

February 2020

Dear ENCOUNTER Family,

I never imagined what God had planned for our family when I first stepped on the ENCOUNTER campus over 8 years ago. The way I ended up joining the Lead Team as the Director of Care & Recovery has become one of my favorite examples of a divine appointment. In the Care role, I have had the opportunity to work with many gifted leaders and I developed a passion for leader development. Eventually my responsibilities expanded to include Women's Small Groups, a role I have really thrived in. I absolutely love the team I serve with. They are wildly creative, passionate and amazing leaders in the ministries they lead. They are not just colleagues, they are some of my closest friends.

Every step of this journey, God's will has been clear to us. In this next season, it is clear to Dan and me that we are being called to Indianapolis where I will serve as Life Group Director at a church called The Creek. Our family will relocate at the beginning of April and I would love to share a little bit of how God's plan unfolded.

All through 2019, I felt God nudging me to grow outside my comfort zone. Over the summer, both Dan and I began experiencing an intense restlessness that we couldn't shake. We couldn't make sense of it because we both loved our jobs, our home, our church, and our wonderful circle of friends. At the beginning of October, we committed to praying and fasting together. We simply told God that we were open to what he had next for our family. We had no idea what to expect.

Three weeks later a friend in Chicago connected me with a friend of hers at The Creek. What started as a casual conversation moved very quickly into multiple interviews and a trip to Indianapolis at the beginning of December. When we left to visit Indiana, I felt certain that we would be staying in Ventura. I have grown up on the beach and the idea of being called to a place so far from the ocean where it snows just seemed absurd. However, it was abundantly clear by the end of our time there that God was calling us to Indiana and I accepted the role.

We chose to relocate in April for a couple reasons. A year ago, a few women and I had the vision to host a women's gathering called IF:VENTURA and I am committed to shepherding the leadership team through the development of the event which will be held at the end of March. It will also be a good time for our family to move with the school break and *hopefully* the start of warmer weather in the Mid-West.

Dan and I continue to feel complete peace over this decision even though it means leaving our friends, our family, our church and the beach. We pray daily for God's plan for ENCOUNTER because He is clearly up to something amazing! Thank you for praying for our team and our family as we navigate our transition.

Our time at ENCOUNTER has been so rich. We love you all so much and look forward to visiting when we need to thaw out from the freezing temperatures. Even though we are excited for what God has for us next, we will miss you all very much. Thank you for being the key part of what has made Ventura feel like home. We are forever grateful for each and every one of you.

Thank you for your continued prayers.

With deep love and gratitude,

Clare and Dan Rice (and Eric, Emmett and Eleanor)