



ROBERT &
MATTHEW

& HENRY, TOO!

FROM OUR HEARTS

It means the world to us that you are taking the time to read our story. Please know that we recognize and honor the strength and selflessness we feel it takes to even open this book. Like you, we are on a journey, and it is our hope that our paths can cross at this moment. It would be our greatest honor to be your child's adoptive parents.

We understand that you have given—and continue to give—so much to your child. We hope that within these pages you will see we are prepared and hopeful to do the same. We are eager to put your child first and make our life's work about building a family and home with your child in the center. Wherever our journeys may take us, we wish you strength, health, and happiness on the road ahead of you.



ABOUT US



We approach life with a sense of curiosity. We are avid readers who love to learn history of all kinds. Each summer, we gather with a group of friends and spend a weekend at different places around Georgia to learn the history of its community. One summer, we visited Brasstown Bald, the highest mountain in Georgia. On that trip we stopped by the historic home of a local poet, Byron Reece. We had never heard of him but laughed as the tour guide said Reece's old farm grew two things: "books and potatoes." We came home with three of Reece's books.

We enjoy staying active. Every year, our family gathers in Atlanta at the crack of dawn on the Fourth of July to participate in the Peachtree Road Race—the world's largest 10k race. We aren't competitive about our times, we just cherish experiencing the festivities together. One year, it rained the whole race and we ended up looking like we swam all six miles! We laughed as we trudged through the muddy park at the end of the race.



We value time with family. Last year, we went to the Georgia mountains with extended family to ring in the New Year. We hiked and then sat bundled up by a fire pit with a wonderful view. As it grew colder outside, Mathew read stories to our niece and nephew inside. Our niece looked up at us and said, "This is the best day ever!" Your child will enjoy lots of cozy family time filled with laughter, good food, stories, and the outdoors.

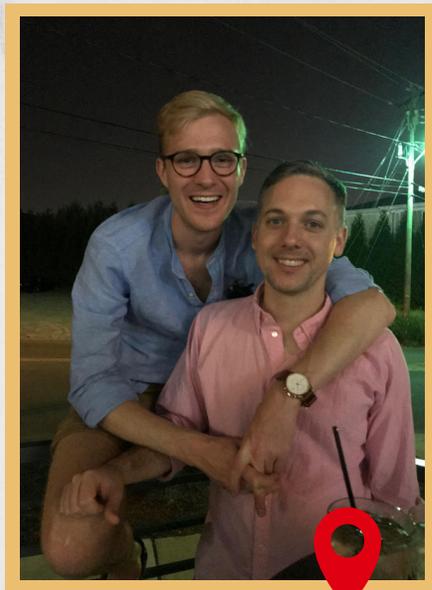
BECOMING A COUPLE



Athens, GA

We are both “Double Dawgs,” having attended the University of Georgia for both undergraduate and law school. Because of this, **we met in 2017 at a law school alumni event.** Robert was in his last year and Matthew came to visit as a recent graduate. We arrived separately to the party but we both realized most of the attendees were far older than us, so Matthew naturally gravitated to Robert and his friend group who were closer in age. Introductions turned into conversation, which turned into dinner, which ended with our first kiss. Matthew left that weekend with Robert’s phone number and we kept talking.

After a summer of dating and hitting it off, we tackled our first challenge. Before meeting Matthew, Robert accepted a job opportunity that he could not refuse. The catch: he had to move to Charlotte for a year. But we were determined not to allow the distance to prevent our relationship from developing. **We put a lot of miles on our cars (with our then-puppy, Henry, in tow),** and spent many hours talking on the phone. Looking back, the distance made us prioritize our time together and, by the end of the year, we knew we were on a lifelong track.



Charlotte, NC



Atlanta, GA

With Robert back in Atlanta, we continued to date and **shared with each other our mutual desire to start a family through adoption.** Our friends RaShaun and Ken have been through the adoption process twice and have helped teach us about the process and calm our nerves. We’ve learned from them that although the process can be long and scary, it’s worth it. As we prepare to take on the roles of “Daddy” and “Papa,” we are hopeful to grow our family with you!

