

# LifeDate

Spring 2013



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

**Speak Up!**



**For Life!**

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Lutherans  
For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life.

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## Compelled to Speak



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Someone took me to task once for using the word “slaughter” to describe abortion. “Too strong,” they said. I disagreed then and I still do. Dictionaries define it as stronger than killing, such as, “The *brutal killing* of a person or *large numbers* of people.” That’s abortion.

**Brutal:** little bodies shredded through suction tubes, dismembered with curettes, or ripped apart by forceps.

**Large numbers:** over three thousand every day in the U.S. alone.

The Bible uses words that also imply something stronger than killing. A word sometimes translated “slaughter” is used when Jezebel kills the prophets of the Lord (1 Kings 18:13) or when Levi and Simeon kill the Shechemites (Genesis 34:26). The word used when Herod ordered the killing of the Bethlehem babies is often translated “slew.”

But in using the above arguments to defend myself, I also admonish myself, for if abortion is slaughter, am I doing enough to stop it? Seeing abortion as slaughter raises the issue way above something we should speak about to something God compels us to speak about and act upon. The following verse does not appear to me as a suggestion.

**“Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, ‘Behold, we did not know this,’ does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?”** (Proverbs 24:11-12)

Those are strong words, guilt producing words. So lest we despair over them, we need to read of another slaughter.

**“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth”** (Isaiah 53:6-7).

Oppressed and afflicted with our sinfulness and sin, Jesus, the Lamb of God, was slaughtered. Through faith in Him we have forgiveness of our sins, forgiveness for failing to grasp the slaughter-like nature of abortion, forgiveness for failing to speak and act. This, however, does not give us license to fail to speak and act. Indeed, now we can go back to the Proverbs verse with renewed motivation. For the Jesus who was slaughtered for us, was slaughtered for them too. Every human life is someone for whom Jesus shed His blood. Every human life is one He wants to call to faith in this redemptive event. This compels us to “rescue” and to “hold back.”

In writing this article, I admonished myself. Maybe you need the same admonishment and perhaps know of others that do as well. We need to keep being reminded that abortion is not just one of those things where we say, “Yeah, I really should do something about that.” God COMPELS us to do something about it for the sake of His slaughtered and resurrected Son.

Everyone can do something! For help in finding out what you can do, check out our *How You Can “Speak”* booklet (LFL100B) available at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org). (Let’s make it a required reading assignment!)



## Speak Up For Life with Gentleness and Respect

by Kay L. Meyer  
Director of Development



**W**hy should we speak up and promote God's word, the Gospel, and the life message to family, friends and those within the community? Why should we always be respectful and God pleasing as we speak up for life? God's Word tells us to, "**Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy**" (Proverbs 31:9). But God's Word also says, "**[I]n your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...**" (1 Peter 3:15).

**J**ust as in witnessing of Christ, sometimes there can be a fine line between being rude and abrasive when we speak up for Christ and being patient, kind, and caring as we speak up for Christ. So, let's speak up for life with gentleness and respect.

Certainly, we should always speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. And who is more in need of our help than innocent babies still in the womb? But, sometimes, the women are pressured into abortions by parents, boy-

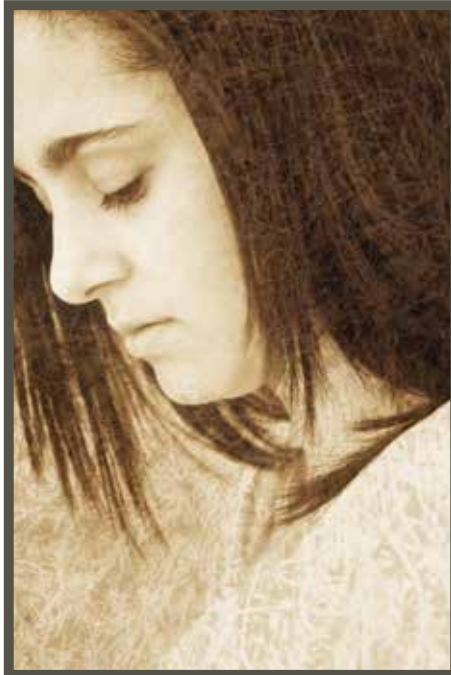
friends, and husbands.

Recently I was invited to join a group of Lutherans after church. I only knew two of the 10 people at the table and was mostly listening. I sat across the table from a woman I didn't know. She said, "I just get SO ANGRY when I hear that a woman is going to get an abortion or has had one. If I had the chance I would tell her what I think of her."

I responded, "I understand your anger and agree that abortion is wrong and sinful. But rather than getting angry at the woman who is contemplating an abortion or who has had one maybe we should find better ways to assist her and others like her. Many of the pregnant women are under tremendous pressure to have the abortion and need our help."

I tried to tell her about Our Lady's Inn ([www.ourladysinn.org](http://www.ourladysinn.org)), a shelter for homeless women who are pregnant. It offers them so much more than a place to stay—it helps them with jobs, learning life skills, and gets them connected to important resources.

She wasn't interested and went on ranting about women who have abortions. It was a very negative approach to speaking up for life. Her conversation, in my opinion, wasn't helpful. So my suggestion is to be careful how we speak up for life. Try to encourage others (Philippians 2:1-4) rather than to condemn them or show anger toward them.



Of course, we must speak up for life. Over the years as I've worked in the pro-life area, I have become acquainted with teens, young women, and older women who have had abortions and needed help.

Let me introduce you to three women:

**Jean** was a young mother of two children when she got pregnant again. Her husband told her he would leave her if she didn't get an abortion. He didn't want a third child. As a stay-at-home mom she knew it was wrong but after some time and much pressure from her husband she had the abortion. It forever changed her life and helped her later in life to become a pro-life leader.

Some years later her 16-year-old daughter became pregnant. Jean lovingly walked with her daughter through her pregnancy and as she released the baby for adoption. They established an open adoption and were able to build a wonderful relationship with the adoptive parents and the baby. Jean and her daughter are in regular contact with her.

Today Jean is a shining light for life in today's world! She always speaks up for life, but in a loving and caring way. For many years Jean volunteered for Lutherans For Life helping hundreds of people. She currently works part-time for Lutherans For Life as the regional director of Renewal for Life® (Texas).

Over my many years of working within the Church I've met many women who are now pro-life leaders and involved in lovingly speaking up for life. Jean is one of them.

For some years I worked at a residential home for women who were pregnant and had chosen life. **Sherry** (not her real name) was 17 years old when she arrived. The home required that the residents attend a weekly Bible study and become

actively involved in spiritual life activities. I led these activities. Sherry was active and involved during her pregnancy. She decided to release her baby for adoption. A few days after the baby was born, she came to the Bible study crying. She had released the baby the day before into the hands of loving adoptive parents. She showed us a picture. It was heartbreaking to see her pain, but she knew she had done the right thing for her child.

**Tonya** (not her real name) was 16 years old when she came to live with us. Her mother had tried to force her to have an abortion. She refused. Because she refused, her mother kicked her out of their home. For awhile she stayed with other relatives and later with some friends, but eventually she found herself pregnant and homeless. At the time she came to us she was already eight months pregnant.

