



BRIAN & LEAH

A PEEK INTO OUR STORY

HELLO!

WE'RE BRIAN AND LEAH

Dear Mama, we have been praying for you as you walk through this process and deal with all the emotions surrounding it. Adoption isn't an easy or popular choice and we are already in awe of your bravery in considering this big decision. **We care for both you and your baby.** We would love nothing more than to welcome your baby into our imperfect but loving home. We hope to raise them to love God, love others, and serve those around them. We are so excited to welcome a child into our home and can't wait to provide them with every opportunity we can and shower them with unconditional love.

For the last four years, we have struggled to conceive. God gave us one miracle baby, Laura, who we lost before meeting her. We haven't conceived since and as we were exploring ways to build our family, adoption kept coming up. We have adored loving and caring for our nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends' kids over the years and can't wait to be parents ourselves. **We have so much love and opportunity to offer children and we are thrilled to welcome children into our home through adoption.**



A young man and woman are sitting on a swing in a park. The woman is sitting on the swing seat, smiling at the camera. She has long, wavy brown hair and is wearing a light pink sweater and white pants. The man is standing behind her, leaning over her shoulders and holding the swing ropes. He has short brown hair and is wearing a blue sweater. The background shows trees with autumn foliage and a path.

OUR LOVE STORY

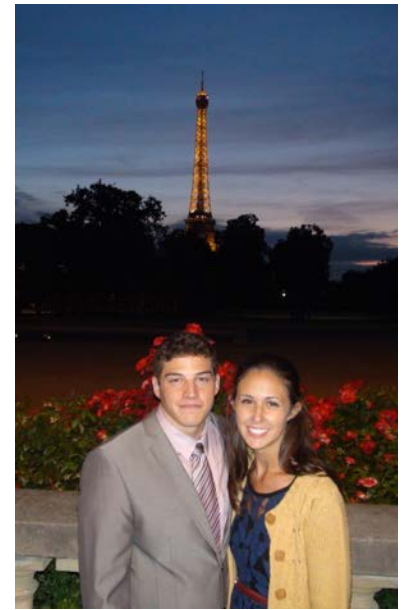
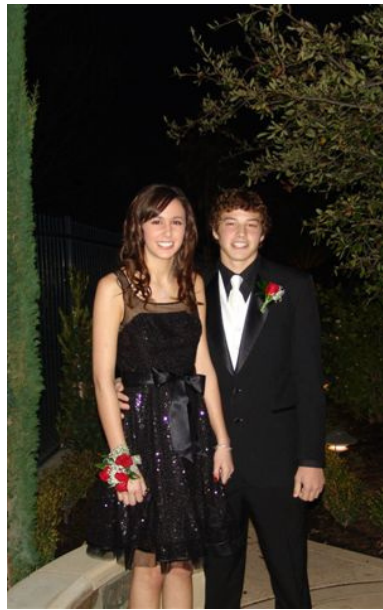
WE MET IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Brian was in 8th grade and tutoring Leah in 7th-grade Geography. We didn't reconnect until several years later when we would walk from Chemistry to Math together. It wasn't long before Brian asked Leah to prom and we became "official."

WE WERE ENGAGED IN PARIS

We dated for five years and knew we wanted to spend forever together. When Leah went to Paris with her family, she had no idea Brian caught the next flight out to London! His dad is a pilot and he was able to fly standby for free but could only get a plane to London, not Paris. He figured he would catch a train to Paris but he landed in London only to find out his luggage was lost. Not letting anything deter him, he took the train to Paris with

only the clothes on his back and the ring. Once he arrived, he went to a fancy store to buy a suit to propose in. But he didn't know the language and they ended up dressing him in a pink shirt, shiny silver suit and suede shoes! Imagine Leah's surprise when she was at the top of the Eiffel Tower with her family and turned around to see Brian in his shiny suit, popping the question! It was so memorable and beautiful! A random passerby even pulled out his harmonica to start playing "Here Comes the Bride!" It was a perfect evening!



WE WERE MARRIED IN FRONT OF A SMALL CHURCH

We decided to get married in a little town in Florida where Leah's family is from. We got married outside the church house her great-grandfather built and had the reception at her grandfather's home. We chose April 19th because it was historically the least rainy day of the year and we knew we wanted an outdoor wedding. Well, when we woke up the morning of the wedding, it was a complete downpour! Leah was so easygoing about everything, knowing it would all work out. She was right. As the ceremony began the rain subsided and a rainbow appeared in the sky.



WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR OVER 16 YEARS

We've been married for nine years and spent more than half of our lives together. Through multiple deployments, career changes, moves, and advanced schooling, we have worked together as a team and supported each other's endeavors.





Brian has a huge heart for people.

When I think of him, I think of the countless times in his life he has sacrificed to love and serve people around him. He is constantly ensuring others have what they need. Brian's heart allows him to easily make friends with strangers and truly get to know them in a short time. He dives into relationships, shows constant kindness, and can make a conversation with anyone.

Kids LOVE Brian. Whether it's the kids at our church, in our neighborhood, or our friends' kids, they all are huge fans! I don't know how he does it, but he connects so well! If I can't find Brian after church, I know to check the front lawn where he will often be playing freeze tag

with the children or in a wrestling match with the boys. Our neighbors' kids are always stopping by the house to ask if Brian can play Nerf guns, soccer, or go on an adventure.

Brian will be such a fun dad. But he'll always use their fun times to connect more deeply.

He will take them camping and they'll have so much fun eating junk and playing campfire games but he will take those chances to know his children for who they truly are. He will use the time to listen and guide them and impart wisdom. I am so excited to see the children emulate him and his love for others and service. I can't wait to see the way our kids light up when they realize just how much their daddy loves them.

From Brian: I am a United States Army officer. Specifically, **I work as a Judge Advocate; a licensed lawyer for the Army.** For the previous seven years, I had been a reconnaissance officer. Although I loved that job, I knew I needed to make a change because it was not as conducive to family life as we wanted. Leah and I are both happy about the job transition and we are already seeing our time as a family flourish while still allowing me to serve our Nation.

I enjoy reading about philosophy, legal theory, geopolitics, and theology and **finding ways for that to pour into my community, service, and life.** For example, when the government of Afghanistan fell in the recent past, I used my extensive experiences from the country and my heart for the Afghan people to help numerous Afghan families escape from Taliban rule and resettle in America. In addition to aiding the escape and providing immigration assistance, I had an absolute blast taking 11 Afghan children ice skating for the first time. Watching their wonder as the translator

explained they were going to skate on ice and that they could trust me to teach them brought so much joy. I loved getting to know these families by taking them grocery shopping, providing tangible needs, and visiting them at

I MOST LOOK FORWARD TO WATCHING MY CHILDREN GROW AND LEARN. I WANT THEM TO DEVELOP A HEART FOR GOD AND SERVING OTHER PEOPLE.

home while sharing a meal and cup of tea.

I also love being active and spending time outdoors. I have played ice hockey since I was very young and have always enjoyed it. Even though I don't play competitively anymore, I still enjoy putting on my skates and playing recreationally with buddies. I enjoy being active and working out and use our home gym often.





All Leah thinks about is how she can serve and care for others. She is a blessing to everyone she meets and is constantly looking for ways she can use her gifts, talents, and possessions to give to others. For the last three years, she has spent countless hours tending to her garden so she could grow enough flowers to give away arrangements to every neighbor weekly. Of course, Leah is beautiful, but it's her heart and passion for God and others that I love most of all.

Leah was born to be a mother. She has a natural affinity for building relationships with children and she has so much knowledge of childhood

development. She invites little girls and their moms from our church over for tea parties. She is so thoughtful and knows her friends' kids so well and buys them the perfect gifts for their personalities. When kids are hurting or in need she is the first to tend to their needs and leaves them with a smile every time. More importantly, **her lovingkindness, patience, and compassion will make her the ideal parent.** When I think about our future children with her I look forward to this so much. I can picture this so easily from watching her interact with all the children in our church and neighborhood over the years.



From Leah: I work as a **pediatric Speech Language Pathologist**. I do in-home therapy for birth to three-year-olds as well as parent coaching. I love my job teaching parents about their new baby's developmental milestones and helping them learn through the toddler years. Seeing babies with medical complications or delays grow, learn, and thrive is so rewarding! Many of my coworkers have also become close friends, and I genuinely love going to work. I work part-time and plan to take as much as 6 to 9 months of maternity leave once we welcome a new baby.