ABOUT MATTHEW

WRITTEN BY ROBERT

Matthew **prioritizes service.** His goal is always to leave our community in a better position. For years, Matthew has worked with others throughout our community to ban harmful LGBTQ conversion therapy. His background and lived experience has allowed him to create unlikely partnerships and increase support for the policy change, and his work has been recognized by many groups throughout the community.



Matthew is **an organized problem-solver.** I joke that Matthew is the Microsoft Excel to my Microsoft Paint. I think he gets a lot of joy in the process of solving problems and making others' lives better. **Our family has felt the benefits of Matthew's problem-solving skills** first hand. One night, my mom's partner, Thom, was missing. We were all very worried. Matthew immediately stepped up and organized a plan, calling around to local hospitals. When we found Thom, he was in the hospital for a bad car accident. Matthew didn't stop there. He investigated the crash and handled paperwork so my mom could focus on taking care of Thom. Your child will have a dad who will not just help solve their problems but teach them the skills needed to set up goals to achieve their dreams.



Matthew **loves board games and puzzles.** His favorite board game right now is "Ticket to Ride," which we've played with friends and family. And Matthew can't fall asleep unless he's made progress on his New York Times puzzle app. One evening, on a family trip, I walked upstairs in the house we were all staying in and found Matthew and our niece, Nora, sitting at a small table doing a jigsaw puzzle together. In the midst of the noise and energy, Matthew provided Nora a quiet moment away from her younger brother so that she could have quality time with Matthew all to herself.



ABOUT ROBERT

WRITTEN BY MATTHEW



Robert is **the most caring person I know**. It's one of the things I love most about him and something you experience immediately upon meeting him. In 2022, Robert's elderly grandmother who lives alone was infected with COVID and extremely concerned about being alone. Both of her adult children were out of state at the time, so Robert dropped everything and went to be with her in the hospital until she was released. Robert drove her home, picked up her prescriptions and groceries, and made sure she had everything she needed to make her feel safe and secure. Your child will be taught empathy and compassion.

Robert is **a talented artist**. Before he went to law school, Robert obtained a degree in painting from UGA, focused on portraits. His favorite subjects are leaders from throughout history, especially Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglas, and George Washington. During the pandemic, I asked Robert to paint a portrait of our dog, Henry. He worked on it for days and days to get it just right—and it turned out perfect!



Robert's favorite place in the whole world is the beach. When we take family vacations, he loves waking up at sunrise and heading to the beach to beat the crowd. He sets up a tent for the family in the best spot to enjoy for the day. He'll sit under the tent with a good book, watching the tide come in as the family wakes up to join him. During a recent family trip to Panama City Beach, Robert led us all on an after-dinner beach walk while the sun was setting. The views were just incredible, and we couldn't resist an impromptu family photo shoot.



HENRY DOODLE



We have a seven year-old chocolate labradoodle, Henry, who has been a part of our family since we first started dating. **We both grew up with dogs** and cherish the companionship and responsibility that they bring to a family. Raising and training Henry together has definitely helped us become a close team. He loves to sneak into our briefcases and pull out whatever he can find—post-it notes, pens, and even legal briefs. Henry has gotten so good at it that we had to teach him a “trade” command: He gets a treat and we get our homework back!



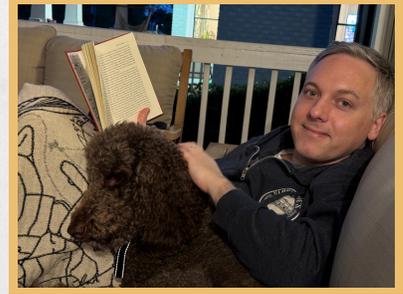
As much as we love walks and hikes, Henry loves them more. There’s not a tree or bush in our neighborhood Henry hasn’t sniffed for good measure. We went on a recent walk during Halloween and passed a neighbor’s house that had a large werewolf statue. Henry did *not* like the looks of it and thought he had to protect us. He barked at the statue as we passed by.

Henry loves accompanying us to community events. We recently attended a rededication ceremony for the Atlanta Rainbow Crosswalks that celebrate Atlanta’s vibrant LGBTQ community. We brought Henry along, and **he had such an amazing time visiting with the other dogs and families** there. Henry enjoys himself so much at events like this that he tends to think the events are about him. This time, he even insisted on getting his picture taken with the mayor!