I heard this type of story over and over. "My mom wanted me to have an abortion and when I wouldn't, she made me leave. She thought that would force me to have the abortion." "My mom and stepfather didn't want to be embarrassed and told me I could no longer live with them." "My boyfriend didn't want the baby and wanted me to have an abortion. He put a lot of pressure on me to have an abortion. Finally I decided to leave him and came to live here."

And the list of those who needed help and received it goes on.



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## Time to Speak



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

My dad once said, “If you have nothing to say, don’t prove it by talking!” Good advice for politicians! Okay, and for us pastors. But if you do have something to say, something positive and powerful, something life affirming and life changing then it is no time for silence. It is time to speak!

### Time to Speak in the Church

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the most positive, powerful, life-affirming, and life-changing message in the universe. The Gospel speaks directly to these issues of life and death. The Gospel, in the broad sense, speaks of what God does that gives value to human life. It may seem backward, but when it comes to speaking up for the sanctity of human life in the Church and convincing others to do the same, we need to start with the Gospel, not the prohibitions of the law. Only when we understand the value that God gives to life will we be able to realize fully the weight of the law against harming human life.

Take abortion as an example. From a pagan perspective, that which is in the womb is *something*. From a moral perspective, it is *someone*. But from a Christian perspective, it raises that which is in the womb is *someone created by God, someone for whom Jesus died, and someone the Spirit desires to call into eternity.*

The same could be said of the embryo in the Petri dish or the elderly in the nursing home.

When confronting Goliath, David understood what was at stake. Goliath defied Israel, “**I defy the ranks of Israel this day**” (1 Samuel 17:10b). But David said, “**I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.**” (17:45b). “Whom” here is singular and thus refers to God. David understood that when you defied God’s armies, you defied God. So it is with life. Defy life and you defy the

Author, Redeemer and Sanctifier of life.

In our congregations, then, we do not speak up for life because we live in a society that doesn’t, but because we serve a God who does. We do not speak up for life because life is precious, but because it is precious to God. This makes the life arena a biblical and theological arena and not a moral or political one; and this is why we are compelled to speak in our churches.



### How to Speak in the Church

Whenever possible on his missionary journeys, Paul went to a synagogue. He wanted his fellow Jews to believe in Jesus as their Savior from sin. How did he go about this? In Thessalonica he “**reasoned with them from the Scriptures**” (Acts 17:2b). When it comes to the value of human life, we also reason from Scripture. Scripture attests to the Creator of Life (Psalm 139:13-14) and to the price to redeem life (Acts 20:28) and to God’s desire

to call every human life (1 Timothy 2:4). Such reasoning does not call for anger or a judgmental attitude. It calls for speaking truth in love so we can grow up in unity in Christ (Ephesians 4:15). The Church does not grow in unity by ignoring controversial truths in order to “get along,” but by discussing them reasonably with one another based on the Word of God.

An understanding of the theological nature of the life issues compels us to speak of them in the Church. The truth compels us to label assaults on life and the Lord of Life for what they are—sin. Society conditions us not to call wrong things wrong. Indeed the push is there to call wrong things right. This influences the body of Christ. Such influence needs to be countered in our churches. No one will be calling wrong things wrong if the Church stops doing so.

But the reason we call wrong things wrong is not to shake the fist of indignation but so we can share what God, in Christ, has done about wrong things. When the magnitude of a sin against life strikes the human heart, it crushes it in a way few sins can. Those struck by such guilt need to hear the Gospel spoken and applied to that sin.

I sometimes hear pastors say, “I don’t preach on abortion because there might be a woman out there who has had one. I do not want to offend her.” I understand the pastoral concern. But is it not a much greater offense to have what such women desperately need to hear spoken to their hearts—the objective, blood-bought cleansing of sin—and then not speak it?

### Time to Speak in Society

But the Church needs to do more than guard itself against the influence of society. It must reverse the flow of influence. Jesus, the Light of the World, calls *us* to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14)

and the salt of the earth (5:13). He calls us to expose the works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11) and to proclaim the Gospel to the whole of creation (Mark 16:15). Like the value God gives to human life, this, too, elevates the life issues far above the political. It makes them opportunities of influence and harvest fields for the Gospel.

### How to Speak in Society

In Athens, Paul also proclaimed the resurrected Jesus as the Savior from sin. But he did not reason with the Athenians from the Scriptures. Rather he started where they were at. He reasoned with them about their “unknown god” (Acts 17:23). He did not quote Bible passages. In fact, he quoted their own poets (17:28). But he did proclaim Bible truths and eventually pointed them to Jesus. Some who heard mocked him (17:32), but others were touched by the Spirit and believed (17:34).

We do not gain by engaging society regarding the life issues with angry and judgmental rhetoric and “Bible thumping.” But we can engage people starting where they are at. After all, we have reason, logic, science, and biology all on our side! Our objective is not to win the debate but to share Jesus! Debate may give us opportunity to do so. Our words and deeds of compassion as we reach out to those struggling with these difficult issues will also give us opportunity to do so. Some may mock us, but the Spirit will be at work and others may very well not only come to understand the value of human life, but the source of that value in our Triune God. When individuals in society are changed, society will change.

“If you don’t have anything to say, don’t prove it by talking.” But if you do have something to say that changes hearts and mind and lives, it is no time for silence. It is time to speak!

## 10 Very Surprising Quotes from Abortion Doctors

by Lauren Enriquez



They're threatened by informed consent. They're traumatized by the limp body parts they look at every day. They're torn by the contradiction that they became doctors to preserve life but use their profession to end it. Here are some eye-opening confessions from current and former abortionists.

"They [the women] are never allowed to look at the ultrasound because we knew that if they so much as heard the heart beat, they wouldn't want to have an abortion." *Dr. Randall, former abortionist*

"Even now I feel a little peculiar about it, because as a physician I was trained to conserve life, and here I am destroying it." *Dr. Benjamin Kalish, abortionist*

"You have to become a bit schizophrenic. In one room, you encourage the patient that the slight irregularity in the fetal heart is not important, that she is going to have a fine, healthy baby. Then, in the next room you assure another woman, on whom you just did a saline abortion, that it is a good

thing that the heartbeat is already irregular ... she has nothing to worry about, she will NOT have a live baby ... All of a sudden one noticed that at the time of the saline infusion there was a lot of activity in the uterus. That's not fluid currents. That's obviously the fetus being distressed by swallowing the concentrated salt solution and kicking violently and that's to all intents and purposes, the death trauma ... somebody has to do it, and unfortunately we are the

executioners in this instance[.]"

*Dr. Szenes, abortionist*

"Telling those women their fetuses feel pain is heaping torment upon torment. These women have real pain. They did not come to this decision easily. Creating another barrier for them to get the medical care they need is really unfair."

