

LifeDate

Fall 2010

A quarterly journal of life issue news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

There is Hope in Jesus the Light of Life



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Lutherans For Life

LifeDate is a free quarterly publication of Lutherans For Life (LFL), 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada, IA 50201-2774. Please notify us of address changes.

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**Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life.**

God Speaks Hope into Hurting Hearts

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



As an Air Force medic, I listened to many beating hearts. As a pastor, I listened to many hurting hearts. As executive director of Lutherans For Life, most of the hurting hearts I listen to are those from women who have had an abortion. I have a pretty good knowledge of post-abortion syndrome, but it's head knowledge and can never give me a heart fully empathetic to the hurting hearts I hear from. I speak to these hearts as best I can, but I know my words are lacking.

But God's words never lack! He speaks to hurting hearts from a heart that fully understands. Listen to some hurting hearts. Listen to God speak to them and give them hope. Listen to God speak to you if your heart hurts.

"I sure don't feel forgiven, God." God speaks: "That's okay; feelings often lie. Forgiveness is not a feeling. It is an objective reality made possible by the death of My Son, Jesus. Because He suffered for you, I can say to you, if you confess your sins, I am faithful and just to forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Have hope! This is My promise to you! You do not receive forgiveness by feeling it but by believing it."

"But God, I cannot forgive myself." "That's okay; forgiveness is not something you do to you. It is something I do to you. You, like all sinners, were dead

in your trespasses and sins and could do nothing about it. But because of My great love for you, I have made you alive through Christ (Ephesians 2:1-5). Your hope lies in My actions toward you, not in your actions toward yourself."

"But God, I feel so guilty." "That's okay; like every sinner, you *are* guilty. I accept your guilty plea. But I love you so much that I carried out the punishment you deserve on My Son, Jesus. (1 John 4:10). Because of Jesus, you will not receive the sentence your guilt deserves. Your hope is not in the lack of guilt, but in my promise not to punish you because of your guilt."



"Still, I'm filled with such grief." "That's okay; in fact, that's good. It means you acknowledge the humanity of your baby. It is good and necessary to grieve. You can get help with your grieving by calling **Word of Hope** at 888.217.8679. So grieve, but you need not grieve as those who have no hope (1 Thessalo-

nians 4:13). You have hope in My love for you and in My grace and mercy. Entrust yourself and your baby to Me."

Yes, there is hope for hurting hearts. It does not come from you; it does not come from me. It comes from God through Jesus Christ. Peace and healing flow from this hope.

**My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ the solid rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.**

Text: Edward Mote; Public domain

His Word Over Deception

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.word-of-hope.org



Deception came early—and stayed long. Sandy felt unloved by her father. She went to church with friends, but always wondered: Is God really here for me? In college, it was easier to turn away from faith toward alcohol and drugs. Once out of college, she believed sexual intimacy would fill her emptiness.

Sandy moved further away from God and the father of lies settled in. The floodgate of emotions burst when she heard the words, “Your test is positive.” For perhaps the first time, Sandy knew real fear, shame, and loneliness. Her father would be so angry! He’d never been there for her before, so why would he be there now?

Before the door of the abortion clinic, Sandy paused only long enough to name her baby. I’m sorry, but I can’t be your mother. There is nothing else I can do. Now the deceiver sang his own praise.

Sandy moved back home, but did not confide in her parents. The whole experience, Sandy believed, was finished. But, the difficult relationship with her father had not changed. Sandy spent as much time out of the house as possible—and met her husband.

Satan continued to play his game of

deception with the goal of stealing all confidence from Sandy. The first years of her marriage to a loving man were made difficult by hissing sounds. “You can’t be a good wife.” In caring so little for herself, Sandy resisted the love of her husband. She resisted the love of God. But God, unseen yet faithful, was present and involved.

Sandy and her husband had kept their distance from church, but when their son was born, they realized their need of a church family. Shortly after their son was baptized, Sandy finished adult instruction and was baptized as well. A daughter was born two years later. She, too, was

carried to the baptismal font. Something was changing in Sandy. She wanted her children brought up in the Kingdom of God. The deceiver moaned, but kept a talon in the door of



Sandy’s life.

It was difficult for Sandy to look at her children and not be reminded of her first baby. The hissing continued, “You weren’t a good mother then. You can’t be a good mother now.” Mother’s Day was a day of mourning for Sandy. The burden of guilt and sadness weighed heavy. Most pressing of all was Sandy’s question, “Am I right with God?”

The question was answered by a bold, but caring pastor. In Christ, you are a new creation. There was prayer. Honesty. Trust. A listening ear and gentle nudging with the Father’s Word. Oh, Jesus, my Savior, I lay it all before You. With

confession, the weight was lifted (Psalm 32:3-5). With each day of healing, the hissing subsided.

Sandy had not been able to explain the sense of sorrow that overwhelmed her during the month of May. Why did joy elude her during the season of new life? God was faithful to help Sandy realize that May would have been her first child's birth month. With each bit of painful truth also came a bit of freedom.

There's so much more to Sandy's story, but here's what she wants us to know: God is faithful. His compassions never fail. They are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). With His life-changing Word, God used the mom who didn't think she could be a good mother to mentor a Christian daughter. Sandy was open and honest about her past. And, when her daughter did not reject her, Sandy's confidence grew. Mother and daughter reminded each other of Jesus' merciful and abiding love. Together, they cried—and laughed. With each laugh, Satan moved farther from their door.

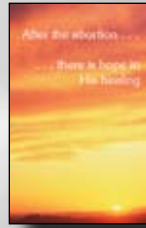
I am privileged to be included in the lives of both of these women. I have witnessed the deceiver overpowered by God's Word at work in both mother and daughter. Today, Sandy's daughter is a deaconess. She is a deaconess with a deep passion to help post abortive women. Why? Because God is faithful.

In setting Sandy free (Isaiah 61:1), God covered both mother and daughter with a robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10). The deceiver has no hold on them.



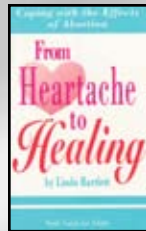
For help in overcoming the pain of abortion contact **Word of Hope**. Call 888.217.8679 or go to www.word-of-hope.org.

After the abortion ...



After the Abortion There is Hope in His Healing, by Linda Bartlett, offers hope to those who are struggling with an abortion decision.

"Through the power of Christ's death and resurrection, you are set free to rejoice in the newness of life!"
Item LFL405B. \$1.00 ea.



From Heartache to Healing – Author Linda Bartlett encourages us all to consider the reality of abortion and the ways in which the Church can minister to the needs of those who

suffer abortion's effects. *Item LFL401BS. \$4.85 ea.*



Hope in His Healing (Spanish) – Abortion may seem convenient, but anger, guilt, and despair are soon to follow. God doesn't want us to carry the baggage of sin. Instead, He offers to set us free to rejoice in the newness of life!

Item LFL403T. \$0.25 ea.



Word of Hope offers information on LFL's post-abortion ministry, which offers confidential post-abortion counseling and reconciliation. **Note: Limit 25 copies.** For larger quantities call LFL.

Item LFL404T. FREE

Hope in Jesus the Light of Life

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



The Darkness of Sin

Darkness is one thing; darkness in which you cannot see a thing is another. The darkness of the night where you can see only shapes and forms can be frightening. The darkness of a dungeon or cave where you can see nothing at all can be paralyzing.

The darkness of sin that creeps into our lives casts shadows that can be frightening. But we can see past them to the cross that “glows with peace and joy.” We rejoice because we have hope in the light of its forgiveness.

But some sins trap us in a dungeon of deep darkness and we are paralyzed. We can see nothing. We despair because this sin seems too dark and too terrible to be forgiven. We have no hope.

The sin of abortion can feel like such a sin—dark, unforgivable. It envelopes us in hopelessness and grief much like the Rachels of Bethlehem.

“A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more” (Matthew 2:18).

Indeed, modern-day Rachels experience an even deeper darkness. Unlike the Bethlehem mothers who could do nothing to stop the death of their babies, post-abortive mothers participated in a choice to have their own baby killed. When the reality of that choice confronts them, they are crushed, devastated, thrown

by their grief into a darkness that seems hopeless.

