

# LifeDate

Winter 2013



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



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# Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life.

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## Our Underwater Worlds



by James I. Lamb

After devotions on vacation, granddaughter Jamie asked, “Since Iron Man does not have a heart, where does Jesus live?” Her brother, Zane, added his inquiry, “If Jesus lives in us, how does He get out?” (I think I would rather answer questions at a pastors’ conference!) We finally agreed that since Iron Man was pretend it didn’t matter. Zane seemed satisfied that we do not *want* Jesus to “get out”!

Jesus’ mode of presence is hard to visualize for little ones—and big ones too! In John 14:20, Jesus says to His disciples, **“In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”** He compares His relationship with us to the mystery of His relationship with His Father. Then two pictures: Jesus in us and us in Jesus. The latter helps us **Live In Faith Everyday**.

Living in faith every day flows from living in Christ every day. Living in Christ every day is like living in the womb every day! We live a good portion of our life in the womb under water. We live surrounded by amniotic fluid. We live in a safe (except for abortion), protected place. God shapes and forms us there. Nothing can touch our lives without passing through this watery cushion. Our mom removes our waste and nourishes us through the umbilical cord. As we grow we become more and more active—swimming, doing somersaults, kicking our mom, and so much more. Living underwater in our mom is, to quote a modern descriptive, “sweet”!

When we leave this underwater world

and are baptized, we live underwater again! We live in Christ. We are **“baptized into Christ Jesus”** (Romans 6:3). We live surrounded by God’s grace. We live in a safe, protected place. He shapes and forms us there using even the suffering in our lives. We have the assurance that nothing can touch our lives without passing through His grace. God removes our “waste” through His daily forgiveness. He nourishes us with His Word and Sacraments. As we grow we become more and more active—rejoicing in Him, obeying His commands, loving our neighbor, loving our enemies, witnessing to His love, speaking up for the vulnerable and so much more. Living underwater in Christ is, to quote a theological descriptive, “faith”!

Living in faith every day is not so much striving to gain something as it is striving *in* something already gained for us in Christ. We live in faith, not trying to secure His favor, but *in* His favor. We live in faith not hoping for victory, but *in* His victory. We live in faith, not based on a righteousness of our own, but *in* His righteousness. We live in faith, not in the absence of suffering, but *in* His suffering on the cross which helps make sense out of our suffering. We live in faith, not seeking purpose for our lives, but *in* the purpose to which He calls us. We live in faith, not motivated by fear, but *in* His promises that move us to make good decisions trusting in Him. We live in faith, not wishing to secure eternal life, but *in* eternal life already secured.

So live under water every day! **Live In Faith Everyday!** For you live in Christ every day!

*Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb is the executive director of Lutherans For Life.*

## Revealing A Dichotomy

by Craig Juntunen



I was at a gathering the other night and as we were talking in a small group the subject of adoption came up. A new acquaintance told the story of how her young niece had recently chosen adoption for her newborn daughter. The young woman's decision was based on her difficult personal circumstances: she is a teenager, she is not married, she does not have a full-time job, and has little ability to support the baby's needs and development.

The reaction of the group was unanimous. They recognized the painful decision this young mother made was grounded and rooted in love, and although making an adoption plan is easily understood to be an emotionally difficult decision, it is an intelligent and appropriate decision representing the best interest of the child. We all respected the young woman's decision.

When a birth mother or family in the United States chooses adoption, our society respects, even applauds the selfless decision and action because we accept the decision in the context of what is best for the child.

However, when this similar scenario plays out in third world countries, we criticize and question a mother's and families' decision to place a child for adoption due to harsh practical realities. Even though the decision to utilize adoption represents the best course of action for the child, international adoption has become ultra-controversial, and is viewed differently than an adoption that takes place in our country.

We have developed a distinctive arrogance of what is right and wrong for a child seemingly based on borders and geography. Many argue taking a child out of one culture to join a family in another culture is robbing a child of the birth heritage and should never happen. We have a hard time accepting cross-pollinating race and heritage as a cultural asset, and view it instead as a personal liability. Think of the many friends you know who were born in one country and during their childhood moved to another country. Ask them if moving to another country was traumatizing and damaging to their human condition, or ultimately an experience that allowed them to expand their human condition. Better yet, ask any child living in an orphanage whether they would prefer to have culture and heritage or a permanent family.