*Abortionist Dave Turok*

"This is why I hate overuse of forceps—things tear. There are only two kinds of doctors who have never perforated a uterus, those that lie and those who don't do abortions." *Anonymous Abortionist*

"I got to where I couldn't stand to look at the little bodies anymore." *Dr. Beverly McMillan, former abortionist*





“I think in many ways I’ve been lucky to have been part of this. If I hadn’t gotten involved, I would have gone through life probably being perfectly satisfied to go to the medical society parties and it would have been very, very dull. I would have been bored silly.” *Dr. Jane Hodgson, late abortionist*

“Sorrow, quite apart from the sense of shame, is exhibited in some way by virtually every woman for whom I performed an abortion, and that’s 20,000 as of 1995. The sorrow is revealed by the fact that most women cry at some point during the experience ... The grieving process may last from several days to several years ... Grief is sometimes delayed ... The grief may lie sublimated and dormant for years.” *Dr. Susan Poppema, abortionist*

“If I see a case ... after twenty weeks, where it frankly is a child to me, I really agonize over it because the potential is so imminently there ... On the other hand, I have another position, which I think is superior in the hierarchy of questions, and that is ‘who owns this child?’ It’s got to be the mother.” *Dr. James MacMahon, abortionist*

“We know that it’s killing, but the state permits killing under certain circumstances.” *Dr. Neville Sender, abortionist*

*Lauren Enriquez is a legislative associate for Texas Right to Life and a graduate of Ave Maria University. From Live Action News, 1/5/13. Used by permission.*

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## Men and Their Identity

by Linda D. Bartlett  
[www.titus2-4life.org](http://www.titus2-4life.org)



It has become tradition for me to read to my husband while he is driving.

For a recent journey to the southwest, I selected *The Book of Man: Readings on the Path to Manhood* by William J. Bennett. It was good to return to his treasure trove of writings gleaned from thinkers such as Alexis de Tocqueville, Teddy Roosevelt, Booker T. Washington, and David Aikman on such topics as war, politics, women and family, faith, and work.

As a wife and mother of sons, I've always been fascinated by the gender opposite mine. I want to know what they think. What makes them tick. This desire comes naturally to me as

the one God called to “complete” or compliment the male being. In my vocation as a “helper,” I am inspired to daily bring out the best in any male person whose life intersects mine. How can I compliment or be of help if I haven't taken the time to study and learn what men are all about?

If you've been reading my blog or have attended any Titus 2 Retreats, you'll know I'm on a quest to help myself and others better appreciate biblical manhood and womanhood. Foundational to all discussions on this matter is our identity. How we define ourselves matters. How we see ourselves affects our behavior and choices. If we call ourselves people of God

in Christ Jesus, then we are compelled to live as sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:16-18)

How does a son of God live? He is called to daily live out his male vocation in a sanctified or holy way. In other words, he is not called to obsess on himself or his sensuality, but to do all that he does—in married or unmarried life—in the light of what Christ has done for him and to God's glory. He is called to work, serve, protect, teach, and relate to other men and women in ways that honor his Creator and Redeemer.

How a man defines himself matters. How he sees himself matters. What he does as a man matters. God's Word in 1



Thessalonians 4 instructs man to live a life pleasing to the Creator. It is the will of God and for a man's sanctification (holiness) that he controls his own body and abstains from what is unholy.

God's gift of sexuality, or anything having to do with intimacy and procreation, is for use within the parameters of marriage. Sexuality has very real connections with fatherhood, children and family.

But, what if (as so often happens in this present culture) a man identifies himself as a sexual being? What will become of him if he can't live out his sexuality? Will he simply wilt away into a pitiful heap useful for no good purpose? Ah, but let us expose the lies and deception. Man is more than a sexual being. He is a human being. A male human being. Our gender—male or female—is to be lived every day, not reserved for marriage. To be a

man is, literally, a vocation. To be a good steward who honors God's created order is a vocation. The culture is powerfully affected—for generations to come—by the way a man daily chooses to think, to serve, to work.

What is the value of work in a man's life? Indeed, God created man to be a worker; a good steward of the land, fully engaged in honest and, thus, joyful labor. Work in a sin-filled world isn't easy. It can be frustrating, ordinary, or tiresome. Nevertheless, work for a man is more than what he does. Work for a man satisfies his most inner yearnings for order, stability, and significance.

In the prologue to his section on "Man at Work," William Bennett writes this:

"Despite what popular culture might convey, we know there is something intrinsically satisfying in being able to plant your own garden, repair your own house, and fix your own car. Recently, a friend of mine was recovering from life-threatening cancer. His doctor told him that he could not work, exercise, or enjoy the other fruits of life—all things that men pride themselves on. I asked him what hurts the most to be without. 'Work,' he said. 'I don't feel like a man. Work has more to do with me being a man than sex or muscle.'"

God calls us to a life of holiness in our vocations as male or female. Whether we are healthy or not so healthy. Strikingly handsome or plain. Married or unmarried. In work or in play. In service or at rest. Not to our glory, but His. Sensuality may be fleeting; something for this earth. But, holiness leads to another life and the promise can be trusted. A son of God lives forever.

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**Life Quotes** are quotations on life issues for use in weekly congregational bulletins (or monthly newsletter). **Life Quotes** are available at the LFL website and are included in each week's Life Notes.

**Life Thoughts in the Church Year** are based on the appointed readings for the week. You can find them on pages 28-29, the LFL website, and in **Life Notes**.

## Reflections from Birth Mothers



by Wanda Pritzel

*This article was adapted from the Lutheran Family Service of Iowa fall 2012 newsletter. It offers a unique perspective that we thought was well worth sharing.*

For a while now, we at Lutheran Family Service of Iowa have been thinking and talking about ways to be more intentional and active in our support to birth mothers following their adoption placement. But after the placement, when things seem to be going well, it has been easy for us to go on with busy work schedules and attend to other people who need our attention. But we won't neglect them any more. Not after one incredible weekend last fall.

In October, we hosted "Rocks, Ripples & Reflections," a retreat for birth mothers who have placed their newborn children with adopting families. Held at Camp Okoboji, near Spirit Lake, Iowa, the retreat started on a Friday and finished on Sunday. Even though it has been several months since the retreat, I am amazed to find that conversations and memories from the weekend have been on my mind every day since. Not knowing exactly what to expect, as this was our first attempt at sponsoring such an event, I am pleased to report that it was all that we hoped

it would be: a weekend focused totally on birth mothers, full of relaxation, contemplation, fun, sharing, learning, praying, tears, laughter, and healing.

Each birth mother's personal story of unplanned pregnancy, delivery, and letting her infant go to adopting parents was moving for all of us—other birth mothers and staff alike. Some were recent (in the past year) and some were from previous generations (as far back as 1968). Each story had its own unique set of circumstances. Some of them were obviously painful to tell and, I will admit, painful to hear. Society, families, nurses, and social workers weren't always very kind to birth mothers in earlier days.



These women still bear the wounds from the actions and words of others which have not been spoken of or shared over the years. It was an honor to hear each

birth mother's story and to be a small part of their healing.

Pastor David Loeschen of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Denison, Iowa, led lessons throughout the weekend which focused our attention on the many ways that God cares for us. We talked about ways in which God has been with us and how we know that to be true. We explored how He has used events and unexpected directions in our lives to our good and to bring goodness into the lives of others. We identified ways in which God has been our Rock, and thought about other "rocks" whom He has placed in our lives just when we needed them most. Not all in attendance were church-going people.



What an opportunity to share the message of God's abiding presence and love! One young woman commented on the "rocks" conversations in her evaluation at the end of the retreat saying:

"The rock presentation got me thinking because it shows that you are not alone; you always have someone in your life that is always there."

For someone who has felt all alone so often in her life, this is a powerful message. She learned that God has and will continue to be with her—no matter what.