Listen to their weeping. “You see, I didn’t just kill my child that day. I was a victim too. I killed something inside of me, something that is now replaced with the knowledge that I too, can do a very wicked evil.”¹ Another Rachel described her feelings in the post-abortion recovery room. “Inside I felt empty, stripped of my own self-respect. The words, ‘I’ve killed my baby, pounded through my mind.’”²

Satan loves abortion. He loves to lie to women. “It’s your only choice. But don’t worry, it won’t hurt much and it will all be over soon.” As one Rachel put it, “I caused the death of our little one. I listened to the lies of the devil that there

was no way out. He had cleverly laid his trap for me and many other unsuspecting women.”³

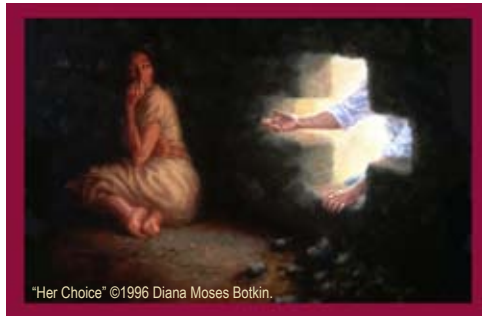
Then Satan lies again. “Now look what you have done! You murdered your own child! Don’t think you can go to

your Jesus for this one. This sin is too big to be forgiven. There is no hope for you.” Many believe Satan’s lies. Many cower, paralyzed in the darkness of their sin.

The Light of Hope

Remember that sign in Dante’s *Inferno* that hangs over the gates of Hell? “Abandon all hope ye who enter here.” Have you ever thought about the fact that the essence of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that Hell is the only place that sign hangs? That sign does not hang over cancer wards or nursing homes or funeral homes. And it does not hang over abortion mills.

There is hope for Rachel! In describing the grief of those Bethlehem Rachels,



Matthew quotes Jeremiah 31:15. But Jeremiah goes on.

“Keep your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, ... There is hope for your future, declares the LORD” (Jeremiah 31:16-17a).

There is hope for Rachel! There is hope for those feeling hopeless! There is hope because one baby escaped Herod’s sword that awful dark night. His name was Jesus. Jesus, of whom it was said, **“[T]he people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned”** (Matthew 4:16). Jesus, who said of Himself, **“I am the light of the world,”** (John 9:5) and, **“I have come into the world as a light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness”** (John 12:46). You do not have to stay in the darkness!

You do not have to stay in the darkness because Jesus hung in the darkness for your sake. Remember? On Good Friday, darkness covered the land from noon until 3:00 p.m. It was the darkness of sin, yours, mine, the world’s. Jesus hung in that darkness and bled in that darkness. He suffered the pain, agony, hopelessness, and forsakenness of that darkness. He was buried in the darkness of the tomb and death.

There is hope for Rachel, for sinners, because the darkness could not contain the Light. The darkness of the world could not overcome the Light of the world. The Light shattered the darkness of the tomb giving to you and me, not just hope, but, as Peter says, **“A living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”** (1 Peter 1:3b). Our hope is not in some martyr who died. Our hope is in our living God!

There is hope for Rachel, for sinners, because the living Jesus shatters the darkness of our sin with the light of His cross.

He comes where we are. He enters the darkness of our sin to give us the light of living hope. As one Rachel put it, “I never really understood that Jesus Christ was willing to get down into my muck and miry life and pull me up out of the sewage of my problems. He has since shown me that He really is.”⁴ God does not abandon us in our darkness, even when we choose to enter that darkness ourselves.

There is hope for Rachel in Jesus the Light of Life!

The Hands of the Light

Jesus gives to His Church the joy of sharing that hope! You are the body of Christ in this world. You are now, Jesus says, “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). You are His hands that reach out through the light of His cross bringing hope and help to Rachel. We must continue to do all we can to bring an end to the darkness of abortion. We need to reach out in compassion to those experiencing a crisis pregnancy so they do not enter that darkness. In the mean time, we must continue to be the welcoming hands of Jesus extended to those trapped in the darkness of their sin.

If you find yourself sitting silently alone in that darkness, know that God loves you as He loves all sinners. He comes right into the very depths of your darkness and shines upon you with the light of His forgiveness. In that light you have hope, a certain and living hope that can get you on the path toward healing. For a **Word of Hope** trained and loving counselors, call 888.217.8679 or go to www.word-of-hope.org.

There is hope for Rachel, for sinners, in Jesus the Light of Life!

1 From a letter received at the national LFL office.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

Reproductions of “Her Choice” available at <http://DianaMosesBotkin.imagekind.com/>

The Wonder of Adoption

by Rev. David O'Leary



Adoption is one of the important resources available in the ministry to women and men who face crisis pregnancies. While it may not be the optimal choice for all, it certainly provides the right option for many. If we consider the biblical pattern of adoption, we can draw a parallel to crisis pregnancy ministry.

The Bible tells us of the wonder of adoption! It is a privilege that every believer has and that many believers overlook. We have status. We are somebody. I don't mean this in the modern secular sense of the word, which seeks to build our self-esteem. I mean this in the Gospel sense—you are a child of the living God through our Lord Jesus Christ. You have been adopted into the family of the King! Put it another way: "Adoption is the act of God's free grace by which we become His children with all the rights and privileges of being His." Amazing! Such status! John writes of his amazement in 1 John 3:1, **"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!"** (NKJV).



It is important for us to distinguish adoption from other acts of God's grace. Adoption, though inseparable from justification, is still distinct. Justification bestows on us the legal status of forgiven sinners who are righteous before God. Adoption accords us the status of belonging to the family of God along with all the privileges which that brings. We are not just legally acquitted; we are welcomed and embraced as prodigals who have returned to our Father.

That is the first privilege we have as children. We receive the Spirit of adoption and may call God our Father. Notice what Scripture says:

"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Galatians 4:6-7 NKJV).

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:15-16 NKJV).

More than that, we enjoy the love of the Father for His children, which John speaks about (1 John 3:1); we enjoy His Fatherly compassion (Psalm 103:13); and

we are invited to cast our cares on Him because He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). And the blessings continue. Paul says, **“And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together”** (Romans 8:17 NKJV).

But, what I think is the richest privilege is that we have access to our Father. We have His attention when we are in need. So our Lord reminds us of the Father’s provision:

“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things” (Matthew 6:30-32 NKJV).

He also invites us to ask our Father for His help: **“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”** (Matthew 7:7-11 NKJV).

What a privileged place we have as children of our Heavenly Father. No wonder one theologian called adoption “the apex of covenant grace and privilege.”

Consider the parallel to adoption in

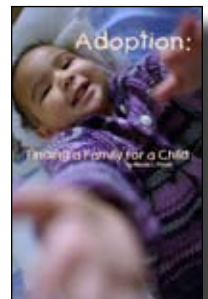
our own human families. Beyond all imagining, a child who may not be able to receive the care and nurture he or she needs is received into a family because of that family’s deliberate decision of love. And that love not only bestows blessings of care and nurture, but it gives a new status—a child of the house, a member of the family. In addition to care, the child will have the comfort of knowing that he or she has been chosen in love to be one of the family. An adopted child takes the family name, has the family love and protection, and has at his or her disposal all the resources of the family. Granted, each and every family falls short of this ideal, but we are reminded of our own adoption in Christ as the pattern for adoption of children in need. What a wonder that is!

Isaiah 49:1-2 tells us, **“The Lord has called Me from the womb; From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name. And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a polished shaft; In His quiver He has hidden Me”** (NKJV).

(From “At the Center,” www.atcmag.com, Fall 2006. Used by permission.)



Lutherans For Life offers a number of adoption-related resources Check them out under the Sanctity of Life tab at www.cph.org.



The 2011 National Lutherans For Life Conference theme is **Adopted in Christ**. Make plans now and join us August 5-6 in Dallas, Texas!

There Will Be Resurrection



by Rev. Mark Jeske

What is your most miserable funeral memory? Was it burying your husband? Your mom? Or ... one of your children? You know, death is always ugly. Even when one of my loved ones has passed away after a long life and lengthy illness, it still hurts to let go. Death seems so final, so cruel.

Only Jesus Christ has a rescue from the grave. He instructed the prophet Daniel to inform us, **"Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake"** (Daniel 12:2a NIV). I think I can bear almost anything knowing that my Savior will catch me when I fall. I can survive any separation knowing that I will be reunited with all believers. Those who die in the Lord aren't lost. They only got to the finish line a little before we did.

Our Lord Jesus himself demonstrated how resurrection of the body will work. His rising authorizes him to perform mine. And yours. My Redeemer lives. Yours does, too.

