-time as the head caretaker at GilChrist Retreat Center, which is a perfect fit for my passion for nature, my quiet presence, and my gift for hospitality. I love my co-workers, including our cat, pony, and goat, and I can’t wait to romp around in the woods with our kiddo. In my free time, I enjoy gardening, reading fiction, singing, watching movies, and building community with friends and neighbors.

Learn more at our web site:  
[www.vg-r.com](http://www.vg-r.com)

# About Our Family

We both grew up in the south suburbs of Chicago, in a community that valued family, church, and education. Our parents taught us by example the value of hard work, honesty, and integrity, and made sure we had excellent teachers, some of whom have become lifelong friends. Rob is the youngest of three and Kirstin is the oldest of four. All of our siblings are married with children, totaling 19 nieces and nephews for us so far! We really enjoy watching these kids grow up and like knowing that our child will have a lot of cousins. Where we live in Three Rivers is about a two-hour drive from the majority of our immediate family, so it's easy to visit back and forth. In Three Rivers, we are fortunate to have many friends who have become family to us, and our child will have many "aunts," "uncles," and "cousins" right here in town, and in many other parts of the country as well. We're especially thankful as we begin this journey to have friends who can share their wisdom with us from all angles of experience with adoption: as adoptees, as birth parents, and as adoptive parents.



# About Our Home & Community

In 2009, we purchased a historic building in downtown Three Rivers, a small city of about 8,000 people. Built in 1865, the building now houses a fair trade store on the main floor and our cozy home on the second floor. We love living in downtown Three Rivers, which is a unique combination of urban and rural living. There are several great riverfront parks, a petting zoo, a wonderful bookstore, an ice cream shop, and a library within easy walking distance. Our diverse neighborhood includes families with young children. We have a nice, private green space right behind our building that's perfect for safe outdoor play, and our back windows look out over wetlands and woods longing to be explored. When we renovated the living space upstairs, we anticipated becoming parents some day and included a sweet little second bedroom, a claw foot tub for bath time, and lots of space for playing, reading, and cooking together. We strongly believe that a home is both a safe space for our family and a space for sharing everything from ordinary meals to special celebrations with family and friends. A neighborhood where people know each other's names and look out for one another feels like just the right place for us to raise a child.



Further inquiry contact:

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