We hope to offer the retreat again, reaching more birth mothers in 2013. (If you know of a birth mother who would like to participate, please let me know.) We told the birth mothers that the retreat was funded by many Lutherans in Iowa who care about them. On the evaluation at the end of the retreat, one woman wanted to express her appreciation, so I will share with you what she wrote:

Thank all of them for thinking about us—the birth mothers who are easy to forget. People either think "how could they give up their child" or "that was a nice thing to do." People don't realize what a traumatic experience the birth mother goes through for the rest of their lives, they have given up a part of their heart. It is nice that these kind souls contributed to this retreat and support to the birth mothers. Thank you so much, you made a big difference and will not be forgotten.

*Wanda Pritzel is the acting executive director of Lutheran Family Service of Iowa. [www.lfsiowa.org](http://www.lfsiowa.org); [info@lfsiowa.org](mailto:info@lfsiowa.org); 515.573.3138*

## Get Involved Today!

As a Lutherans For Life supporter, you decide how to you can help! It might be through an **annual membership gift** or a **monthly or quarterly sponsor gift** (remember that gifts designated for membership are shared with state federations and local chapters—expanding the effectiveness of your gift).

**Abundant Life Giving Society members** help LFL with gifts of \$1000 or more annually.

**Volunteers** help by becoming involved in their federation and local chapter or by helping bring a Life Team to their congregation.



Your commitment and passion For Life is critically important! Because of you, LFL is impacting thousands of people annually through the Gospel of Christ. Call 888.364.LIFE or go to the LFL website to find out more and to help.

Here are a few more ways to help!

**Combined Federal Campaign** – the identification number for LFL is 11508;



**Automatic Bank Drafts; Employer Matching Gifts; Planned Gifts; Online Shopping Rebates through iGive.com.**



**Best Way to Order LFL Resources:**  
At [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040.  
Shipping/handling applies to all orders.  
Quantity pricing on select resources.

*Mark your calendar!*

## **2013 National Lutherans For Life Conference • November 8-9**

**Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
Urbandale, Iowa  
(Des Moines)**



**Our theme is L.I.F.E. • Living in Faith Everyday.**

**“And his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation” (Luke 1:50 ).**

How do we live out our biblically-based, For Life convictions in this culture? Our 2013 National Lutherans For Life Conference will help you do that as we focus on L.I.F.E.—Living in Faith Everyday.

Here are some of the wonderful speakers and worship leaders scheduled to join us in November:

- Steve Deace - Nationally syndicated radio talk show host
- Rev. Matt Harrison - President, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
- Linda Bartlett - Titus 2 for Life
- Jenny Farrell on post-abortion healing
- Rev. Peter Preus on dealing with suicide
- John Talley on religious freedom
- Laura Davis on L.I.F.E. with youth
- Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb on L.I.F.E. around the world

*Check the 2013 conference page at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org) for more details. Online registration is set to open in May.*

**Scientists from England have found unborn babies yawn in utero, according to research published in the November academic journal, *PLoS ONE*.** The study from Durham and Lancaster Universities involved 4D ultrasound images showing 15 healthy unborn babies yawning. The scans show a clear difference between “yawning” and “non-yawn mouth opening.” The frequency of yawning declined from 28-36 weeks gestation, suggesting the action may be linked to the maturing of the brain early in gestation—not lack of sleep. “The results of this study demonstrate that yawning can be observed in healthy fetuses and extends previous work on fetal yawning. Our longitudinal study shows that yawning declines with increasing fetal age,” explained the study’s lead researcher Dr. Nadja Reissland from Durham University’s Department of Psychology. ([www.mommyish.com](http://www.mommyish.com), 11/23/12; *CLR Life News*, 12/14/12)

**Deaf twin brothers were euthanized in Belgium after learning they were going blind.** Belgian doctors killed the 45-year-old twins, identified as Marc and Eddy Verbessem, after they sought assistance under the country’s euthanasia laws to end their lives. Neither of the men was terminally ill or suffering physical pain at the time of their deaths. Dr. David Dufour euthanized the men by lethal injection at Brussels University Hospital on December 14. Under Belgian law, euthanasia is permitted if a patient is suffering unbearable pain. The pair did not meet the criteria. It took the pair nearly two years to find an institution



willing to administer a lethal injection. Bioethicist Wesley J. Smith commented on the controversial joint euthanasia, “This is the simple logic of euthanasia consciousness. Once killing is seen as an answer to human suffering, the meaning of the term becomes very elastic and the killable caste, like the universe, never stops expanding.” (*National Post*, 1/14/13; *NRLC’s News Today*, [examiner.com](http://examiner.com), 1/15/13; *CLR Life News*, 1/16/13)

**Sadness, depression, fear of sterility, guilt, drug abuse and suicide are just some of the effects suffered by women who have abortions in Mexico City, according to the country’s most eminent newspaper, *El Universal*.** The newspaper ran an article openly acknowledging the psychological trauma associated with abortion on January 21. The article also spoke openly of the motives that often lead women to have their unborn children killed, describing various circumstances that lead to abortion: a woman is impregnated by her boyfriend, who then abandons her upon learning of the pregnancy; the child is the result of adultery and his mother wishes to hide it from her husband; a young student decides that a son or daughter will be inconvenient for her career aspirations. But “no matter how resolute and firm” the women might be, “the abortion causes them remorse, frustration, dissatisfaction,” gynecologist Mario Lucas told the newspaper. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 1/22/13)

Follow us on ...





# LifeMarks **NEW**

*The Catechism and the Value of Life*

"Very attractive and easy to understand."

"[C]atchy, succinct and with relevant messages. I know my seventh and eighth graders would relate."

On the Lord's Prayer LifeMark: "Very, very good ... will use that when teaching the Lord's Prayer."

"Wonderful, perfect for confirmation students."

**Baptism**  
*Life begins UNDER WATER!*

Most of your growth before birth took place in a "bag of waters" known as the "amniotic sac" filled with your quiescent, amniotic fluid. As you grew you did **COOL STUFF** as you floated around like an astronaut in space. You could:

- Do gymnastics
- Swim (a little more—like a fish)
- Tread water
- Kick your mom. (Not recommended after birth)
- Be safe and protected

Mom supplies your oxygen and other needs through the umbilical cord. Otherwise you would drown!

**Confession**  
*BIG SINS? Little sins? is there a difference? IN OUR EYES MAYBE, BUT NOT GOD'S*

But some sins are more difficult to deal with.

**ABORTION IS THAT KIND OF SIN.**

Imagine how you would feel if you accidentally started a fire and burned down your neighbor's garage. What if his dog died in the fire? His daughter? The guilt would be tremendous.

Now imagine making a choice that results in the death of your own son or daughter through abortion.

At first you might feel relief that the "problem" has been taken care of.

But the guilt will come sooner or later. It will be unbearable. That's why, many try to stuff it down deep inside. But it will come out.

**The Creed**

You are Special!  
Life is Special!

**WHY???**

Good looks?  
1000 friends on Facebook?  
Great abs?  
Sports hero?  
Math genius?  
Gamer extraordinaire?

**WRONG!**

Want to know the **REAL answer?**  
Turn this over!