My favorite things to do are bake macarons, work in the garden, run, and sew! My grandmother was a seamstress and she taught me to sew from a young age. I have been quilting for a long time and have made over 50 quilts. I also love gardening during the summer. I grow lots of cut flowers like zinnias and snapdragons to give away to

I CAN'T WAIT TO SHARE MY LOVE WITH A CHILD, BUILD A BEAUTIFUL LIFE FOR THEM AND LEARN ABOUT THEIR PERSONALITY.

the neighbors and to always have fresh flowers in the house. Last year I challenged myself to master the French macaron dessert. It took a while but I finally got the hang of it! I love baking these special treats for church events, friends' parties, and to give away for special occasions. My brother and his fiancé even hired me to make macarons for their wedding in September! Lastly, I love running. I used to run half marathons but now I stick with running 5ks. It is a fun and doable distance to keep up and enjoy the outdoors!



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

BETTER TOGETHER

One of our favorite things to do on the weekends and evenings is to **cook and bake together**. Leah makes French macarons which take a lot of skill and precision, but that doesn't mean Brian stays out of the baking game! He took it upon himself to find and perfect the chocolate chip cookie, and let me tell you, it doesn't disappoint. It was so funny watching him try to figure out the secret. Leah loves cooking Half Baked Harvest recipes and trying out new things in the kitchen. However, her all-time favorite food is a grilled cheese sandwich. Again, Brian has mastered this meal and he

makes the best grilled cheese ever. Somehow, he has found the sweet spot between crispy, gooey and cheesy!

Brian has never met a stranger and oftentimes ends up with new friends every time we go on a trip! We also **love watching a good TV series together**. Brian's favorite is any type of British crime drama and Leah loves reality shows like Survivor and MasterChef Junior. You can catch us most nights unwinding after dinner with a book or TV show. We both love reading and will **read books aloud together**.





MEET DIXIE & DOMER

OUR SWEET GOLDEN RETRIEVERS

For years, Brian begged Leah to agree to get a dog. After years of talking about it, she finally broke down! We welcomed Dixie, a sweet golden retriever, into our family. We named her after a farm in Tennessee that we got her from. She is a sweet old lady who loves to nap in the sun or cuddle up next to you. Years later, Brian was wanting another dog. Leah played a trick on him and pretended to be opposed to another dog. Secretly, she bought him Domer, our second golden retriever, for Christmas! You should have seen his face when Leah walked into the house with another puppy! Students at Notre Dame are called “Domers” and since we bought him while Brian was a student at Notre Dame, we decided to give him this iconic name! He is a rambunctious guy, three years old now. He is always playing fetch, catch, and up to no good!



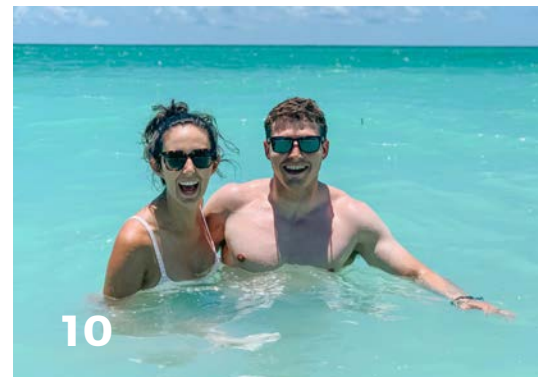
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**WE CAN'T WAIT
TO ADD TO OUR
FAMILY!**

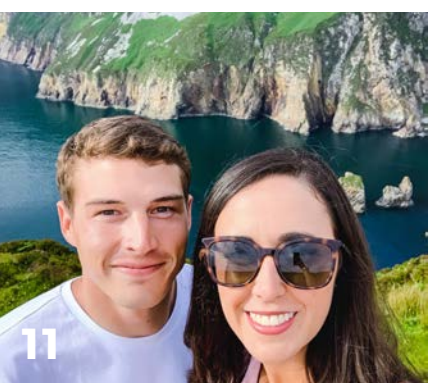
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CELEBRATING LIFE

- 01 Dixie and Domer on a walk
- 02 Cowboy party with friends
- 03 Driving through the Irish countryside
- 04 Northern Ireland
- 05 Girl's vacation in Boston
- 06 Hiking along the coast
- 07 Sheep farm tour in Ireland
- 08 Notre Dame Football game
- 09 Rowing on the river
- 10 Florida vacation
- 11 European vacation
- 12 Decorating the pink tree!



