

This month I met with Michael and Sarah Foglia at their home by the college. Upon arrival I was greeted by barks from their excited pups, Max the dachshund and Athena English Bulldog. I walked into a house full of the hustle and bustle of a family of 6, their children range from 17 to 1.5 years old, and instantly felt welcome. I really related to the shuffle of cars and teenage drivers and trying to make everyone's schedules flow together! The Foglia's shared their work toward growing in patience, and I learned that music is a really big part of their lives.

Here is a bit of our conversation:

Sarah Foglia: Michael and I have been married since 2016. Michael works at Peak and I stay at home with the babies- and we are both in school full time, I'm studying accounting.

Contessa Wolverton: What brought you to Alaska?

SF: I grew up here actually, but left when I was little, and moved back to be closer to family.

CW: How long have you been going to College Heights?

SF: Since this last summer.

CW: Is that it?! It feels like longer!

SF: Well, maybe it was closer to-

CW: Oh wait yes it was because I was working in the office!

SF: Yeah I think it was August!

CW: Haha okay sorry about that side note! What do you like about our church?

SF: I really like the diversity in everything from age to culture. I like the openness and warmth, it is very inviting and just a positive place to be.

Michael Foglia: The camaraderie!

SF: Yes! The fellowship for sure.

CW: Sarah What is your favorite color?

SF: Red- both of ours is

CW: Do you have any hobbies?

SF: I recently started gardening and collecting houseplants, my little collection is right over there. I'm working on it!

CW: Is there anything specific that you're really passionate about?

SF: That's a hard one! I'm passionate about being a good parent and making sure my kids have a good quality of life, and that they're going to be good, God-fearing people who contribute to society.

CW: What has been your single greatest joy in life?

SF: Honestly raising these kids and watching Michael and I grow as people and parents.

CW: Life throws us some hard challenges at times, are you able to share one of those with us?

SF: Yes! The hardest time in my life actually was the year that we got married. We got married in September and the week that we got married my dad had a routine arthroscopic surgery and ended up passing away days before our wedding. We had his service on a thursday and got married that Saturday. That ended up being the most trying time in not only our marriage, right at the very start, but in our relationship and my whole life really.

CW: Thank you for sharing that. What is your favorite food to cook or be cooked?

SF: I love breakfast foods! I just LOVE them, morning, afternoon, or at night I just love breakfast!

CW: What has God been teaching you, or how have you seen him work lately?

SF: For me really it is just patience.

MF: That's what I was gonna say! (both laugh)

SF: To really have patience, to not fear and stress, and just to really look for God's work in everything. It is there. I'm learning to look for that and to see it, and there's appreciation that comes when you find that God is working in everything.

CW: What is one thing that you frequently assume about others, or that others frequently assume about you?

SF: I looked at that (when you sent the questions in advance) and I have no idea!!

MF: A lot of people see us and assume we're not from here.

SF: Yeah I guess that is pretty true!

MF: I was born and raised here, went to KCHS, and I get asked “where are you from?” all the time. I just grew up down the street! Sometimes people think we speak spanish.

SF: You know what yeah I do get that too, I guess that is it!

CW: Yeah that is funny, it really follows people’s assumption that because you are Hispanic you aren’t from here. Do you have anyone you love to follow online, read books, etc?

SF: I jump around all over the place, I don’t have anyone I am really dead set on always following.

CW: What kind of music do you love?

SF: We grew up in 90’s-2000’s R&B and hip-hop, it’s just kind of ingrained in us, BUT have you heard that song by For King & Country that just won awards, it’s called God Only Knows, with Dolly Parton? Oh my gosh I LOVE IT. I love it so much, and I didn’t even discover it until like yesterday and I’m totally going to download their whole album. So good. People need to check it out if they haven’t heard it yet!

CW: Michael tell us a little about yourself!

MF: I was born and raised here, graduated from KCHS in 2004, both of my parents also went to KCHS. I am half Filipino and half Italian-

CW: Oh my gosh see I did it, you’re not even Hispanic!

MF: Sarah is though, she’s half Mexican! (laughs) But yeah I moved away twice but have always come back. I lived in Arizona for a couple years with my brother, and also lives in Hawaii where my dad, my brother, and my mom were all on the same island at one point, it is kind of a second home or a home away from home kind of thing.

CW: That is really cool, and Sarah said you work at Peak and are in school?

MF: Yeah I work for Peak right now and am pursuing a processing degree.

CW: You said the camaraderie is what you most enjoy at church?

MF: Yeah, there’s not one person there that I can’t sit down and have a nice conversation with and I love that, it is refreshing.

CW: Any hobbies or anything you’re passionate about?

MF: Right now probably sports, I'm in a city league basketball team with my family, we play a couple nights a week. I collect vinyl records, big hobby of mine. No specific genre, I will go from buying our wedding song on vinyl to whatever. I have a broad taste in music. I really love Hawaiian and reggae music, it is really calming.

CW: What has been your single greatest joy in life?

MF: These kids. Sarah had Serena and Isaac before we got together and they're just as big of joys to me as the two we have had together. Being a father to these kids is huge.

CW: Life throws us some challenges at times, are you able to share one?

MF: My family growing up, I guess you could say everybody knows how to hold a grudge. There's been a lot of rifts between each other. One thing Sarah has taught me since we have been together is to just let the little petty stuff go. Even at our wedding, it was almost like we had to hire a referee to keep people away from each other, these people can't sit next to these people, and when that's your family it's tough. So trying to move on from that has been pretty trying. But Sarah and I both feel like we know where we stand on that stuff, and as long as it is both of us making decisions, I'm okay with it.

*Editor's note: Upon hearing about the events of their afternoon, including a dead car battery and a quick shuffle to make sure everyone had a ride, I could see that patience playing out in real time.*

CW: Do you cook?

MF: I do! Not too often anymore, I love to cook Filipino food. We have been on this crazy diet- I've lost almost 50lbs in the last 3-4 months, so some of the food that I love I haven't been able to eat much of anymore. But yeah Filipino food, it's a treat to spoil ourselves every now and then. I learned to cook from my mom and grandma, real traditional.

CW: What has God been teaching you?

MF: I hate to piggyback Sarah with patience but yeah, between working full time, both of us going to school, 4 kids- 2 are babies and the oldest is a senior in high school, patience is something I've been working on and it's coming to me better. I wasn't where I am now, and God has been working with me on that very much. Stuff doesn't stress me the way it used to, I don't let it carry as easily as I used to.