If we are really going to evolve into a functioning global society, why can't we accept, embrace, and promote cross-border adoption in the same light we accept and promote domestic adoption? Are we still quietly clinging to the notion that a segregated society is a better society?

Any family, irrespective of where they live, can offer a child the love, the safety, and the nurturing every child needs. Why do we draw the line and believe domestic adoption is a positive part of society, and international adoption is a dirty word? Why are we allowing kids to grow up in stark, filthy orphanages or on the streets, just because the family they could be part of today requires them to get a passport and a plane ticket?

*Craig Juntunen is the founder and president of the Both Ends Burning Campaign (bothendsburning.org), author of "Both Ends Burning: My Story of Adopting Three Children from Haiti" and the executive producer of the acclaimed documentary "STUCK."*

## Giving Body (& Soul) To Whom?



by James M. Kushiner

**“I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body ... fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell” (Luke 12:4-5).**

I find it odd that the mantra, “It’s my body” with its refrain, “Right to privacy,” followed by the second verse, “Private choice between a woman and her doctor,” is no longer heard when it comes to state-mandated health care coverage and the state’s growing involvement in the health care of private citizens. I can think of fewer things more private than the care of one’s body. Who knows how far the state will go in requiring doctors to ask (and record the answers to) certain questions of patients? And if procedures are denied to the elderly who could formerly afford them through private insurance, hasn’t the state taken on a greater role in controlling the very flesh and blood of its citizens?

But my questions here should not suggest that ownership of one’s body is absolute. Hardly. For the Christian, his body is never his own. If a man is married, he does not rule over his own body, but his wife does (1 Corinthians 7:4).

Paul asks all Christians, “[D]o you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Thus, we are not free to do with our bodies as we wish. **“The immoral man sins against his own body”** (6:18 RSV); our **“bodies are members of**

**Christ”** (6:15) and are **“meant ... for the Lord”** (6:13).

What we do with the body is not inconsequential and cannot be divorced from some hidden inner intent without being a lie. For this reason, Christians were forbidden to physically express subservience to the cult of divine Caesar by offering sacrifices or incense. Often-times a martyr would be encouraged to make the offering with the body while inwardly confessing Christ, to save his skin, so to speak. But this was considered a betrayal of Christ, who said not to fear those who could kill the body.

Indeed, the body we have is part of the gift of talents we’ve received to invest in this life for the sake of the King who now owns us. I find it strange that a Christian thus minded would want the state—which throughout history and the world today is not a dependable or respectful steward of man made in the image of God—to be empowered to determine more and more aspects of our physical existence. Christ, our true owner, gives us much more true freedom in being His servants than any state.

Thus, wherever we find ourselves, **“Glorify God in your body,”** even if that means losing it for the sake of Jesus: We are **“always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies”** (2 Corinthians 4:10).

If you don’t know what that looks like, begin meditating on the martyrs. It may take time, but there is no hurry, as long as you are pointed in the right direction and take a step at a time. Trust me. I’m still not there yet.

*James M. Kushiner is executive director of The Fellowship of St. James (www.fsj.org).*

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# The Blessing of Life—The Blessing of Adoption

by Sandy Nielsen



I have been involved as a peer advocate for a crisis pregnancy center in my town. I decided to volunteer for this because I too had a crisis pregnancy

In July of 1972, I was raped. Several weeks later I discovered I was pregnant. This was before *Roe v. Wade*. My mother was not particularly thrilled with the turn of events and told me I had three weeks to get out of the house. (My father died in 1967.) So, I lived at a home for unwed mothers established by a group of Catholic sis-

ters. It was there I began to find the start of my healing. The question arose in my mind: What am I to do with this baby? My aunt had an idea. She could arrange for me to have an illegal abortion. I pondered that idea for a while—and something about it felt terribly wrong. There was life inside of my womb—life given by God. So very early in my pregnancy, abortion was out of the question.

At the time, I had no permanent residence. I was not married. I had no job. With the help of the staff of the home

where I was staying, I made the decision to place my baby for adoption. The father was, of course, out of the picture. I did not even know his name. I decided to place this baby for adoption because I knew there were infertile couples facing the pain of not having a child. My only request of the social worker was to place my baby in a strong Christian home.