**Sacrament of the Altar**  
*Life Can Be Good! You passed the test! You made the team! He smiled at you!*

**But Life Can Be Rotten**  
None of the above happen—ever!

**And Life Can Be REALLY Rotten**  
Someone you love dies  
Your parents divorce  
A friend gets cancer

**Where is God when life is rotten???**

Guess what? You can meet God! To find more, turn this over!

**The First Commandment**  
*Can death be a god? YES!*

When we turn to death to rescue us from our problems. That makes

**ABORTION and ASSISTED SUICIDE and EMBRYONIC STELL CELL RESEARCH IDOLATRY!**

Why? Because death becomes a god—the solution to an unplanned pregnancy, pain and suffering, and disease.

To find a much better answer, turn this over!

**The Sixth Commandment**  
*MARRIAGE is the place for SEX.*

Sex is a gift from God. (Genesis 1:27; 2:24-25) **Marriage** is a holy institution between a man and a woman reflecting Christ and His Church. (Ephesians 5:32) **Chastity** is the choice of **Champions** (those created, redeemed, and called by God). **That's your Chastity!** is also the positive choice champions make to honor God inside and outside of marriage.

Inside marriage = fulfilled to your spouse. Outside marriage = choosing to love and honor your future spouse.

"Hi! How can I love my future spouse?"

Turn this over to learn more about loving your future spouse!

**Prayers For Life based on The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father**  
We dare call You Father because You adopted us as Your children. (Galatians 4:4-7) Be with and bless all adoptive families.

**Hallowed be Your Name**  
May we keep your name holy by respecting the value You give to human life. (Psalm 8:4-5)

**Thy Kingdom Come**  
Give us your Holy Spirit that we might lead Godly lives and make Godly, life-affirming choices. (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

**Thy Will Be Done**  
Hinder the evil plans of the devil who seeks to profane Your gift of life. (Hebrews 2:14)

**LifeMarks** is a brand-new set of seven bookmarks designed to directly apply the Bible's teaching's on life as found in *Luther's Small Catechism*—and fit right into the catechism itself! This a wonderful new resource for confirmation, congregational, Sunday school, and home use! *Item LFL1632. \$0.25 per set.*



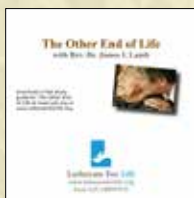
**Best Way to Order LFL Resources:**

At [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040.  
Shipping/handling applies to all orders.  
Quantity pricing on select resources.

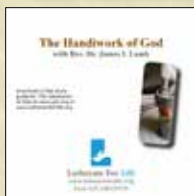
"These are very, very good ... I would think they would be very helpful for people to connect 'pro-life' with God's Word."



## New DVDs from The Equipping the Saints Series!



**The Other End of Life**, with Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, takes a look at end-of-life issues. Key Concept: God gives life value and purpose and decides the time of our death. Gospel Focus: Christ's victory over death and the grave makes death a gain and makes life meaningful. *Item LFL1409DVD. \$5.00 ea.*



**The Handiwork of God** shares how the value of human life comes from what God has done and continues to do! Life is His **handiwork**! He creates life with His hands. He redeemed life with His hands. He desires to call and hold each life in His hands. Understanding these answers gives us a positive, Trinitarian foundation for dealing with the life issues. *Item LFL1401DVD. \$5.00 ea.* A companion brochure is also available (*Item LFL1007T. \$0.50 ea.*)



These are wonderful resources for congregational, school, and home use!

Quantity discounts are available on select items.

**Note:** Free DVD study guides can be downloaded at both the CPH and LFL websites.

## Spanish/Russian Resources!

Lutherans For Life offers several resources in Spanish and Russian (funded by designated gifts)—and more are on the way!

### Newly in Spanish:

**Real Love/Real Life • Amor Real/Vida Real • Item LFL615T-S. \$1.00 ea.**

**God's Word for an Unplanned Pregnancy • La palabra de Dios para un embarazo no planeado • Item LFL912B-S. \$1.00 ea.**

**Why Not Just Live Together • ¿Por qué no simplemente vivir juntos? Item LFL607T-S. \$0.50 ea.**

**A Life Not Like Any Other • Una vida como ninguna otra • Item LFL1622-S. \$0.50 ea.**

**Is Abortion Allowed in Cases of Rape and Incest? • ¿Está permitido el aborto en caso de estupro o incesto? Item LFL132-S. \$0.50 ea.**

**Not Alone • No estás sola • Item LFL901B-sp. \$2.00 ea.**



**Russian: Abortion and the Message of the Church; Abortion – A Matter of the Heart; Called to Remember; The Secret Pain. Note:** Russian resources are available only as PDF downloads on the LFL website.



### Best Way to Order LFL Resources:

At [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040.  
Shipping/handling applies to all orders.  
Quantity pricing on select resources.

# Teaching For Life®

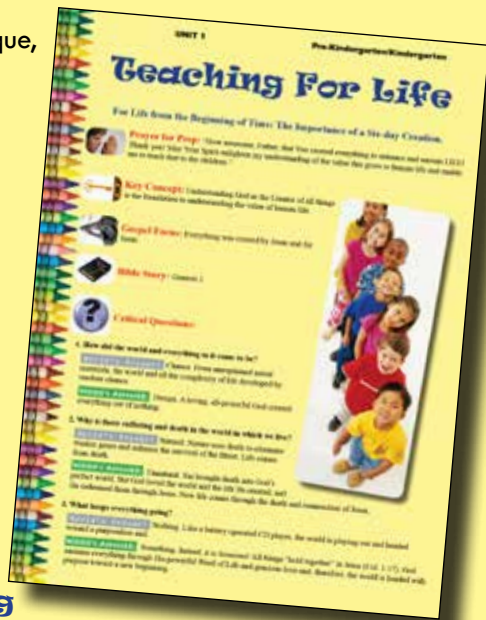
Order at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org).

**Teaching For Life®** is a unique, Gospel-centered, positive way to help Lutheran school teachers apply God's Word to the life issues!

**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](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)



Order LFL's **Teaching For Life®** at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)!

## 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 of 45 lesson plans and CD for all grade levels: Item LFL729C. \$199.99 ea.

**Teaching For Life®** offers 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.



Help apply God's Word to the life issues! Consider purchasing **Teaching For Life®** for your favorite teacher or school!

## Giving a Gift Annuity Can Benefit Others

by Jim Schroeder,  
Christian Estate  
Planning Counselor



**M**any friends of Lutherans For Life are using a gift annuity as a way of increasing their own retirement income and making a future gift to support the mission of Lutherans For Life. You probably know how a charitable gift annuity works. **You give cash or appreciated stock to establish your charitable gift annuity and you receive a fixed income stream for the rest of your life (or for two lives).** This arrangement benefits you in several ways, including tax relief. Lutherans For Life benefits because we receive a gift from you sometime in the future to help us carry out our mission.

Charitable gift annuities help both the donor and the organization the donor cares about. Some folks like them so well that they establish a new one every year.

**But did you know that you can give a charitable gift annuity to someone else?** For example, let's say your mother is 85 years old and lives on a fixed income. She could use some extra money to live on. So you make out a check for \$20,000 for a charitable gift annuity and we establish the annuity with your mother being the income recipient.

According to the current charitable gift annuity rates (age 85 single life payout rate of 7.8%), she would receive a monthly fixed annuity payment of \$130 for the rest of her life. Lutherans For Life would benefit from this thoughtful arrangement by receiving the remainder of the annuity principal at your mother's death.