(From Grace Moments, 7/7/10. Used by permission. www.timeofgrace.org)



A Life Quote:

"Life is not ours to give nor is it ours to take ... Indeed the cross of Jesus Christ makes the difference in facing and living through our end-of-life issues. Thanks be to God!" Rev. Dr. Eugene Boe, Lutheran Brethren Seminary



Life Quotes
are online at:

www.lutheransforlife.org

Here's why taking a stand For Life matters:



**In the United States alone,
3,500 unborn babies
are killed through
abortion every day.**

Source: National Right to Life Committee



**Everyday,
women and men
are left hurting
and
grieving
due to an abortion decision.**

Teenagers and Pregnancy

by Chuck Colson



A recently released survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control asked teenagers between 15 and 19 about their sexual conduct and attitudes. As National Public Radio put it, the survey showed “little change in the numbers of teens having sex, but it [showed] a big change in attitudes toward premarital sex.”

While this “big change” has many experts dismayed, no one ought to be surprised. It is the inevitable outcome of our ideas about sex and teenagers.

The survey found that 42 percent of the teenagers surveyed had had sex at least once. That represented a slight drop from the last time teenagers were surveyed in 2002.

If the difference in the percentage of kids having sex was “statistically insignificant,” as the report said, other differences were anything but.

The one statistic that has gotten the most attention is a change in teen attitudes toward out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Between 2002 and 2008, the percentage of kids who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “It is OK for an unmarried female to have a child” jumped from 50 to 64 percent. One quarter said that they “would be pleased if they or a partner had a baby.”

For 15 years prior to 2005, teen pregnancy rates declined. But since then, they’ve been rising gradually. The result is weeping and gnashing of teeth among the sexual education crowd.

In words of the CEO of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, “progress in reducing teen pregnancy has stalled.”

Well, if it’s “stalled” it’s because contemporary sexual education and efforts to prevent teen pregnancy are constrained by two very bad ideas: the first is a strong aversion to telling kids that sex outside of marriage is wrong.

Whether it’s because most adults nowadays don’t really believe it’s wrong, or because of their own sexual history, they will tell kids anything but this.

Parents will tell them to “be responsible” or tell them to “be safe” or even, under duress, tell them to postpone sex until some unspecified date. But too many adults won’t say, “Don’t do this until you are married.”

The other bad idea is treating teens like adults who, armed with “the facts,” will make the right choices. Any neurologist or social scientist or parent of a teenager will tell you that this isn’t so.

Education based on these bad ideas doesn’t stand a chance against an over-sexed culture that regularly depicts celebrities as successful single moms.

What does stand a chance is faith—and the worldview it produces. Among teens who hadn’t had sex, the most common reasons were religious and moral beliefs. Faith and morals have replaced fear of pregnancy as the main reason kids abstain from sex.

That makes sense. Technology and culture have made it easier to prevent pregnancy and removed the stigma. That leaves what kids believe about right and wrong as the only effective restraint—not only against premarital sex but also against teen pregnancy.

If we won’t summon the courage to tell our kids the truth—that sex outside of marriage is wrong—then we may have to settle for them telling us even less pleasing news.

(From BreakPoint, June 29, 2010, reprinted with permission of Prison Fellowship, www.breakpoint.org.)

Christian Training – It Starts at Home

By Rev. Nathanael Mayhew

Churches are facing a major issue in our day. The number of young people leaving our churches is reaching record highs. Have you noticed this trend in your congregation?

The biblical instruction of our young people must start at home! That is what is missing in our society today. Consider the words of the apostle Paul: **“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord”** (Ephesians 6:4).

In the preface to his *Small Catechism* Luther emphasized this as well, saying: “As the head of the family should teach them in a simple way to those of his household.” As parents we are often so busy with the responsibility of providing for our family financially and dealing with other family matters, that we are glad to be able to relinquish the spiritual education of our children to the teachers at school and the pastors of our churches.

But wait! Our children are the most important responsibility that we have

been given. The Scriptures are full of examples of godly men who dedicated themselves to the work of the Lord at the expense of their families. Righteous men such as Eli, Samuel, and David serve as examples of how NOT to raise God-fearing children. As parents we dare not neglect the responsibility of preparing our children for the world by establishing in them a solid and firm biblical worldview

so they are ready to face the so-called “wisdom of the world.”

How can we do this?

(1) Be proactive, not reactive.

We can’t wait for issues like evolution, relativism, and pluralism to come up in school or among the kids they hang out with. Rather, we need to prepare them NOW for the issues that they will soon be facing. One way to do that is to

set a time for family Bible study in our homes. Let’s take time to read our Bible and discuss its application to the lives of our family.

(2) Be involved in their education.

If our children attend a public school, be aware of what they are being taught and recognize the deep and lasting influence teachers are going to have on our



children. Be ready with solid biblical facts to address issues that conflict with Scripture. If our children are blessed to attend a Christian Day School, we still need to be involved with their memory work and other assignments (Don't we often forget that their "Bible homework" is the most important?).

(3) Get involved with your child's growth in Christ.

We shouldn't wait with memorizing Bible passages until our children start confirmation classes with the pastor. Get started with them now. Remember that this is not primarily the pastor's responsibility. While the pastor is there to assist us in this task, child-training is first and foremost the parents' responsibility.

When the children begin confirmation classes, go over the lessons with them and have discussions with them. We parents have the greatest influence on our children; let us make use of that influence for their spiritual benefit.

(4) Pray.

Let us pray that the Lord would give us wisdom, knowledge, and strength to do this important work. Pray that God would create, preserve, and sustain the faith He has begun in the hearts of our children. He can and will give what is necessary.

Remember, biblical instruction and training of our children start at home!

(Rev. Mayhew is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Lawrenceville, Georgia. This article first appeared in "The Lutheran Spokesman," April 2010; www.clclutheran.org)

LFL Family Living Resources!



Lutherans For Life has many resources for families. **Check them out under the Sanctity of Human Life tab at www.cph.org!** You can also download the *Life Resource Catalog* at the LFL website.

Here's a quick list:

Bible Studies

Dressing For Life
Men, Women, and Relationships

Booklets

Biblical Manhood
The Failure of Sex Education
Forgiven in Christ
Generations of Hope ...
Into His Loving Care
Not Alone
Second Thoughts about Living Together

Brochures

A Life Not Like Any Other
Joseph and His Rib
Marriage – A Statement by LFL
Why Not Just Live Together

A Life Quote from Linda Bartlett:

"Generations to come need Lutherans who love life today! Fathers love life when they model chivalry, fidelity, courage, character, and servant-style leadership. Mothers love life when they model purity, virtue, homemaking, hospitality, and relationship-building ... Grandparents love life when they pass on stories of faith."



Nothing But Him

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.titus2-4life.org



Our identity—how we see ourselves—holds powerful influence on our attitude, choices, behavior, goals, relationships, what we wear, and where we want to be now and in the future.

Tamara was flattered by the attention of an older man. When she became pregnant, her dad, boyfriend, and pastor all agreed an abortion was the best choice. Later, Tamara moved in with another older man. Over the course of 20 years, she aimed to please, making the circle from plastic surgeon to diet center to abortion clinic.

Jenna endured several years of sexual abuse. She became promiscuous (what did it matter?) and, in college, settled into a lesbian relationship.

Kate and her husband were successful attorneys. After the birth of their first child, Kate went into a state of depression. “I’m a good attorney,” she said. “but I don’t know how to be a mom.”

Jill liked what she saw when she looked in the mirror. She knew the guys liked what they saw, too. Jill’s mom was proud. “My daughter is so sexy!”

Ben despised himself after his wife’s abortion. His failure to protect his child shaped other poor choices. Ben went to church, but sat passively in the back pew.

Jeff was embarrassed by the Sunday school stories he was taught as a child. His faith seemed disconnected from reality. When challenged by his professor, he could offer no explanation of his origin or purpose. Life on campus, and a perspective on the world, took on a whole new meaning.

We all seek identity. We want to be somebody. We want to define ourselves in some notable and even memorable way. A woman wants to be loved. A man wants respect. Both want their lives to have purpose and meaning. The enemy of our lives knows this.

Satan, the world, and our own sinful nature deceive both men and women.

Because male and female are not the same, we are uniquely deceived. We are targeted in our most vulnerable places. We allow emotions, self-pride, and ideas of the world to shape our identity.



