



## *our adoption story*

# CASEY & MAGGIE

### How did you decide to adopt?

After years of unsuccessful attempts to conceive on our own, we decided to discuss the option of adoption. After about a year of soul searching, we both felt like this was our calling. We wanted nothing more than to welcome a baby into our home and we are so glad that we did!

### What made you choose LifeLong Adoptions?

We loved that Lifelong seemed so personal. We didn't want to be just a number on a list. The fact that the expectant parents could choose which family would raise their child was a huge deciding factor.

### What were some of the biggest challenges of the adoption process?

One of the biggest challenges for us was choosing an expectant mother. Having been presented with two on the same day, we felt enormous pressure to make the "right" decision. Another challenge was the lack of control of prenatal care. It's at that point that you have to trust in the Lord that he has given you the situation and that the health of the baby is in His hands. Another challenge is working with the lawyers in your state and

the lawyer for the expectant mother in her state and making sure requirements are met on both sides.

### What were you most nervous about?

Being first time parents and having fears that because this baby isn't biologically yours, will you be able to love him or her as much? What a ridiculous thing to have nerves over! The first time we laid our eyes on our baby girl, our hearts exploded. Love at first sight does exist! We were also nervous about the possibility of the adoption falling through. Investing your heart in an adoption situation is scary as you can't know 100 percent that this baby you're falling in love with will be your baby.

### What were you most excited about?

Meeting our baby for the first time! Also, for our future as a family. Baby's first holidays, vacations, school recitals. The list is endless.

### Adopting a baby can be a lengthy process - how did you get through the wait?

Definitely by keeping busy. Focusing on our marriage and having some fun dates that we knew wouldn't be an option

for awhile after baby came was one thing that helped. Reading What To Expect When You're Expecting also helped, as we could experience the pregnancy, and learn what stage baby was in at any given time. Even with keeping ourselves busy the wait and challenges were sometimes unbearable. The most helpful thing was having faith that everything would work out in the way it was supposed to and we ultimately didn't have any control over that.

### **How did your friends and family react to your decision to adopt?**

They were excited and very supportive! We asked our immediate and extended family if they would love this child as much as if we were able to conceive him or her ourselves. We were blown away by the support and love shown to us and our unborn adopted child.

### **Did you choose an open or closed adoption - and how did you make that decision?**

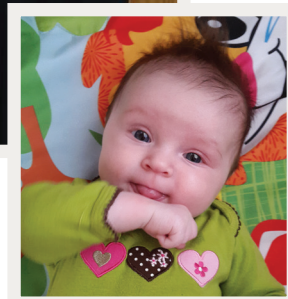
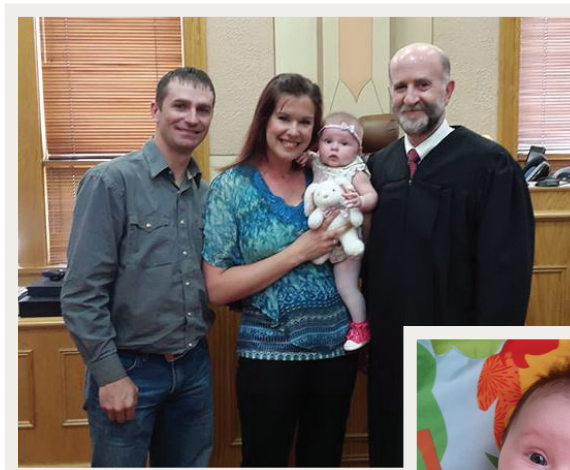
We chose a semi-open adoption. We knew we didn't want a closed adoption. We felt it would be wrong to accept such a priceless gift from someone and then never be in contact with them again. However, we didn't want to have a fully open adoption either. A semi-open adoption was the perfect solution. Our birthmother also wanted a semi-open adoption so it worked out perfectly. We share pictures and stories on a quarterly basis and sometimes more frequently than that.

### **What was it like meeting the birthmother?**

Maggie and her mother went to meet the expectant mother 2 months prior to our baby's due date. We drove from Wyoming to Arizona to spend time with her and I'm very glad that we did. We had already communicated at length for weeks before meeting in person so I already felt connected with her. Meeting her in person was so special to me and really helped in the waiting process.

### **Describe receiving the call that your baby was being born and traveling to meet her:**

Thanksgiving morning we are in our pajamas baking pies, when Maggie's phone rings. Upon answering we hear our expectant mother yelling "The baby's coming! The baby's coming!" We were beside ourselves, running in circles, trying to



organize our thoughts and prepare for the 16 hour drive ahead. We were SO EXCITED! About a half hour later we received another call from our birthmother telling us we had a girl! We were so fortunate to be able to text back and forth with the birthmother during the drive. Knowing that she was okay and that our baby was healthy was such a comfort and made the very long drive more bearable.

### **Describe the feeling of finally meeting your baby.**

Pure joy, utterly unconditional love for our baby, and such gratitude and respect for the birthmother. We were able to spend time with the birthmother and our baby together in the hospital, and then we were set up with a private room with our baby girl in our care indefinitely. It was the perfect meeting, the perfect transition, the perfect experience. Upon discharge from the hospital, the birthmother was able to come spend time with baby Millie. That time was precious and I'm so glad we were able to do that.

### **What is something you would like to share with other adoptive parents?**

Try not to set any expectations or assumptions about the adoption process. We were faced with endless challenges with our adoption, and because we had researched how it "should" go, these challenges always came as a surprise. Also, don't decide ultimately what type of situation you will accept and which you won't. There is no greater gift than receiving someone else's child to raise as your own. And there is no greater challenge to get there.