Or, consider this scenario. You have two adult children and you want to supplement their retirement income. You establish a deferred payment charitable gift annuity with Lutherans For Life for each of them. At the outset, when you provide the initial funds, you determine when the annuity payments to your children will begin. It could begin at their age 65. They will receive the annuity payments for their life. Lutherans For Life again would benefit from this type of arrangement for your children by receiving the remaining principal of the charitable gift annuity at the death of your child.

**Can you give a charitable gift annuity to a non-family member?** Yes, indeed. In fact, some donors use these gift arrangements to benefit a treasured friend, a longtime employee, a revered teacher or pastor. What a wonderful way of telling someone you care by providing them with a new stream of retirement income. Charitable gift annuities can help just about anyone. And in all of these cases Lutherans For Life receives future blessings from you to carry out our important mission.

**If you would like to learn more about how a charitable gift annuity could work for you or for someone you care about contact me at [jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org) or call me at 515.490.7371.** I can help give you a personal written analysis of any charitable gift annuity idea. This would show the actual payments and tax advantages.

There is a very important point to remember in establishing a gift annuity for another person. There are limits on the amount that can be gifted to another person without triggering a gift tax. I am able to provide you the information that you will need to discuss this with your own tax advisors.



## Y4Life-We ARE the For Life Generation

by Laura Davis,  
director of Y4Life



What role do youth play in the For Life movement? Are they even engaged? What do they think about life issues? These are the questions I am often asked when I tell people about our new initiative, **Y4Life**. When I first started working at Lutherans For Life, I had these same questions. As I explored and

learned more, I saw what an impact our youth are having and how passionate they are about life.

Research has shown that my generation has developed

strong opinions on several of the life issues and these opinions demonstrate a growing momentum for our movement. Recent trends have shown that the upcoming generation is increasingly pro-life and is significantly more opposed to abortion than the generations before it. A national survey, commissioned by Students for Life of America and released last summer, found that 44 percent of respondents thought abortions should either be illegal or only legal in cases of rape, incest, or threats to the life of the mother.<sup>1</sup>

This supports previous reports that

teens are overwhelmingly pro-life, with one Gallup poll reporting that 33 percent think abortion should be illegal in all circumstances and 45 percent think that it should be legal in only a few circumstances.<sup>2</sup> Even those on the other side of the debate have noticed that our movement is getting younger, as commented on by former NARAL leader Nancy Keenan. Keenan commented on March for Life participants in 2010 by saying “There are so many of them, and they are so young.”<sup>3</sup>

The organization Students for Life

of America boldly proclaims “we are the pro-life generation.” If I had doubted it before, the 2013 March for Life proved to me that my generation,

Generation Y, has the passion and the drive to take our cause into the future.

This year, with the generous support of our donors, Lutherans For Life was able to sponsor five students to attend the 2013 March for Life and the Students for Life of America Conference for the first annual **Y4Life** program in Washington D.C. The goal of the program was to inspire and educate these students to make big changes For Life back home. I believe we certainly accomplished that goal. I spoke with the mother of one of our participants and she said that the trip has been the highlight of conversation



2013 Y4Life in Washington D.C. participants



since she returned and they are already planning ways to volunteer at local life-affirming ministries. But as much as I hope the trip inspired these students, I know that these students inspired me.

On our last night in Washington, I got out my camera and started filming the students, asking them, “why are you pro-life?” Their impromptu, unscripted answers were full of passion and excitement. In between heartfelt cries of, “we love babies,” one of the students shared her personal story of how she was almost aborted. Another pointed out that age should not be the basis of discrimination. Still another stated with intelligence and confidence that the only one who has the right to decide life or death is God, according to His plans. Hearing these fervent statements about life gave me even more assurance that we are on the right path to see abortion end in our lifetime.

The youth and young adults of today are ready and willing to be the voice for the voiceless. That is why the ministry of **Y4Life** is so important. Many have the passion and the determination and only need the knowledge, skills, and opportunity to have an amazing impact on their schools and communities. Equipped with the life-saving message of the Gospel, I have no doubt these students will be the generation that ends abortion.

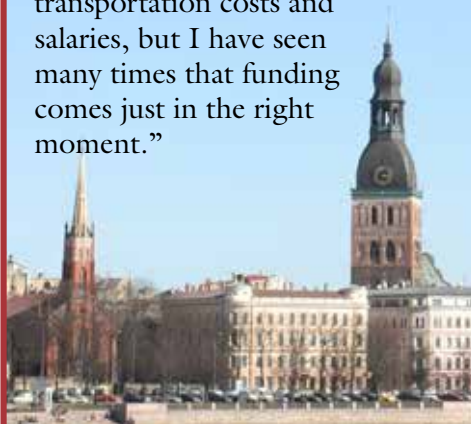
To learn more about **Y4Life** and to see the student interviews discussed above, visit the new **Y4Life** section of [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)!



## A Trip For Life Overseas—An Update from Jānis Diekonts in Latvia

(Also see *LifeDate* – Winter 2012.)

“We have just registered foundation ‘Nodibinājums Dzīvībai’ (Foundation For Life). That will give us legal status ... We have no special funding yet, but we are going fine. We have received help from God in various ways. Some congregations have paid for fuel. One of our congregation members took our car to service (he didn’t even tell us the cost—all I know is that the car was in very bad condition) and paid for mobile internet connection. So we don’t have to worry about these practical things. I have talked to more than 20 pastors, 30 congregation members and 150 students in November and December ... Now I am working on our new website. We plan to start over again in February, because I have exams in January and I have to be in “Luther’s academy” every day. Then we will need some money to cover transportation costs and salaries, but I have seen many times that funding comes just in the right moment.”



<sup>1</sup> [studentsforlife.org/2012/06/22/sfia-releases-poll-results-on-young-people-abortion-and-the-2012-election/](http://studentsforlife.org/2012/06/22/sfia-releases-poll-results-on-young-people-abortion-and-the-2012-election/)

<sup>2</sup> [www.gallup.com/poll/7969/current-teen-views-abortion.aspx](http://www.gallup.com/poll/7969/current-teen-views-abortion.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> [www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2010/04/15/remember-roe.html](http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2010/04/15/remember-roe.html)

## LFL—LUTHERANS For Life



by Scott Licht

You don't have to look very hard to see that the Lutheran landscape is changing, especially in the last five years. The fourth and fifth largest Lutheran church bodies (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ/North American Lutheran Church) in the United States weren't even in existence 15 years ago.

While Lutheran denominations differ on some specifics of doctrine, the mission of Lutherans For Life transcends those differences. One of the things which we will be continuing to focus on is reaching out to ALL Lutherans. After all, our mission statement is, "Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel motivated voices For Life." The For Life/Gospel-centered message of life needs to be heard and applied and affirmed in every congregation—in every church body.

Right now, in all church bodies, people are struggling with everything from unplanned pregnancies to infertility, with sexual purity, and with end-of-life decisions. LFL is making a concerted, intentional effort to reach out to members of all Lutheran bodies—and YOU can help in several ways.