We may find our identity in an intimate relationship, a degree, a title, a successful job, an image, or popularity. We may identify ourselves by how we look or how healthy we are. We may identify ourselves by something that was done to us or how we were treated.

What happens to our identity when we don’t feel loved; can’t make use of our degree; lose our title, job or image; fall out of popularity; or fall into ill-health? What happens to our identity as parents when children grow up and become independent? What happens when how we see ourselves is shaped by mistreatment? What happens to our identity when circumstances in life change? What happens

when we define ourselves by our mistakes and failures?

Who, then, are we? What is our purpose? Where is our hope?

God tells us that our identity is sure and certain. It depends on nothing but Him.

We are His creation; therefore, we are wanted and lovingly designed. God involves Himself with each human creation and writes each of our days in His Book of Life (Psalm 139:13-16).

We are all part of the human race, all either a son or daughter of Adam and Eve. We differ predominately in gender (male or female), appearance, place of residence, experience, and work prepared for us to do. As members of the human race, we have something else in common. We are all sinners. We are born into sin (Psalm 51:5) and scared by sin. Our first parents reflected the perfect image of God. But, when they lost sight of their

identity and purpose, they fell. When Eve doubted God and sinned, her world was changed by guilt, sorrow, and pain. When Adam failed to remember God's Word for life and use it, his world was also changed. But God didn't change. His love for His creation didn't change. He didn't abandon man or woman but, instead invited them into a restored relationship as His treasures.

We are all treasures of Christ. We are the treasures for whom Jesus Christ gave all He had (Matthew 13:44). No matter our circumstances in life, no matter our failures, no matter the sin Satan whispers is "too big for God to forgive." They do

not define us. Jesus Christ does. Because of what Jesus has already done, God sees us clothed in the righteous robe of our Savior and Redeemer.

Can you imagine the difference trusting this identity would make for Tamara, Jenna, Kate, Jill, Ben, and Jeff? For you? For me?

There is one more thing. All of us are on a journey—going somewhere. The destination is determined by our identity which, in turn, affects the way we travel.

On the journey, we might be described in many ways by many different people. Their description most probably will be based on what they see us doing. What they see may be how we're treating

someone. (How we treat someone is influenced by our identity.) Or, what they see may be a role we're playing. For example, I am a wife, mom, grandma, friend, mentor, advocate, volunteer, citizen, and so on. What I

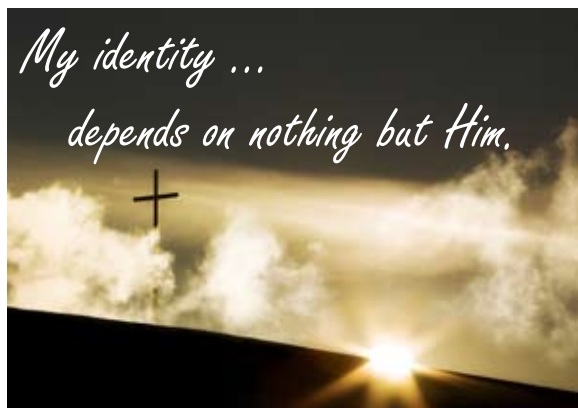
do is not who I am, but who I am determines what I do and how I do it.

I am also a sinner. I fail God and others. Even so, my identity as a creation of God, daughter of Adam and Eve, and treasure of Christ does not change. Instead, it gives me purpose and hope.

It depends on nothing but Him.



"We Have Identity" is the second session of a five-part Titus 2 Retreat. Upcoming retreats are scheduled in Norfolk, Nebraska, September 17-18, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 8-9. Questions? You may e-mail lindabartlett@mchsi.com. Also check out the Titus 2 website: www.titus2-4life.org.



New Bulletin Insert to Help Bring Good News to Life!



There is Much Darkness, But ...

There is Hope in Jesus, the Light of Life!

Darkness

- Since the legalization of abortion in 1973 (Roe v. Wade), our culture has existed in darkness—the shadow of death.
- Millions of preborn babies have been murdered in the name of choice.
- Millions of women have been imprisoned in the darkness of guilt and despair because of their “choice.” Many fathers, grandparents, siblings, friends, and even the doctors and nurses who performed abortions also sit in that same darkness.

Hope

- The prophet foretold: “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined” (Isaiah 9:2).
- John writes: “In him was life, and the life was the light of men” (1:4).
- Jesus said: “I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness” (John 12:46).

Light

Jesus also said: “You are the light of the world.” (Matthew 5:14a)

- As Christians who are pro-life, we are called to reflect the life giving light of Jesus into the darkness of this world.
- As Christians who are pro-life, we are called to expose the deeds of darkness with the light of His truth.
- As Christians who are pro-life, we are called to reach out through the light of His cross to those who are trapped in the darkness.



Lutherans
For Life

www.lutheransforlife.org • info@lutheransforlife.org • 888.364.LIFE • Item LFL406BI

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Scripture quotations from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (ESV), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good and Beautiful. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

The powerful message of the **There is Hope in Jesus, the Light of Life!** bulletin insert speaks of the “Darkness” since the legalization of abortion as well as the “Hope” and “Light” to which we as pro-life Christians are called to witness. This is a special updated version of an earlier Life Sunday insert that featured the same beautiful painting by Diana Moses Botkin. Supplies are limited. **Item LFL406BI. \$0.10 ea. plus S&H.**

Order at www.cph.org or call LFL at 888.364.LIFE!

Teaching For Life®

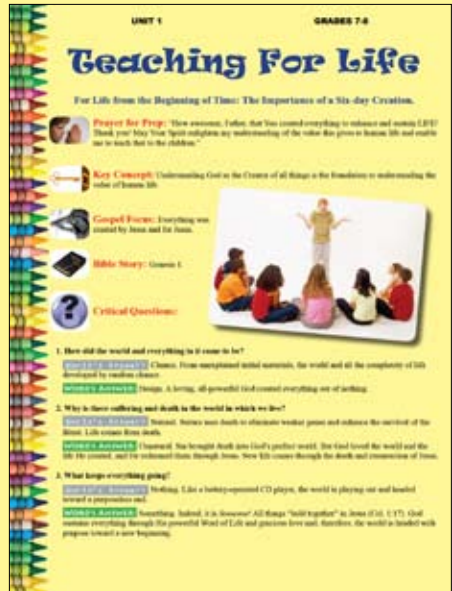
Teaching For Life® is a unique, Gospel-centered, positive way to help Lutheran educators be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

Teaching For Life® teaches nine key pro-life concepts—one for each month of the school year—by giving ideas on how to integrate them into religion, math, social studies, language arts, and more.

Each **Teaching For Life®** package includes a CD which provides additional resources, commentary, and teaching tools.

www.lutheransforlife.org

You can also order directly at www.cph.org.



Consider purchasing **Teaching For Life®** for your favorite teacher or school!

“I like the variety of different ways you can integrate the key concepts in your day.”

“The activities were diverse and applied to a wide variety of curricular areas. I appreciated how the lessons were laid out in a step-by-step manner.”

“I liked the variety of choices in each curriculum area. It was easy to fit at least one activity in.”

“The teachers’ guide was well-prepared and looked great!”

“I like that there were activities to incorporate in all subject areas. I enjoyed hands-on activities.”

“I appreciated the age-appropriateness of the material.”

Lesson Plans and CD

Grades PK-K. Item LFL720C. \$49.99 ea.

Grades 1-2. Item LFL721C. \$49.99 ea.

Grades 3-4. Item LFL723C. \$49.99 ea.

Grades 5-6. Item LFL725C. \$49.99 ea.

Grades 7-8. Item LFL727C. \$49.99 ea.

Complete **Teaching For Life®** package: 45 lesson plans and CD for all grade levels: Item LFL729C. \$199.99 ea.