TRADITIONS + TOGETHERNESS

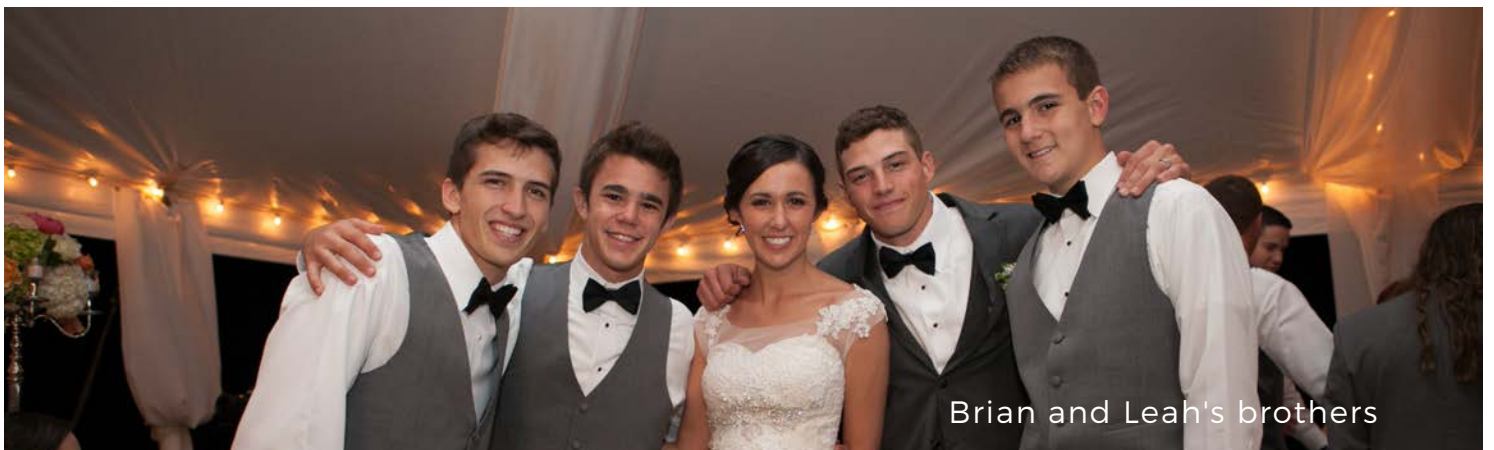


Leah's favorite tradition is her pink **Christmas** tree, decorated with pink lights and pink ornaments! Her mom bought it as a wedding gift because Leah adored the idea of having a pink Christmas! Although Brian isn't the biggest fan of the pink Christmas tree, he graciously is involved in setting it up each year. Several years ago it was destroyed in a basement flood and Leah was devastated. That Christmas Brian secretly bought a new pink tree and set it up as a surprise! He is always a good sport! Leah loves having little girls from church over to be involved in decorating the pink tree; they think it is so special and sparkly. This tradition always brings so much joy.

Our **Thanksgiving** is always spent opening our home to people who need somewhere to go for the holiday. We love being able to welcome new friends for food and fellowship and make new memories with them as they share their family traditions.

While **college football season** isn't an "official" holiday, it might as well be in our home. We love Notre Dame football and if we aren't going to a game in person, we are celebrating game day at home! When we go to games, we start our morning with a pancake breakfast and then walk over to campus to watch the band march underneath the arch, trumpets play outside the Dome, and tailgate with friends. If we are watching at home, we will watch College GameDay, make our favorite football snack- sausage dip, and decorate the house with the Notre Dame flag. It is a fun and silly tradition that we love to celebrate.

FAMILY IS EVERYTHING





Brian's parents, Doug and Liana, have been married for 36 years! His older sister, Lorin is married to Josh and they have two kids: Lily (13) and Luke (1). His younger brother is also named Josh. He is single but definitely the "fun uncle." He is known to take Lily out for special dates, trips, and more. His youngest sister, Anna, is married to Landon, and they are expecting their first baby soon. We are so excited to welcome their baby girl soon! All of Brian's family members live in Southern and Central California, are relatively close to one another, and are always able to stay in touch well.

Leah's parents, Bob and Rhonda, have also been married a long time - 34 years! Leah is the oldest and has two younger brothers: Bobby and Phillip. Bobby is engaged to his lovely fiancé, Anja. They live in Vermont and plan to settle their lives there. Bobby is a computer tech guy and Anja is a newly minted nurse!