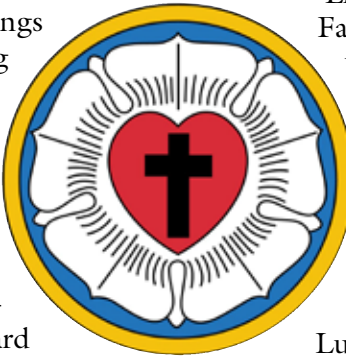
First, we need to let people in all Lutheran bodies know that Lutherans For Life exists and that we have some great resources (videos, brochures, booklets, curricula, and more!) to share and great ways to serve. But it all costs money. We could REALLY use your help with funding this outreach effort.

Second, we could use your help getting the word out. You know about Lutherans For Life. You probably know a Lutheran who doesn't know about Lutherans For Life. If everyone who reads this would just tell three people about Lutherans For Life, we could touch over 100,000 people who never knew that there was such an organization before. Think of the impact you could have just by telling three people that Lutherans For Life exists!

How can you tell someone about Lutherans For Life?

- Bring up something that you heard in the Life Sunday message.
- "Like" the Lutherans For Life Facebook page, and follow us on Twitter, and then "Share" some article or video from that page that really impacted you.
- Don't throw out this edition of *LifeDate*. Give it to someone you know or take it to another Lutheran church in your area. Also consider ordering *LifeDate* in bulk to share with everyone in your congregation.
- Encourage your congregation to use *Life Quotes*, *Life Thoughts in the Church Year*, and *Life News*.
- Don't be afraid to speak affirmatively about life issues. The other side isn't afraid to give their point of view.

All of us in Lutherans For Life, whatever our church body, have our differences, but we are UNITED by a love of the Lord of LIFE. Help us to spread the word about LUTHERANS For Life!



Thank you for your ongoing and often sacrificial support of Lutherans For Life during 2012. Your prayers, volunteer efforts, and financial support allow Lutherans For Life to continue to equip Gospel-motivated voices For Life! You are examples of Christ's love in action. Your partnership with Lutherans For Life is needed today more than ever before!

**2012 Memorials and Honorariums** can be found on the *LifeDate* and *Give* pages at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org).

### 2012 Abundant Life Giving Society

**“A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came so that my sheep will have life and so that they will have it abundantly”**  
(John 10:10).



The Abundant Life Giving Society (ALGS) was introduced in 2010. We are pleased to announce that the following LFL supporters (individuals, families, LFL state federations and chapters, and congregations) donated \$1,000 or more last year. Thank you for your gifts!

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## Spotlight on Lutherans For Life

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## Life Legacy Society Members 2012

The Life Legacy Society was established in 2011. It recognizes all supporters who have notified us that they have put LFL into their will or estate. We currently have 55 individuals/families that have notified us they have put Lutherans For Life into their will or estate. Their names are below. If you have done this, but have not let us know, please do so. We encourage LFL donors to prayerfully consider putting LFL into your will or estate. If you need help with your will or estate, let us know—we can assist you.

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## Where the Rubber Hits the Road



by Scott Licht

**L**FL's **Renewal For Life**<sup>®</sup> mission statement is to equip Lutheran **congregations** to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. In the local congregation, **Renewal For Life**<sup>®</sup> consists of a Life Team Leader and a Life Team. The Life Team Leader is selected by the pastor in prayerful consultation with other leaders in the congregation. The Life Team, then, assists the pastor and the congregation with life issues-related ministry.

At its most basic level, this isn't all that different from the way that Lutherans For Life has always operated. For many years, people who care about life and about "those who cannot speak for themselves" have gathered together in chapters to pray at abortion clinics, to support pregnancy counseling centers, to inform people about life issues, and to perform **MANY** other functions. These chapter volunteers have worked tirelessly and selflessly. God has truly blessed Lutherans For Life with these volunteers—and we know that God will continue to bless us through these chapters. (Chapters will continue to be crucial to fulfilling the mission of Lutherans For Life!)

You don't have to look very far, though, to see how times and priorities have changed in our society over the last 20 years. People are getting busier and busier. There are more and more activities, organizations, and demands on people's time. Ironically, the more we do, the more disconnected from other

people we can feel. But people still attend church and feel connected to their fellow members. The church is often compared to a body with each member playing a vital role in the functionality and health of that body. **Renewal For Life**<sup>®</sup> works through those existing connections within the body of Christ (the Church) to spread the same message that chapters have been spreading for years. The primary difference is that **Renewal For Life**<sup>®</sup> operates directly within the congregation, rather than being a separate entity (as many chapters operate now).

Both chapters and Renewal For Life volunteers are on the front-line of Lutherans For Life's mission to equip Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. They both use the same materials and information produced by Lutherans For Life (and others). They both network with people to provide information about God's message of Life. They both rely on the tireless efforts of volunteers. They both "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves."

Lutherans For Life publishes and distributes over 38,000 copies of this *LifeDate* magazine. There are about 125 Chapters. There are about 70 Life Team Leaders in **Renewal For Life**<sup>®</sup> congregations. Has anything you've read in this magazine made you want to do more For Life? Do you wish there was **SOME** way that you could help? Memberships and gifts to Lutherans For Life are always welcome. The gift of your time and talents to Lutherans For Life is definitely welcome as well. Please prayerfully consider how you might "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." Then contact your pastor or Lutherans For Life at 888.364.LIFE (5433) or [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org).





# Just For Kids!

God loves you no matter who you are! God loves you no matter what size you are!

Here are some of the words to a very nice song about God's love. Unscramble the words in **bold** to see that God really does love life!



Rich or **oorp** \_ \_ \_ \_  
Big or small

Short or tall  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ **oYugn** or old

Shy or **dblo** \_ \_ \_ \_  
Girl or boy

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ **wleloY** or red  
Black or white

We know God loves life because in the Bible God tells us many times how precious and valuable each one of us is to Him. He loves every human life, no matter how big or small, weak or strong.

We know God loves life because He created each and every life. We know God loves life because He sent Jesus to die for each and every life! That's a lot of love!

Answers: poor, Young, bold, Yellow

Lyrics taken from "God Loves Life" by Terry K. Dittmer © 1995. This song is available on Lutherans For Life's "For Life" DVD (LFL1705) at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org).

**Life Thoughts in the Church Year** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*.

### **April 7 – Second Sunday of Easter –**

Thomas saw Jesus and was invited to touch His wounds. Thomas believed. But Jesus does not bless Thomas. He blesses us! “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29b). We do not live by evidence of a resurrected Savior, but by faith in a resurrected Savior.

When circumstances seem to present a lack of evidence of Jesus’ love and presence, our faith directs us to a cross and an empty tomb. Prayer: Thank you Father for the gift and blessing of faith.

### **April 14 – Third Sunday of Easter –**

Jesus takes a scroll in His hand and the entire universe breaks out in praise! (Revelation 5:8-14). What’s the big deal about the scroll? It contains everything that has happened, is happening, and will happen to God’s people—to you and to me. When life presents impossible circumstances and difficult choices, remember the commercial.

“You’re in good hands.” Prayer: Lord, give us courage in the midst of struggles for You hold us in Your hand.

### **April 21 – Fourth Sunday of Easter –**

“Hey, be careful. I paid big bucks for that,” we might say should someone handle our new technological “toy.” The price we pay for something gives value to it. Acts 20:28 reveals the enormously high price paid for human life—the blood of God! Here we find the highest motivation to value every life. And since this blood also cleanses

(Revelation 7:14), here we find hope for those who have sinned against life. Prayer: We praise You for the high price You paid for human life and for the hope this brings into our lives.