The entire **Teaching For Life®** package includes 45 lessons for five grade levels (PK-K, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8). It comes in a sturdy 8.25" x 11" full color tri-fold format, providing the teacher with all that is needed to teach a key life concept each month in a variety of ways.

www.lutheransforlife.org

The British government is planning to adjust its foreign aid spending in order to promote so-called family planning overseas. The department for international development claims that a major cause of maternal deaths is so-called unsafe abortion, and therefore promotes so-called safe abortions as the solution. The move is an example of how abortion is promoted under the false banner of maternal health. (*Yahoo! News from politics.co.uk*, SPUC, 7/27)

Saodat Rakhimbayeva, an Uzbek woman, believes she was deliberately sterilized as part of a nationwide campaign to lower the birthrate. Her surgeon removed part of her uterus while delivering her baby by Caesarean section. The surgeon claimed the uterus was cancerous, but Mrs. Rakhimbayeva said she never consented to the operation. (*The Scotsman*, 7/19; SPUC, 7/21)

In South Africa, a women's rights group has claimed that pregnant women who are HIV positive are being coerced into accepting sterilization. The International Community of Women Living With Aids has also reported women claiming to have been sterilized, without their consent, during abortions. (*Irish Times*, 7/20; SPUC 7/21)

Wesley Smith—LFL conference keynote speaker (see page 24)—has said that the Western Australia Euthanasia Bill 2010 gives doctors complete exemption from criminal and civil liability for performing euthanasia. Smith also says the broad definition of “terminally ill” means that people who might live for decades would qualify for euthanasia. Smith said the bill would risk turning the medical profession into a “killing practice.” (*Wesley J. Smith*, SPUC, 7/15)



Hannah Beech, of TIME, has reported that China is now experiencing severe gender imbalance due to its one-child policy. She reports that many Chinese families selectively abort unborn female children, meaning there will possibly be as many as 24 million single men by 2020. Beech says this is likely to cause a major rise in criminal gangs and trafficking of women. (*Time*, 7/12; SPUC 7/13)

A landmark ruling in June by Germany's highest court makes it easier for people to allow their relatives and acquaintances to die. The court found no criminal liability to end life-sustaining treatment for a patient. Last year a lower court found attorney Wolfgang Putz guilty of attempted manslaughter after advising his client in 2007 to end the tube feeding for her 71-year-old mother who had been in a coma for five years. Court records showed the woman, Erika Küllmer, voiced prior consent to her daughter not to be kept alive with life-sustaining treatments. The ruling overturned Putz's

previous conviction and clarified the distinction between “killing with the aim of terminating life” and an action that “let a patient die with his or her own consent.” Following the verdict, Eugen Brysch, director of the German Hospice Foundation, released a statement, taking exception to the fact that Küllmer expressed her wish orally rather than in writing. “If, as in this case, a casual private conversation without sufficient witnesses is enough to determine the patient's wishes, then the floodgates for misuse are wide open,” Mr. Brysch said. (*The Independent*, 6/26; *CLR Life News*, 6/30)

Unless otherwise noted, World News summaries are from the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) based in London, England: www.spuc.org.uk.

LFL Changes Mission and Vision Statements

“Change” can be a frightening word, especially for Lutherans! But sometimes change is needed and is good. It is always healthy for an organization to periodically look at its mission and vision.

LFL’s board of directors will be doing some major strategic planning in September of 2010. Since the strategic plan flows from our mission and vision statements, the board decided to re-look at these statements in preparation for the planning meeting. Over a few months time, input was sought from a variety of sources. This was then collated by the board’s strategic planning committee. A draft was eventually approved by this committee and presented to the board of directors at their meeting on July 22, 2010. On July 23, the board met with LFL’s state presidents to discuss and refine the draft. At this meeting, a new mission statement and a new vision statement were adopted.

As you read these, remember that a **mission statement** should tell what an organization does and to whom it does it. A **vision statement** should reflect what things would look like if we accomplish our mission.

LFL’s Mission: *Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.*

LFL’s Vision: *Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same.*

Mission

A **mission statement** should be as short as

possible so it can be easily memorized and displayed. Nevertheless, much thought went into developing this statement. The following comments will help give some understanding of the thoughts reflected in our mission.

Equipping – Educating, Energizing, and Encouraging through high-quality, relevant multi-media resources—print, DVD, website, social networks, etc.—and various speaking venues.

Lutherans – *Whoever* they are: Pastors, Individuals, Educators. *Wherever* they are: Homes, Congregations, Schools (Seminaries, Universities, High Schools, Middle Schools, Elementary Schools, Pre-Schools)



Gospel-motivated – This is the heart of LFL and makes us unique. We are not For Life because we live in a society that isn’t, but because we serve a God who is. We are motivated by the Gospel to be Him and share Him

boldly, joyously, and lovingly as we connect Him and His message to the life issues and, thus, changing hearts and minds. Gospel-motivated does not preclude use of the law, but always as preparatory for the Gospel.

Voices – This includes preaching, teaching, witnessing, caring, and being Christian citizens.

Vision

If we accomplish this mission and get to all these Lutherans, then every Lutheran congregation will be affected and every Lutheran congregation will be upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society through word and deed.

Hope in Him

by Jerilyn Richard,
RFL Coordinator



So many women and men around us are hurting, alone, lost and in despair. So many in our pews haven't heard the message of healing our Risen Savior has to give. As followers of Christ, it is our responsibility to reach out to those in need, both within the Church and out in our communities. Our message is not only important, it is life changing!

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).



Renewal For Life

We begin our ministry in the Church, which is the reason **Renewal For Life®** exists. **Renewal For Life's** purpose is to produce resources, provide training, support, and connections to further the For Life ministry.

Through **Renewal For Life®** resources, pastors have the opportunity to share materials to help counsel those in need. To have the opportunity to connect to other pastors in similar situations is an option through the For Life Forum on the RFL website. It also offers our grassroots advice, support, and direction to further their ministry within the church.

Renewal For Life® has been mentioned frequently in our periodicals for

some time now. Many of you are fully aware of **Renewal For Life®** and what it has to offer, or will offer. And many of you may not yet have heard of it. Our goal isn't to promote another initiative or program, but to provide an avenue for grassroots supporters, congregations, and pastors to connect on the life issues. Grassroots are vital to the ministry of RFL. Who is considered grassroots? Anyone led by the Savior to share the For Life message!



Laundromats are a great place to leave crisis pregnancy, post-abortion, sexual purity, and other LFL material!

With hours and hours spent waiting for clothes to wash and dry, offering new and colorful Gospel-centered For Life resources in the midst of all the old magazines is one way to reach people in need—many of whom may be struggling with past life decisions.

To order LFL materials, go to **www.cph.org** and click on the Sanctity of Life tab for booklets, book-marks, brochures, pens, pencils, balloons, and more!

Developing Your Christian Estate Plan

by James P. Schroeder



As Christians we are called to be stewards of what God has given to us to manage. One way of doing this is to develop a Christian Estate Plan. I can assist you in developing your plan that would include three parts.

The first part of your plan is to develop a written statement of your faith that can be included in your will or placed with your will. This can be of great comfort to your family at the time of your death and be a witness to future generations.

The second part of your plan is to provide for your family by writing a will or revocable trust. Over fifty percent of all Christians have not taken the time to do this. Many wills are out of date and need to be reviewed.

The third part of a Christian estate plan is to make a gift in your plans to continue your support of your favorite ministries after you die. If you believe in the mission of Lutherans for Life, you will want to include a gift to them in your estate plan.

If you would like more information or personal help in developing your Christian Estate Plan, contact me:

James P. Schroeder
Christian Estate Planning Counselor
jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org
877.913.2221 or 402.256.9410
Fax 402.256.9238
Cell 515.490.7371

How Can You Provide For Your Family, Loved Ones, and LFL?

Lutherans For Life has a Christian estate planner, Jim Schroeder (see article) who can offer you comprehensive, charitable expertise, and services to help you provide for your family, loved ones, and ministries like Lutherans For Life.

Annually, thousands of faithful Christians just like you support a variety of Lutheran ministries through:

- Gift Annuities
- Direct Gifts
- Wills
- Family Gift Funds
- Endowments and Trusts

Contact Kay Meyer at 515-441-6571 or kmeyer@lutheransforlife.org.

☐ I would like more information about how I can bless my family and my favorite ministries for generations to come.

☐ I would like more information about how I can support Lutherans For Life.

☐ I would like to have someone review my current will or estate plan.

☐ Send information on: ☐ gift annuities ☐ family gift funds ☐ endowment fund ☐ charitable trusts ☐ Christian will preambles ☐ bequests

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

E-mail

Send to LFL (see address on page 2).



For more ways to support
LFL see the Give page at:

www.lutheransforlife.org

Share the Light of Christ with Today's Families!

by Kay L. Meyer



What are your favorite memories of light? Is it the flashlight that you turned on and off on a camping trip with your family? Is it watching the light from a

campfire as you sat and sang camp songs together? Is it going to see the Christmas lights with your family during the holidays? Is it catching and then letting go of lightning bugs on a warm summer evening? Or maybe it's when you light a candle in your home for a special occasion?