FUN TIMES

We both grew up avid readers. There's just nothing like spending a rainy day curled up with a good book or visiting a neighborhood book shop! In the process of making our house a home, **we designed a library** where we like to spend quiet evenings together. We play music and read or visit with friends. Over the holidays, we spent nights in our library while Matthew and his sister, Adrienne, taught Robert to play chess. We love filling our bookshelves and have saved space just for your child to fill with their favorite books.



One of our favorite things to do is to visit one of the many lakes in Georgia with our friends and family. Recently, we spent a long weekend on a lake in North Georgia. We rented a pontoon boat that Matthew drove the whole day, pulling everyone in an inflatable raft. **He was particularly proud that he could manage to sling Robert off the raft!**



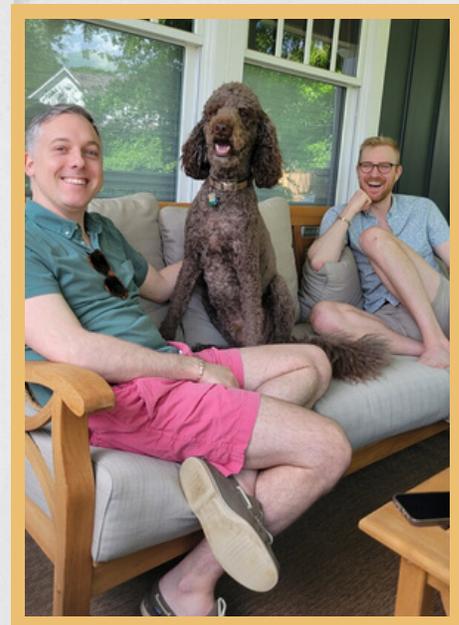
Whether cozied up in our living room in the winter or out on our screened-in porch during the summer, **we love a good old-fashioned movie night**. Matthew is an old classics buff, while Robert enjoys introducing Matthew to his nerdy favorites: *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings*, and *Harry Potter*. Robert recently convinced Matthew to watch *Lord of the Rings* for the first time. When Matthew paused the movie after two hours to get a refill on snacks, he realized we were only *halfway through!* Robert “forgot” to mention he chose the extended director’s cut edition! Your child will enjoy snack-filled movie nights, spending time huddled together with family.

OUR HOME

We have a comfy home that was built for a family! Our house is set upon a hill in a vibrant residential community in Atlanta, Georgia. The main level features an **open-concept floor plan that encourages family interaction** whether you're in the living room or the kitchen. We fell in love with it at first sight and chose it with our future in mind. We recently hosted a Friendsgiving with many of our closest friends and their children. While the adults prepared the food in the kitchen, the kids enjoyed playing with toy cars just a few feet away in the living room. We are so grateful for a space that helps us bring our loved ones closer together.



If the weather is nice, you won't find us inside! We have two porches that we spend many mornings and evenings on. Whether reading a book, watching a movie, listening to the rain, or just chatting with neighbors, **our favorite spot in the house is on the porch.**



We have a fenced-in yard with lots of space for outside fun and games. Last Easter, we hosted an Easter Egg hunt after church for our niece and nephew. We're not sure who had more fun: the adults hiding the eggs, or the kids trying to find them all. To add to the fun, everyone wore a brightly colored Easter hat. **We may look silly but we had a blast!**

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD



We love our neighborhood. **We are able to walk to so many places** that we hardly crank up our cars on the weekends. To celebrate Robert's birthday last year, we threw a party at one of the restaurants down the street and invited all our friends and their kids. Everyone met at our house and then walked to the restaurant on a beautiful summer Saturday. Robert's mom made us all laugh when she started decorating the restaurant's patio with children's birthday decorations (Robert was turning 33)!

There are a ton of local events. Every year, **the neighborhood throws a "porchfest"** where neighbors host local bands on their porch while families walk up and down the streets. A street close by also hosts an **annual street derby**. Kids design their own cars and race down a huge hill! Neighbors line the streets to admire the derby car designs and cheer the kids on!



