

# The Bullock's Surrogacy Journey

## INTRODUCTION

We have had several people ask about our story, and we would love to share. First off, I would like to do a quick introduction in case you do not know us! My name is Becky and my husband is Michael. We are high school sweethearts and have been together 9 years, married 4 of those years. One fun fact is that we have the same birthday, and we were born at the same hospital only 20 minutes apart. Love at first sight...right? We have been through many stages of life together - the good, the bad, and the hard times. In our free time, we love spending time together and taking vacations. HE IS MY ROCK.

## WHY WE CHOSE SURROGACY:

During my senior year of high school, I started having medical issues. We went to several doctors, and it took up to a year to get a diagnosis. Just months after Michael and I started dating, I was diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease. When I received my diagnosis, I had just started college, and this was a shock for both of us. As the years have passed, he has supported me, attended doctor's appointments with me, and has been there for me when times were hard. Of course, I also had the best support from my family. Over the past nine years, we have learned and researched the important things to keep my body healthy. Thankfully, my kidney disease has been manageable and has had a slow progression. With this being said, if you are reading this, please pay attention to your body and do your annual wellness visits. YOU have to take care of yourself and be your own advocate before



making other life decisions. This is not something I usually talk about publicly—but it is an important part of our story, and why we are on the journey of surrogacy.

We have always known we wanted children and knew it would be hard for me to carry without risking kidney failure. Right after we got married, we went to a maternal fetal medicine doctor, and they advised us of the risk involved.

Fast forward to 2019 and the question was... do we want to give it a shot? We went to the doctor and decided we wanted to switch my medicine so that it would be safe for me to get pregnant. After trying 3 different medications, it landed me taking an ambulance ride to the hospital. My heart rate was extremely high! Switching medicine has never been easy for me. I was ready to give up and decided to go back to my original medicine regimen. We were getting ready to move into our new house and focused on that for several months.

During this time, we decided to get a second opinion from another kidney doctor. We headed off to the doctor on Valentine's day hopeful the Doctor would say everything would be fine but we got the opposite. I was heartbroken. I kept thinking to myself we can try and if something happens to me it would be okay, we could work it out.

A few weeks later, I went for my annual physical and my doctor said "Becky, there are other ways to become parents." She then told me to think about surrogacy. Michael and I both had heard about it, but we were not familiar with the process. My first thought was "we can't afford that!" We spent months researching and decided to go see a specialist. At this point, COVID took over, and our appointment was pushed back until May.

I was so excited about our journey to parenthood. I think I read every article and blog post about surrogacy on the internet. We prayed for weeks that God would guide us through this process and lead us in the right direction if this was the right path for us. Our appointment day finally came. After the appointment, we were so excited and nervous. We were going to give surrogacy a shot. We felt this was our best option to have our own biological children.

You may be wondering, “What is surrogacy? What are the steps to becoming a parent through surrogacy?” Below is a little information about this process:

**Gestational carrier:** Also known as a **gestational surrogate**. A woman who carries a pregnancy and gives birth to a child for another woman or couple. For a woman to serve as a gestational carrier, an embryo (created by the process of in vitro fertilization) is implanted in her uterus.

We did not go in the typical order because we were lucky enough to find Sandie, our surrogate before I did IVF. Here are the steps we went through:

1. Found our surrogate/ANGEL from God (July 2020)
2. Sandie completed several tests—I remember the doctor telling us she was PERFECT! If you know Sandie, you know she is the most kind-hearted person you will ever meet! (Aug.-Sept. 2020)
3. I did one round of IVF (Sept. 2020)
4. 2 rounds of transfer prep attempts (Nov. and Dec. 2020)
5. 1 transfer—IT FINALLY WORKED (God’s Timing never fails) (Jan. 2021)

## HOW WE FOUND OUR SURROGATE/SANDIE:

Before our appointment in May of 2020, I had conversations with my sister on how we were going to find someone. She said she knew someone who was interested in being a surrogate, and she was going to have a conversation with her to find out details and information to help us get started. When thinking about how I was going to find a surrogate, it made me nervous because I am not the one to share my feelings or personal information on social platforms.

I spent weeks working on a letter to send out and post. Of course, when I tried to post my completed letter on Facebook it wouldn’t work, and I felt this was God telling me to hold off! I was irritated and decided to wait until after our vacation.

We were heading for a family camping trip on July 4th weekend, and my sister called and said “Sandie wants to be your surrogate!” My brother-in-law works with her husband and one conversation led to us finding Sandie! Tears of joy came rolling down my face. I messaged Sandie immediately and called her to discuss our thoughts and her thoughts about surrogacy.



I remember this day like it was yesterday. We planned for her family to visit our home after we returned from vacation! I had never met her, but coincidentally, she had cleaned Michael's teeth for years! This was literally the best news EVER! WE WERE SO EXCITED.

The day finally came for us to meet, and they were coming over to our house! It was literally the longest day of my life. We had dinner and sat down to chat. I knew it was an instant connection, and she was the one I wanted carrying our child. Trusting someone you don't know to carry your child is a hard thing...but I knew the first time we met that I could truly trust Sandie! GOD IS GOOD. I kept repeating that day in and out. How could we be so lucky to have someone so selfless do this for us?

One thing that was important to Michael and I was for our Surrogate to have support. It was very clear that Kirk and the kids were all on board and very supportive! We could not be more thankful for the bond we have created with this sweet family. They will forever hold a special place in our hearts!

As I share this today, we can finally say our precious bundle of joy is due in October!

If you are going through a similar situation with IVF or considering surrogacy, feel free to reach out. We are happy to give advice or just be a listening ear for you!

An Excited Mama-To-Be,

Becky

