

Beloved Family & Friends:

Lord-willing, we are expecting 1-2 kiddos to join our family this year!

No, we are not pregnant with twins. For the past five plus years our hearts have sung at the thought of adopting someone older... (not a baby)... and through God's divine plan as we changed churches last year, we found a local nonprofit that trains Christian families to foster and adopt. We recently found out this is the only organization of its kind in the U.S.!

The Story.

How divine that The Lord would bring Marcy back to St. Louis... have her marry a guy who had family locally... put a heart for adoption on the heart of her husband... and have them reside in the same region as One Heart Family Ministries -- the organization that has trained them for the journey of foster care adoption!

What's motivating this?

As we have told our immediate family and close friends we have been asked why we are choosing foster care adoption. Nathan's paternal grandfather (his dad's dad) was orphaned at the age of 7 or 8. His older two siblings were adopted but his Grandpa Sam never was. Grandpa Sam had artistic abilities that were never fully developed. Nathan has often wondered if his grandpa had been in a supportive home what artwork and expressions his grandpa may have contributed to our world.

How'd we get here?

Since we were dating, we have shared an interest and passion for adoption. Marcy and Nathan have been seeking insight and advice for the past five years. Some information has been through books, others through families God had put in their path that have adopted - internationally and domestically. We are both grateful for these families as they have allowed us to ask questions and gain insights we might not know be it not for them. Well... we all know God has a lovely way of opening doors. We switched churches last May to be part of one of Marcy's sisters' lives more regularly. A few weeks into our new church home we found One Heart Family Ministries. Marcy's boss (which she had just begun working with in January 2013) shared with Marcy her own personal adoption journey... and recognized the fears and emotions of taking the plunge as normal. Hence, where we are now.

So what exactly are you saying?

We have taken 27-hours of STARS training (state foster care training) and 12-hours of SPAULDING training (state foster care adoption training) and at the end of January we will Lord-willing have our license to adopt child(ren) from foster care.

Why do you keep saying "child(ren)"?

We are open to adopting 1-2 kiddos. Possible a sibling set.

Do you know how old the kid(dos) will be?

We are open to kiddos age 4-10.

Where will the kid(s) be from?

We are licensed to adopt kiddos from Missouri but could be able to adopt child(ren) from a neighboring state such as Illinois or Kansas.

Aren't you sad that the child(ren) won't look like you?

While we can't expect our biology and genetics to translate to a kiddo or two that is adopted, we are very excited about seeing what a child or two looks like when our hearts combine.

*You might not be thinking about all of these questions, but along the way someone has asked us.
We want to be transparent and invite you into the journey with us.*

So, you're adopting older kids because it fits your lifestyle? I get it, you both are professionals and have jobs during the day.

This isn't exactly true. While there are benefits to raising children that are school-aged, our motivation is to invest in, love, and adopt kiddos that are often overlooked for adoption because of their age.

Are you guys struggling with infertility?

We do have friends who have pursued adoption as a result of infertility and we have walked alongside many who have been through heartache as a result. We love those friends dearly and are supportive of their decision to adopt. We, however, have chosen adoption as our Plan A - meaning we are choosing to expand our family through adoption for now.



How are your dogs feeling about this?

They are excited to have someone new to greet and cuddle with. They are hoping we find kiddos that love pets!

You're probably glad to skip the baby stage. Older kids will be so much easier.

Children who are in the foster care system are there as a result of abuse and/or neglect. Sometimes they are in foster care because their primary caregiver has died and there is no family to care for them. Helping kiddos heal from trauma, abuse, neglect, etc. requires a lot of patience, grace, and untraditional parenting. We are willing to learn, try, and not give up.

Is this a request to financially support your adoption?

Nope. In fact, foster care adoption is nearly entirely free.

However, if you're feeling led to make a gift in our honor, One Heart Family Ministries is a nonprofit and would gladly welcome any resources to continue its work. (11746 Manhattan :: St. Louis, MO 63131)

What can I do to help you?

1. Pray for and encourage us

Join us in praying for discernment as we look at profiles and pursue kid(dos).

Surround us with prayer as we become parents.

Continue praying for growth in our marriage and our hearts, pray for attachment, and pray for grace as we raise these kid(dos). We desire to not only help these kid(dos) heal, but to also be a safe and connected place for them to continue to have a family beyond their years under our roof.

2. Research the realities of foster care adoption

Some great resources we have found along the way include:

adoptuskids.org (National resource for potential adoptive and foster care homes.)

davethomasfoundation.org (Dave Thomas founder of Wendy's restaurants and was adopted from foster care. Although he is no longer alive, his foundation lives on and provides resources for employers to become adoption-friendly.)

heartgalleryofamerica.org (Meet children in foster care who are longing for a forever home.)

3. Ask us questions

We want to be as open about this process as possible. Research shows that most people do not even know kids in foster care can be adopted. (We honestly didn't know we could until we discovered One Heart Family Ministries.)

With much love and many hugs,

Nathan + Marcy

When	What you can be praying about...
Jan. 2014	Receive license to adopt foster care kiddos. Pray for our social worker to write our home study (25-page biography) accurately and strengths-based.
Feb. 2014 - ?	Review profiles of potential kid(dos) and be reviewed for best fit for kids and our family. Pray for discernment and guidance.
After Matched	Meet with kid(dos) through supervised visits at neutral location once a week for a few to many weeks. Pray for connection and joy.
After Supervised Visits	Kid(dos) start staying at our home for the weekend for a few weekends to many weekends. Pray for connection and healing.
After Weekend Visits	Kid(dos) move in. Pray for smooth adjustments for school and routines.
After Kid(dos) Move In	After kid(dos) live in our home for 6 months, we can legally finalize adoption. Can happen quickly to take several months. Pray for kid(dos) to overcome fears of abandonment and unwavering grace and compassion.
After Adoption is Legalized	Continue to raise kid(dos). Continue to pray for connection, healing, and growth physically, emotionally, and spiritually.