God's Word has a lot to say about light and the light of the world! Jesus spoke to the people, **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"** (John 8:12).

As we think about God's Word and the topic of light we remember that in the beginning God said, **"Let there be light,' and there was light. And God saw that the light was good."** (Genesis 1:3-4a)

What else does the Old Testament have

to say about light?

One story I like is Moses and the burning bush in Exodus 3. Moses was tending the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, and came to the mountain of God. He saw that although the bush was on fire it did not burn up. He went to see why the bush didn't burn up. There the Lord called to him, **"Moses, Moses! ... Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet,**

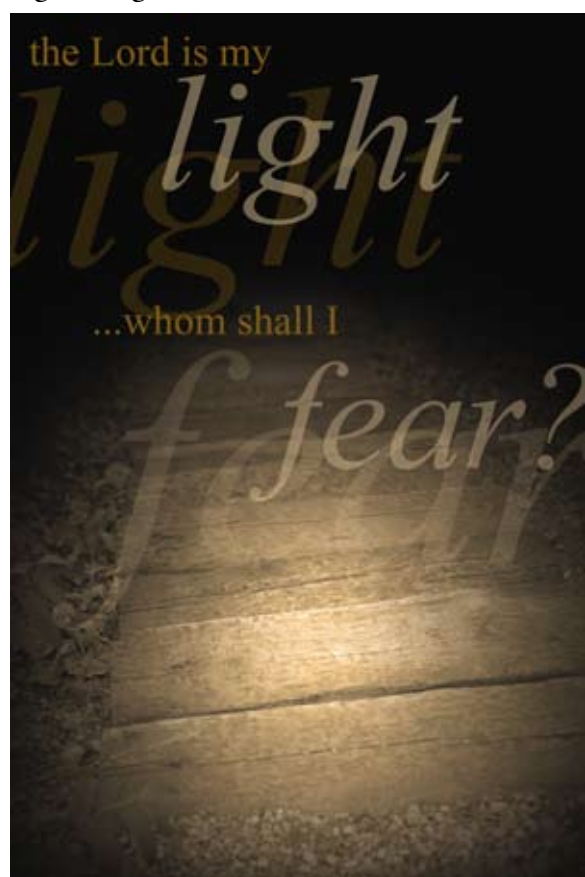
for the place on which you are standing is holy ground ... I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (4b-6a).

At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The Lord said, **"I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come**

down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians" (7-8a).

Note that God used His people—in this case Moses—to accomplish His work.

Moses was a lot like you and me. He argued with God: **"If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his**



name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said ... ‘Say ... “I AM has sent me to you”’ (13-14).

Have you ever argued with God? In a small group or at the dinner table this evening talk about a time when you argued with God. What happened? Who won the argument? What did you learn from this situation?

Later, “**Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights**” (Exodus 24:18). There, he received the Ten Commandments.

Do you remember what the people left behind did when he was on the mountain for 40 days and nights? They worshiped other gods and had Aaron make the golden calf.

Have you ever been tempted to do something that was against God’s word? What was it? Were you able to resist this temptation? If you didn’t resist the temptation, how did you obtain forgiveness? Thank God now for His forgiveness that is new every morning.

Moses’ anger burned when he came down the mountain and saw what the people were doing. He threw the tablets of the Lord out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. Later Moses asked God to forgive the people’s sins. (Exodus 32)

Reading about Moses reminds me of playing Bible charades with my sixth grade Sunday school students years ago. Six of my students went outside the classroom door to discuss what Bible story they were going to act out for the other students. A few minutes later they walked in, put five chairs into a circle and five of the students knelt down on the floor and acted like they were worshipping the center of the chairs. One student stood near the door. He placed a chair about six feet from the circle of chairs. He stood on the chair, and looked down at the people who were

kneeling. He looked angry as he watched them. Then he pretended to throw something down on the ground. The people looked up, saw him and looked afraid.

Of course, my creative students were acting out the story of Moses coming down the mountain with the Ten Commandments! Charades is a wonderful way to help students comprehend Bible stories and help them apply the story to their life. After we acted out the story the students and I discussed why Moses was angry. We discussed the difference between righteous anger and sinful anger. We discussed what it means to worship other gods. And we discussed the forgiveness that is ours through Christ.

Sometimes we have opportunities to share our faith in Christ with our children, grandchildren, and Sunday school students. And at other times God opens doors for us to share our faith as we build relationships with those in our communities.

In Luke 24, some disciples walked with Christ to Emmaus after the resurrection. They were kept from recognizing Him for a time. Later when they ate a meal together Jesus broke the bread. That was when they recognized Him. Afterward, they said, “**Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?**” (Luke 24:32b)

Do your hearts burn within you to share Christ with those who do not know Him? I pray that they do. If not, pray and ask the Lord to give you a heart that burns to reach the lost with the Gospel—and to those who are struggling with abortion, end-of-life, or other life issue decisions. Tell them about the light of the world—Jesus our Savior and Lord. “**I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness**” (John 12:46).

Bringing Good News to Life in Green Bay, Wisconsin!

Bringing Good News to Life was the theme as over 200 Lutherans gathered, July 23-24, from across the United States and Canada, for the national conference of Lutherans For Life (LFL).

In her welcoming message to conference attendees, President Diane Schroeder said that someday the “horror of abortion will end in our country ... because God is in charge and abortion grieves Him greatly ... He has given us the calling to defend His precious children—the unborn, handicapped, and the elderly.

Let us not shrink from that calling ... planning and working to carry the torch of life into the future until the victory is finally won.” Mrs. Schroeder said those involved in Lutherans For Life need to be a people of prayer; instructing chil-

dren, nieces, nephews, and more, training them for work in the prolife movement; helping congregations become more active; and to show we are more than an anti-abortion group—that we are FOR LIFE—by speaking the truth in love and showing compassion toward women and men struggling with life issues such as abortion.

Wesley J. Smith, noted author and bioethicist, gave a wide-ranging Friday-night keynote address on the theme *The Need For Good News: The Death Culture and Ways to Fight It*.

Mr. Smith stressed the need to con-

trast the culture of life with the culture of death. He said the culture of death is “very powerful and wants us to believe that being a human being doesn’t matter ... and that is very dangerous.” He said much of society is all about eliminating suffering at all costs, which has led to support for abortion, assisted suicide, and euthanasia, yet “love is a word you don’t often see the other side use too often ... eliminating suffering quickly morphs into eliminating the sufferer.”

To counteract the culture of death, Smith said we need to offer both hope and facts because “the facts are on our side.” He said, “when an embryo or fe-

tus is called ‘not human’ it is not rational!” He warned of Personhood Theory that sets arbitrary guidelines for who is and who is not a “person.” In reality, he said, “Personhood Theory tells us who we can kill and get a good



night’s sleep.”

Saturday morning included plenary addresses from Dr. Jeff Gibbs (Professor of New Testament at Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri) on *Bringing Good News to Life in the Church*; Alan Shleman (Stand to Reason) on *Bringing Good News to Life in the Culture*; and Wesley J. Smith on *Talking Human Rights: The Good News Delivered in a Way a Secular World Can Understand*.

Workshops, led by Renee Gibbs, Anthony Horvath, Kim Ketola, Dr. Ryan C. MacPherson, Alan Shleman, and Rev. Dr. Kevin Voss, focused on different aspects of *Bringing Good News to Life*.

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, LFL executive director, in his opening worship sermon, focused on the conference theme, based on Acts 17. He said, "Paul loved the Good News ... he desperately wanted his fellow Jews to know that Jesus Christ was the Messiah ... we too have been given the Good News ... Lutherans For Life understands that this Good News is Good News FOR LIFE—a message tailor-made for the issues of life ... when you mess with life you are messing with the Author, and Creator, and Redeemer of life ... We are compelled to speak ... We live in a society that desperately needs to value life."

The 2011 National Conference has been set for August 5-6 in Dallas, Texas, under the theme *Adopted in Christ*.



LFL Conference CDs Available!



Bring Good News to Life anytime with CDs from the 2010 National LFL Conference!