EVERYONE IS SO EXCITED TO WELCOME ANOTHER CHILD INTO THE FAMILY! THERE ARE SO MANY LITTLE COUSINS RUNNING AROUND OUR EXTENDED FAMILY AND OUR PARENTS CAN'T WAIT TO SPOIL A GRANDBABY..

Her youngest brother, Phillip, is also engaged and he and his fiancé are settling in California. He is an audit accountant and his fiancé is a labor and delivery nurse. While Leah's family is more spread out, we surprisingly see each other often. We try to get together at least a few times a year. Family is a huge priority and we do our best not to let distance keep us away!

We love our home in the South.

We have worked hard to make it feel comfortable and safe for all who enter. When you walk into the front door to the left you will see our dining room, filled with photos on the wall of our families. We keep our piano in the dining room because we want the room to be filled with joy, whether it is sharing a meal or singing together. You continue down the hall to find an open space where our kitchen and living room are. Leah will often have some sort of baking project going. There are big windows out to the backyard and we have lots of light streaming in. Each summer we look forward to our backyard being filled with flowers, the grill will be cooking, and friends will be over playing games. Upstairs there are three bedrooms, an office, and two full bathrooms. On each bed, you will find handmade quilts, as Leah loves to make these and we have many that are rotated through the seasons. Leah's dad is a contractor and has taught us a lot about home improvement projects. We love fixing up our house little by little and making it cozy.





HOME SWEET HOME



Our community is full of kids riding bikes, learning to walk, and exploring the playground. We are right between two playgrounds and open fields with lots of room to run around. There's a community swimming pool within walking distance that we can enjoy as the temperatures heat up. **We live in a diverse military community with people from all walks of life**, yet united together by their common work.



As you travel into our town you can enjoy the riverwalk where there is paddle boarding, rafting, and a bike trail. Our area has a lot of opportunities to engage in outdoor sports. We love the riverwalk area on Saturday mornings when the farmer's market is open. Additionally, we love the local theater in our community and going to enjoy live performances.

OUR FAMILY

01 FAITH

We are very committed to our Christian faith and plan to share our faith with our children. We want to teach our children the joy of serving others, the importance of endurance and never giving up, and the value of true joy and unwavering peace, even in the midst of hardship.

02 EDUCATION

We have so many hopes and dreams for our children. We both learned so much and enjoyed our public, private, college, and graduate school years. As we have talked about our children's future, we would love to give them the same educational opportunities but would be open to whatever best suits them and their needs. We've already started saving for them to pursue this if it is something they would desire as well. We are excited to expose our children to so many things - academics, sports, music, trades - and see what sparks their interest and where their talents land. We can't wait to help guide them into the training they need to match their gifts and see how God uses that in their future.





03 TRAVEL

One of our favorite things about our life right now is the ability to experience change and travel. With Brian's career in the military, we have been moving around quite a bit over the last nine years. We have loved seeing how God has taken care of us and we've had a church family and solid community in each of these places. Brian has six years left in the military, which will likely involve another move in that time. We would love to potentially be stationed overseas so our family could learn about new cultures, languages, and customs. After his time in the military is up we would love to move back to Northern Indiana or stay somewhere in the South - potentially Georgia or Alabama. These have been our two favorite places we have lived so far and have rich communities in each place that we'd love to "come home" to. We dream of settling in somewhere, growing our roots, and giving our children a consistent home throughout their school years.

04 HOSPITALITY

When we got married, we committed that our doors would always be open to our community and that we would make hospitality a priority. We have practiced this many times over the last nine years. Brian has such a gift for connecting with others. Leah has learned she should always have a hot meal ready and the guest bed made just in case Brian comes home with a soldier or out-of-town friend who needs a place to stay for the night. He really cares about investing in others.

VALUES

THANK YOU

FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS

Thank you so much for taking the time to get to know us a bit and consider us as parents to your precious baby!

Know that regardless of your choice, we will be praying for you and your baby. If we do have the privilege of being chosen, we look forward to forming a relationship with you if you would be open to it. **This child will always know the story of their adoption, their birth family who loves them so much, and your unconditional love and care for them.**

We would love to welcome your baby into our family and it would be a joy to see this child getting to experience continuous love from so many different people in their life.

Brian and Leah