Our family and friends are close by. In fact, we live one mile away from Robert's older brother and sister-in-law, as well as some of our best friends. Both couples have two kids. We often visit their houses and have them over to ours. Recently, our friends walked over from their house with both kids riding along in a wagon. We spent time with the kids on our back porch. Your child will be very close to cousins and friends their age.

FAMILY

*If you choose us, your child will grow up with a large, nearby family, including 1 great-grandparent, 5 grandparents, 4 aunts, 3 uncles, and **4 cousins**.*

Our family regularly gathers for food, laughter, and fellowship. Recently, we all gathered at Robert's aunt's house for a big family meal. Aunts and uncles from far away came into town, with lots of cousins in tow. We had so many family members over that some of us had to eat outside! The house and back porch were full of conversations and stories, and **the night ended with an impromptu YouTube sing-along** with family members taking turns playing their favorite oldies and everyone singing along (though, not everyone got the lyrics quite right!).



Our family loves a game night. Robert's stepmom recently started making custom Family Feud games. Our latest round was Christmas themed: santas vs. reindeers. Matthew and his sister, Adrienne, were put on separate teams. We laughed so hard as family members scrambled to "buzz" in and guess the right answers. The santa team won this round.

Our family prioritizes **a commitment to public service.** We have current and former law enforcement officers, teachers, healthcare workers, attorneys, judges, state employees, and elected officials in our family. Our family has a wide variety of opinions and beliefs, but we all share a commitment to community. Whether it is running for office (like Matthew and Robert's dad) or organizing a community holiday tea party (like Robert's stepmom), your child will be encouraged to make an impact in our community in their own unique way while pursuing their passions.



FAMILY TRADITIONS

We love spending mornings together over a cup of coffee. One special part of this routine are our coffee mugs, which we started **collecting from meaningful places** we visit. It's a fun way to remind ourselves of past adventures. We have mugs from world travels, favorite events, and our local favorite coffee spots. At a recent concert we attended, our friends grabbed branded t-shirts and hoodies. We took them by surprise when we insisted on buying a coffee mug to add to our collection. We look forward to learning about your favorite traditions to include in your child's life.



Every Christmas, **our family gifts to each other a shared "experience"** rather than a material object. One year, we took a trip together to Chattanooga, Tennessee. We had such a great time exploring the city together, including taking our niece and nephew to the zoo. We showed them the giraffes, goats, red pandas, and meerkats. Seeing their little faces light up as they saw new animals for the first time was the best gift we received all year.



We find great value in participating in **community events** that emphasize service to one another. For Martin Luther King Day last year, we joined friends and neighbors and marched in our local MLK Day parade. Before the parade started, we were able to spend time visiting with a lot of the other participants from various backgrounds. It was inspiring to see so many different folks from throughout our greater community join together to remember Dr. King's legacy and recommit to carrying out his work.

OUR WEEKDAYS



Robert works at a large law firm that places an emphasis on family by allowing **flexible** work-from-home policies. **Once or twice a week, Robert works from home** so that he can have a slower morning that starts with a run or a walk with Henry. Robert would love those slow morning walks to include your child.

Matthew owns a law firm that he runs with his longtime friend. Since he's his own boss, Matthew is able to **work from home** when he wants and has a lot of **flexibility** with his schedule.



We prioritize weekday dinners together.

Robert is our resident chef, while Matthew is our chief clean-up officer and taste-tester. Robert recently perfected a salmon and bok choy curry dish that blended traditional cuisines of China and India. It was so good! Good food aside, the best part of our weeknight dinners is the time we share together. We talk about our days and unwind. We celebrate good days and support each other on tough days. Your child will have quality time with family every day.



THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to read our story. While we do not yet know yours, please know that we recognize and honor what we view as strength and selflessness on your part. We are excited and hopeful that our journeys will meet in this moment. If they do, we can assure you that we will raise your child in a loving home. We will work to help them achieve their hopes and see that their dreams are fulfilled. We will celebrate your child's heritage—whatever that may be.



Please know that you will always have an honored and respected place in your child's life to the extent you feel comfortable. **We are open to sharing a relationship with you** throughout the years. Whether or not our paths are meant to meet in this moment, we wish you peace and strength in the months ahead.

Robert & Matthew