On April 16, 1973, I gave birth to a healthy baby girl. I had some complications with delivery, so I had to stay in the hospital for a week. My baby was also going to be in the hospital for a week

before going to her foster parents. I was blessed with one week's time to love and care for and hold my baby.

On June 26, 1976, I married my husband. We have been

married ever since. We wanted to have children and God sometimes, in His wisdom, lets us experience some trials. We were diagnosed as an infertile couple. We both went through the emotional pain that comes with that news. Thoughts of the baby I placed for adoption became real to me. I was sad I had placed her for adoption, yet I knew first hand that I had given another couple a gift. In 1980, my husband and I decided to pursue adoption. In December of 1981, we adopted a six-week-old baby girl. Now I



knew firsthand the joy that the parents of my birth child must have felt! God so blessed me to be a birth mother and an adoptive mother. (I have met my birth daughter and my adopted daughter has met her birth mother.)

Yet God was not finished with my husband and me. One morning in church, I listened again to the story of Abraham and Sarah—how she was barren and how, in time, they were blessed with their own son. They laughed because they did not believe God's promises would come true.

I believe God also laughs and has a sense of humor. In January of 1983, my husband dropped maternity coverage from our insurance. He was self-employed. On January 17, 1983, we had a positive pregnancy test! On September 28, 1983, I gave birth to a healthy baby boy (who is now a pastor). He and his wife have an eight-month-old baby girl with another on the way. (My adoptive daughter is a third grade teacher.)

As I think back, I feel so blessed with the experiences God has given to me. Adoption is a particular blessing in so many ways. I am so thankful that I chose the gift of life and that my adoptive daughter's birth mom chose the gift of life—for life is indeed a sacred gift from God.

I did not have the blessing of ultrasound back then. Now we do. Yet I knew I was carrying life inside of me and I was not about to disrupt the plans God had for this tiny little life. He has a plan for each one of us all the way from conception to death. I thank Him for that plan.

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## Hope for Rachel

by James I. Lamb



It seems to dampen the Christmas spirit if we observe the Holy Innocents on December 28. We joyfully celebrate the birth of baby Jesus and then must think about the tragic death of babies. Bring up such a text in an article devoted to life, and people conclude you will talk about abortion.

But another tragedy cried out from the streets of Bethlehem that night—Rachel weeping. **“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). Rachel, who personified the sorrow of the Jews enslaved in captivity in Jeremiah 31, now personifies the loud weeping and comfortless sorrow of these Jewish mothers at the murder of their babies.

Along with the Herod-like tragedy of abortion occurring 3,200 times every day in our country, another tragedy cries out from our streets—Rachel weeping, the mothers and fathers of these dead children weeping in the darkness of grief, refusing to be comforted. Rachels today sit in an even deeper darkness. Unlike the mothers of Bethlehem, they participated in the choice to have their own children killed. When that reality strikes, it crushes the heart and numbs the soul.

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.”<sup>1</sup> “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.”<sup>2</sup>

If this secret sin stays secret, it manifests itself in other ways. Women who have abortions are four times more likely to engage in drug or alcohol abuse and to have difficulty maintaining relationships with men. They have higher divorce rates and experience more physical and mental health problems. Over one in

five report having attempted suicide.<sup>3</sup> And there are spiritual consequences. Trapped in the darkness of sin, Rachels feel unforgivable and hopeless. A voice is heard in our land—**“Weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”**

But, *there is hope for Rachel!* **“Keep your voice from**

**weeping, and your eyes from tears ... there is hope for your future, declares the LORD”** (Jeremiah 31:16-17). There is hope for those sitting in the darkness refusing to be comforted because one baby escaped Herod’s sword that awful night—Jesus. Jesus, who said, **“I am the light of the world,”** (John 9:5b) and **“I have come into the world as a light, so that whoever believes in Me may not remain in darkness”** (John 12:46).

No one needs to stay in the darkness! Jesus hung in the darkness. **“It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour”** (Luke 23:44). Jesus hung



and bled in the darkness of sin. He suffered the hopelessness and forsakenness of that darkness. He was buried in the darkness of the tomb and death. But the darkness of death could not contain the Light of Life! The Light shattered the darkness giving us, **“a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”** (1 Peter 1:3b). We find hope in our living God!