### **April 28 – Fifth Sunday of Easter –**

Some of the most comforting words in the Bible may very well be two words in Revelation 21:4, “no more.” No more tears, death, mourning, crying, or pain. When these

manifest themselves in our present life, we cling to this resurrection promise made certain by the promised and fulfilled resur-

rection of Jesus. Prayer: Father, may Your “no more” promise help us endure the “yet now” presence of pain and suffering.

### **May 5 – Sixth Sunday of Easter –**

As we strive to overcome the tribulations of the world and the constant attack on God’s truths, remember that Jesus already overcame the root cause of it all—sin (John 16:33). So He tells us to “take heart,” or “take courage.” We strive in victory, not for victory. Our battle cry is not, “We shall overcome,” but, “He has overcome.”

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for Your victory of sin and death. Help us live in this victory.

### **May 12 – Seventh Sunday of Easter –**

This Sunday marks the last Sunday of Easter, but not the last of Easter’s hope! It goes with us and sustains us. Jesus’ resurrection gives us the assurance that what Jesus prays for will be accomplished. “Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory ...” (John 17:24a). The





certain hope of seeing Jesus' glory helps us deal with our very inglorious world. Prayer: Father, enable us to dwell on Your glory instead of seeking our own glory.

**May 19th – Day of Pentecost** – “Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (John 14:27). Trouble and fear-free hearts do not necessarily mean the absence of trouble or fearful circumstances, but the presence of the Spirit of our resurrected and Ascended Savior. Prayer: Through Word and Sacrament may we continually hear You say, “Let not your heart be troubled.”

**May 26th – The Holy Trinity** – The grand, incomprehensible mystery of the Holy Trinity testifies to the incomprehensible love of God for human life. The Trinity is “designed” for relationship to human life. The crown of God’s creation was human life. The object of Christ’s redemptive work was human life. The Spirit brings faith and the presence of God to human life. Honoring life honors the Holy Trinity. Prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, help us see that in honoring You we honor human life.

**June 2 – Second Sunday after Pentecost** – “But say the word ...” (Luke 7:7) Therein lies the power of God to save, to heal, to change lives. Everything the Church does, therefore, must be based on the Word. Admonition without the Word becomes morality. Comfort and hope become psychology. Without the Word, dealing with the life issues becomes political. “But say the word” and there is power for holy living, forgiveness and certain hope, and real change in people’s lives. Prayer: Lord Jesus, keep us ever focused on the truth of Your Word.

**June 9 – Third Sunday after Pentecost** – In both the Old Testament and Gospel readings we see the ultimate miracle, sons raised from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24;

Luke 7:11-17). Yet they present but a tiny picture of what will happen because God raised His Son from the dead! All the dead in Christ will be raised to eternal life. Death is a defeated enemy! Prayer: Lord, may Your defeat of death give us courage as we confront a culture of death.

**June 16 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost** – Because of her sinful life, the woman in today’s Gospel (Luke 7:36-50) did not feel worthy to anoint Jesus’ head, only His feet. Because of the nature of the sin of abortion, many do not feel worthy to approach Jesus at all. “He could never forgive this sin.” This text presents the opportunity to direct the words of Jesus to such sinners, “Your sins are forgiven” (7:48). Prayer: Jesus, help those with an abortion in their past to receive Your ever-present forgiveness.

**June 23 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost** – Galatians 4:4-6 reminds us that we become God’s children through adoption. But the Bible never refers to us as “adopted children,” only as “children” declared worthy of an eternal inheritance through Christ. This can help change our thinking about adoption. When couples receive the gift of children through adoption, those children are their own children. Prayer: Father, thank You for the gift of children through adoption.

**June 30 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost** – Elijah felt all alone and despaired of his life (1 Kings 19:4, 10). Then God whispered (19:12b). He promised the destruction of Israel’s enemies. He promised Elijah was not alone. Do you feel discouraged because of the seeming triumph of so much evil? Listen to the whisper of God’s promises. They contain more power and hope than rock-splitting winds or mountain-shaking earthquakes. Prayer: Lord, give us faith to trust in the whisper of your promises.

## Mady's Story

by Diane E. Schroeder



Why should the church speak up for life? Let's have Liz and Patrick tell their story:

Patrick and I were very excited about welcoming our first child ... The pregnancy was going along well until I had a quad screen when I was 18 weeks along. I didn't realize it was an optional test, or I probably wouldn't have done it, but in retrospect, God was preparing me. The test came back indicating that something was wrong with the baby, either a chromosomal problem or a neural tube defect. Of course, Patrick and I were very upset and concerned. The doctors suggested we do some additional testing, but we felt that not only was the risk very small—only two percent—and we would not do anything different about the pregnancy. The delivery was easy, but as soon as Madylin was born, there was silence. It was only a couple seconds, but felt like 10 minutes. I knew immediately that something was wrong. I asked my mom "Is the baby ok?" And the doctor said, "We think she has Down syndrome." As soon as I



saw Mady, I knew. Even though we had been a little prepared for this, Patrick and I were still shocked.

Why did we refuse further testing? After all, 90 percent of children with Down syndrome are aborted—but I never believed in abortion. My parents raised me in the church and in a Christian school. I never understood how anyone could create life and then take it away. Every child is a gift from God. He creates every child with a plan and Patrick and I are part of God's plan for Mady.

As soon as I held her in the hospital, I didn't care that Mady had Downs. It was the same with everyone in our families. Patrick and I had already loved her throughout the pregnancy. We had heard her heartbeat and I felt her kick.

People don't know what to say when they see Mady. They say stuff like, "Mady is so lucky to have you as parents." But Patrick and I are the lucky ones to have Mady. I know some parents of special needs children wish they had made another decision. I have thought about if I could, would I take away Mady's Down syndrome? But that would change her, she wouldn't be Mady anymore and we love her the way she is. Mady is an amazing

baby already. We call it the Mady Affect. She makes everyone happy, she is so content.

I know that Mady will struggle and Patrick and I will struggle as well, but we know we can make it. We have great support systems in our families and our church and we know that God will provide. God chose us to be Mady's parents because He knew we would love her so very much.

Patrick and Liz made a decision that many people look at as being foolish and irresponsible. But they listened to God rather than a culture that places no value on people who are different. Their courage shines like a beacon of hope to other hurting families who need to hear that God loves them even through difficult times.

Why should the Church speak out for life? Because people in the Church are not immune to the problems of life and it is the obligation of the Church to equip them through the Word of God to make God-pleasing decisions. The reality is if the Church fails to speak, it leaves its people vulnerable to the siren song of personal autonomy that says "think about yourself ...you can do whatever you want." But Christians know differently. We are not our own, we were bought with a price! (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

So where will the story of Liz, Patrick, and Mady go from here? Only God knows. But He does have plans for them. Plans that will make a difference not only in their lives, but in the lives of the people they will come in contact with. God works through the weak and humble, this young family will be a blessing to many. They are true heroes.



**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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LFL has 11 state federations, 122 local chapters, 144 Life Ministry Coordinators, and 75 Life Advocates in the United States.

**LifeDate** 

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