Kay L. Meyer—LFL Volunteers Bring Good New to Life/Fund Raising

Opening Worship

Wesley J. Smith—The Death Culture and Ways To Fight It

Renee Gibbs—Panel of Young Thinkers Sessions 1 & 2

Rev. Dr. Jeff Gibbs—Plenary 1

Alan Shleman—Plenary 2

Wesley J. Smith—Plenary 3

Anthony Horvath—Biblical Manhood

Kim Ketola—Biblical Womanhood

Ryan C. MacPherson, Ph.D.—Life in Defense of Marriage

Alan Shlemon—Making Abortion Unthinkable

Rev. Dr. Kevin Voss—Defending Adult Stem Cell Research

All CDs are \$9.00; complete CD Set (all recorded sessions) \$85.00

Go to the LFL website to download an order form or contact AMOT Tapes at PO Box 167, Wonder Lake, IL 60097; 815.728.1281; www.amottapes.com.

LFL Speakers Bureau

Do you need a speaker? Check out the Speakers Bureau page at the LFL website to find out more!

A variety of formats are available from a single presentation or sermon to a multi-day series of workshops.

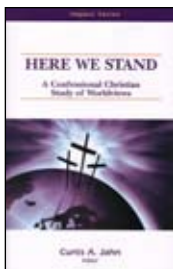


Staff speaker: James I. Lamb

Affiliated speakers:

Jean Amundson
Linda D. Bartlett
Paul M. Clark
Connie Davis
Daniel M. Domke
John Eidsmoe
Peter B. Greenspan
Anthony Horvath
Kimberly Ketola
Sheila Luck
Ryan C. MacPherson
Betty McGuire
Allen Quist
Russell E. Saltzman
Alvin J. Schmidt
Carl F. Schroeder
Diane E. Schroeder
Ed Szeto

Booknote! Several LFL Speakers Bureau members have contributed to an excellent new book published by Northwestern Publishing House. It's called *Here We Stand – Confessional Christian Study of Worldviews*, edited by Curtis A. Jahn. Contributors include John Eidsmoe, Ryan Cameron MacPherson, Allan Quist, and Alvin J. Schmidt.



You Can Make a Difference For Life!

Please call (515.441.6571) or e-mail (kmeyer@lutheransforlife.org) if you would like to learn more about any of these giving options.



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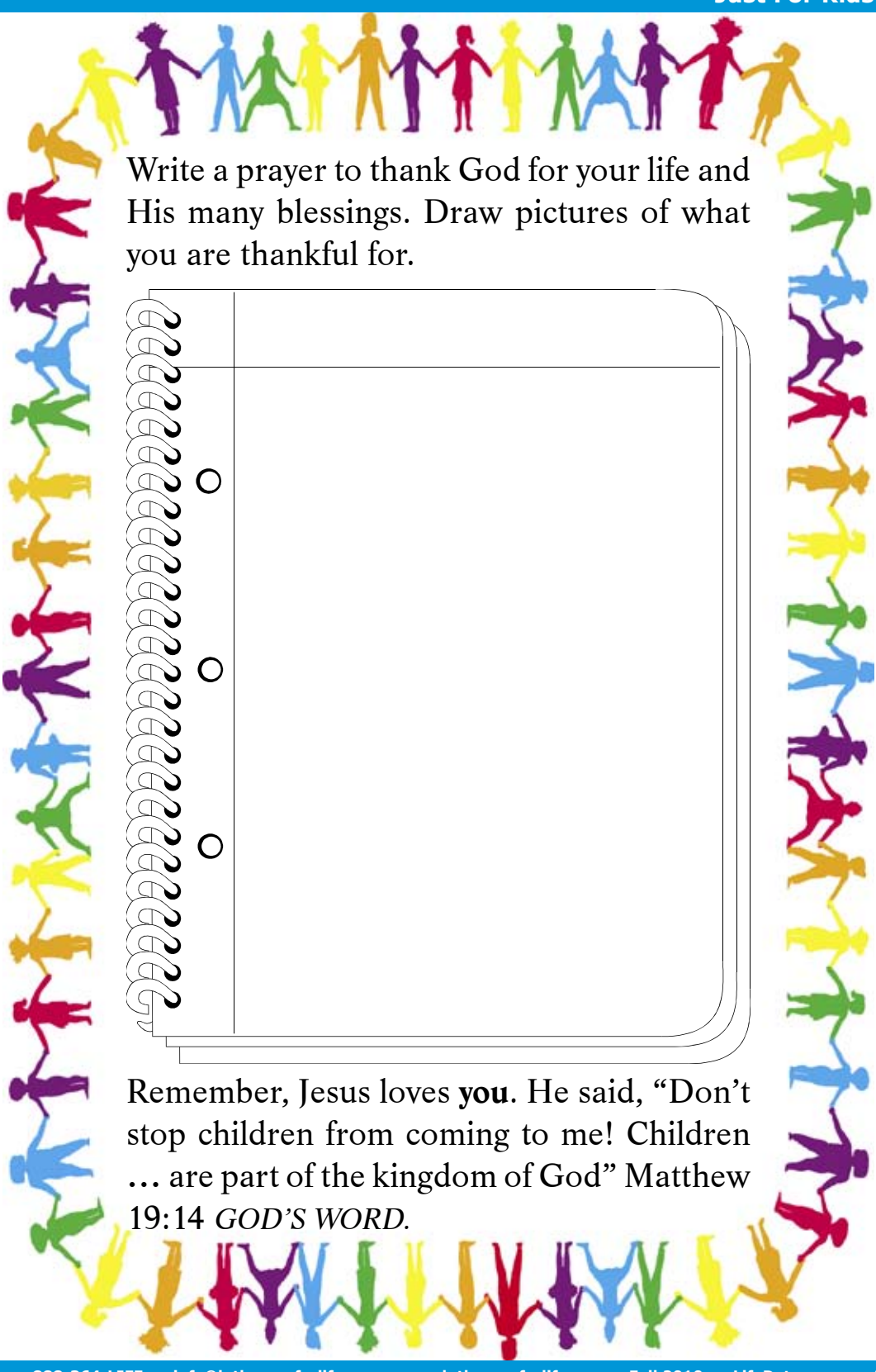
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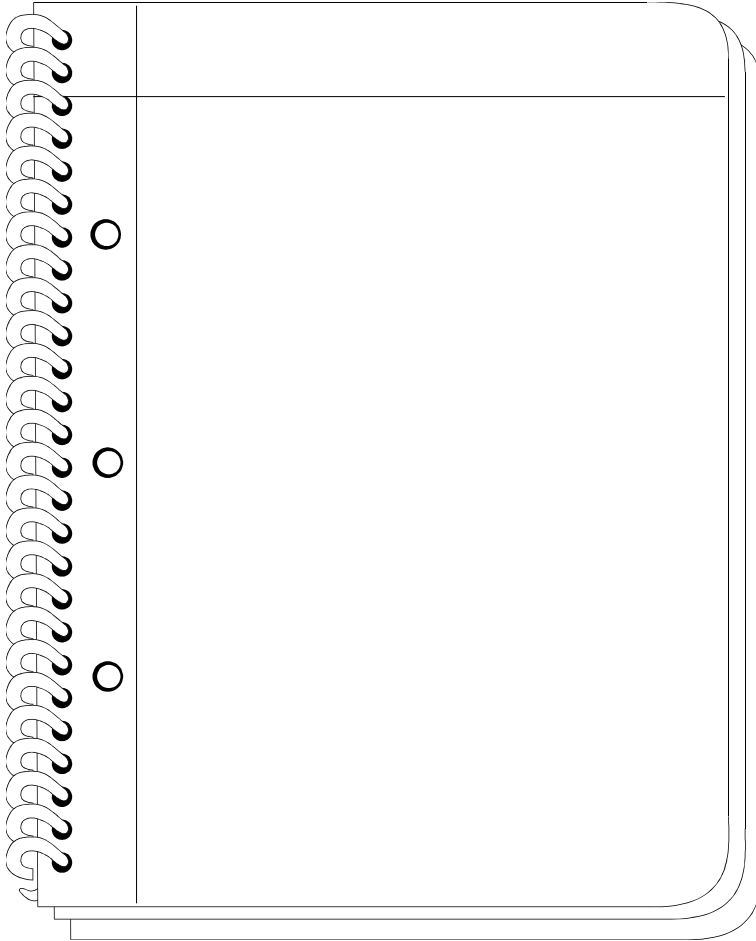


If you are a federal employee or member of the US military

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Write a prayer to thank God for your life and His many blessings. Draw pictures of what you are thankful for.



Remember, Jesus loves **you**. He said, “Don’t stop children from coming to me! Children ... are part of the kingdom of God” Matthew 19:14 *GOD’S WORD*.

Life Thoughts in the Church Year are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life. **Life Thoughts** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*.

October 3 – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Habakkuk complained about the seeming indifference of God to violence and iniquity and destruction. The “bad guys” were winning—“The wicked surround the righteous” (1:4). We fellow complainers can identify with Habakkuk. God did not explain Himself to Habakkuk and we should not expect to be treated any differently. God’s answer is sufficient both then and now, “The righteous shall live by his faith” (2:4b).

October 10 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost – It is good to be faithful to Christ and His will and to endure whatever may come our way because of it. It is even better to know that Christ is faithful to us even when we are faithless (2 Timothy 2:13). What a powerful message for sinners! What an especially powerful message for those who have sinned against life.

October 17 – Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost – Abortion is the greatest injustice of our time. Like the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8), many Christians pray for justice. Be assured, God will answer. Justice will come. In the meantime, we continue to pray persistently and live faithfully, boldly speaking against this injustice and compassionately reaching out in the name of Jesus to those damaged by it.

October 24 – Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost – “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13b) is the cry of someone crushed under the weight of unbearable sin

and knowing he can do nothing about it. “Justified” (14) is the pronouncement of the one who bore the unbearable weight of all sin for all sinners. God’s justice satisfied by God on a cross. The repentant, helpless sinner exalted and declared holy. No sin is heavy enough to hold down the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

October 31 – Reformation Day – The truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ frees us (John 8:36). It frees us so we need not turn to sin to solve our problems. It frees us from enslavement to sin when we do.

November 7 – All Saints Day (observed) – We see saints in heaven standing around the throne (Revelation 7:9) and saints next to us sitting in the pews. We see those purified by the blood of the Lamb (7:14). May we strive to live as His saints valuing the lives of our fellow saints and valuing the lives of those God desires to call as His saints.

November 14 – Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost – So often death and evil seem victorious. Not so! Christ has won the victory and, when He returns, death and evil will be vanquished. We will

“leap like calves from the stall” (Malachi 4:1-3). In the mean time, He calls us to be obedient to His commands so that we might avoid the pitfalls of sin (4:4).

November 21 – Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost – A bloodied cross seems an unlikely source of peace (Colossians 1:20). But the peace purchased through the cross is peace with God. No circumstance, no pain or suffering, no calamity or illness can rob you of this peace. It is the perfect peace for imperfect people struggling with the issues of life.

November 28 – First Sunday of Advent



– The infirm, the unborn, embryos—these, too, are neighbors to be loved (Romans 13:9). We who await the coming of our Savior are compelled to love those for whom He comes.

December 5 – Second Sunday of Advent

– Preparing the way for the advent of Jesus calls for repentance (Matthew 3:1-12). That needs to start with our own hearts. We repent of our sinfulness, our indifference to the suffering of others, our failure to speak for those who cannot speak, our failure to love the “unlovable.” Then, we humbly receive our Savior and the forgiveness He brings. Then, we reach out to others that they too might be called to repentance and eternal life.

December 12 – Third Sunday of Advent

– Who is the greatest member of your congregation? He or she would be the least among you, the one most vulnerable and in need. The least in the Kingdom is greater than John the Baptist! (Matthew 11:11) We prepare to receive a Savior who came in great humility to serve the least.

December 19 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

– Joseph was a “just man” and handled this

unplanned pregnancy in an honorable way (Matthew 1:18-25). “Easy enough,” you might say, “when he’s got an angel speaking to him.” But God speaking to us through His holy Word is no less powerful. When faced with such situations, we have the promises of God’s Word to guide our choices and decisions to honorable conclusions. We have the assurances of God’s love in this baby whose birth we prepare to celebrate.

December 26 – First Sunday after Christmas

– Two great tragedies are seen in today’s Gospel (Matthew 2:13-23)—the slaughter of little babies and the overwhelming grief of their mothers. Two great tragedies are seen in our society—the slaughter of little babies in abortion and the overwhelming grief of their mothers when the reality of their “choice” strikes their hearts. One great hope is seen in today’s Gospel—Jesus escapes Herod’s sword to shed His blood upon a cross. He is the hope for those who grieve. Here is the reason we strive to end abortion.



Life Thoughts
are online at:
www.lutheransforlife.org



Life News

monthly bulletin inserts



Life News bulletin inserts help keep your congregation informed on life issues every month! **To subscribe call 888-364-LIFE. \$5.00 per 100 copies/per month.**

There is Hope in Jesus—for ALL of Us

by Diane E. Schroeder



My friend John and his young son, Joey, were fishing at a local pond. As they sat there quietly enjoying the summer sunshine and conversation, Joey suddenly yelled, “I got one.” and began reeling in his line and bobber. John, expecting to find a bluegill on the end of the line, was disappointed to find that Joey had hooked a piece of garbage, a plastic bag. But they hauled it in anyhow, intending to throw it in a nearby garbage can. To their surprise, when they opened the bag, there was a bottle in it with a note. What could this be? Excitedly, the father and son pull out the bottle and read this letter.

Dear Baby Edgar,

I fell in love with your father the absolute second I saw him. He was the most beautiful man I had ever seen. I'm telling you this first because I want you to know that we loved each other (or rather, I loved him). It didn't matter to me that he already had two kids and was married to someone else because I loved him so much and if I had it to do all over again the only thing I'd change would be the abortion. I wanted to have you the second I found out I was pregnant. It was your father that made me change my mind. He kept claiming that he didn't love his wife and that he really loved us. When I saw how much pain he was in because he had to tell his wife about you, I felt like I was dying inside. I knew that I had to give you up through abortion because I couldn't hurt the one I loved so much. I had the abortion so Daddy

could tell his wife and leave her with dignity instead of just saying he had an affair. I regret it because he's the one who so thoughtlessly hurts me now. He didn't want to leave his wife for anything. I'm seeing a therapist now, Baby Edgar, to learn to forgive myself for what I so needlessly did to you. I wish that you were still in me—you'd be 5 and half months old and I'd be getting ready to have you. I love you, Baby Edgar, and I'll never forget you for as long as I live. Sorry to say that I don't think your Daddy cares about us anymore. But I hope someday you and God forgive me enough for what I've done and maybe I'll see you in heaven. I love you, Edgar,

Mom

The despair and grief expressed by this unknown woman is manifested over and over again in the lives of the people connected to the more than 50 million abortions that have taken place in our country. Many of these people are in our churches, neighborhoods, and schools. They are our relatives and friends. Forty-three percent of women who have abortions self-identify themselves as Protestant, 27 percent as Roman Catholic. At current rates, one-third of all American women will have abortions (according to the Alan Guttmacher Institute). These grieving individuals have a desperate need to feel forgiven by a God that loves them and does forgive them, and then to forgive themselves. Jesus is the only hope for their situations. Scripture tells us this in Romans 5:8: **“God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us”** (NIV). A good friend of mine, Jeanne, who has an abortion in her past said, “I needed to own what the Bible and what God told

me—that I was forgiven. So I took that and I started believing that I was now walking in the joy of being forgiven and not the shame and guilt of the abortion.” Jesus is the way to Life. Isn’t it the same for all of us sinners? All of us are filled with regrets and grief over past sins. They may not be an abortion, but all of us are guilty of sin. Like Jeanne we walk in the joy of being forgiven.

The Mom in the above story did not know the forgiveness available to her through the blood of Christ. What are you doing within your church and community to help those people overcome by the sin of a past abortion? Do you put out brochures from LFL’s, **Word of Hope** post abortion ministry? Do you encourage your pastor to preach about abortion and the forgiveness already given to fellow church members sitting in your pews? Do you speak with compassion to others about the pressures of women and men in unplanned pregnancy? Do you encourage support for your local crisis pregnancy center? Do you truly understand that abortion is a life-altering event that robs not only life from a child, but also life from everyone involved?

A woman wrote LFL: “Many years ago when I was young and naïve, I made the horrible decision to have an abortion. I have lived with ‘mourning and great weeping’ ever since. God is good, I know, because of what Jesus did, I have forgiveness. But there is still ‘weeping and mourning.’ Please don’t be stingy with God’s grace.”

What a kingdom opportunity for us to proclaim to our church and society that the pain and grief caused by abortion can be taken away. Proclaim the good news of forgiveness in your words and actions. There is Hope in Jesus the Light of Life for all of us!



Our Mission ... Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same.

Our Philosophy ... Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God’s Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give witness, from a biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

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