There is hope for Rachel because Jesus shatters the darkness of our sin. He enters the darkness to give us the light of living hope. As one Rachel said, “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.”<sup>4</sup>

Satan would love us to believe that the Herod-like destruction of unborn children and the abuse of women through this destruction are political issues and do not belong in the Church. But that is precisely where they do belong! We have the Gospel, the *only* message that can shatter the darkness and bring hope.

If you sit silently alone in the darkness, know that God loves you. He enters the very depths of your darkness and shines upon you with the light of His forgiveness. In that light you can find hope and begin the path toward healing.

**“Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears ... there is hope for your future, declares the LORD.”**

*A version of this article appeared in the January 2013 edition of the “Lutheran Witness.” Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb is the executive director of Lutherans For Life.*

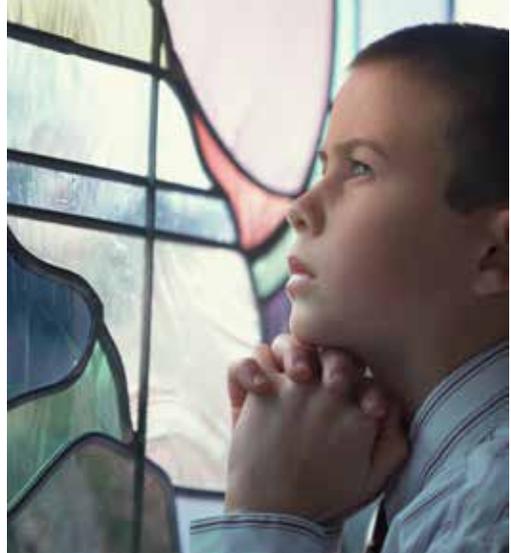
1. From a letter received at the national office of LFL.
2. Ibid.
3. David C. Reardon, *The Jericho Plan - Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing* (Spring field, IL: Acorn Books, 1996), 49-50.
4. From a letter received at the national office of LFL.

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## Letter to a Friend Caught in Sexual Sin

by Linda D. Bartlett



It was my hope to write much sooner. I hope this finds you growing in the confidence of our Father's mercy and love.

Our paths crossed for a time on this earthly journey. Choices you were making brought suffering to your family and those you care most about. Those choices forever changed their lives—and yours.

Over fifty years ago, those who promoted the new concept of sex education in both public and parochial schools said it was necessary to decrease unwed pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. To parents and congregations they said, "Stop teaching so many 'nos.' Let us teach your children to say 'yes' to the wonders of sex because, after all, children are sexual, too." They promised: "Getting everyone comfortable with their sexuality will benefit marriage."

All that I see proves that too many of us believed the lie that "children are sexual from birth." Kinsey built that lie on skewed research and criminal behavior. He called it science. Those of the humanist faith were waiting for such "science" to reform the whole of society, one child at a time. But children are not "sexual" (as Kinsey meant it) from birth. And we are certainly more than sexual beings, we are spiritual beings. We will live for-



ever—either with or apart from God. The Church has forgotten to be distinctively different from the world and, in doing so, failed to encourage children and adults to see themselves as God does. As baptized persons, we are sons and daughters of God in Christ. That makes us holy. Holy means being set aside for noble purpose. We are not common, but uncommon. As such, we are usable not just by anyone but by God. What a difference it makes to see ourselves this way. Sadly, the world convinces too many of us to identify ourselves as sexual beings and that—from early on—has set the stage for promiscuity, abortion, living together, homosexuality, re-definition of marriage, pedophilia, and a great deal of sin, suffering, and separation from God. The humanists may claim some victory now, but we know Who has the final Word, don't we? Souls are in danger and for that reason we need to do battle with the sinful world and our own corrupted nature even as we fall at the foot of the Cross—every day—and thank God for His mercies in Christ.

My deepest sense tells me that you know what I mean. We modern sinners are no different from our first parents. Eve doubted and thought she could become god of her life. Adam failed to remember God's Word and use it to bring order out of the chaos. Ever since, the enemy of our lives comes to us in our weakest moments, tempting us to doubt God's strong Word. We think ourselves wise, but we are foolish. We think ourselves "good" and, most certainly, we are not.

So, at the end of every day, it is a great privilege and comfort to entrust ourselves to our Savior, poor miserable beings that we are. In the morning, all things are new and, because of His forgiveness, we can begin all over again. You know this. You believe this. But wrong choices taught you how much sin hurts. It changes lives. Covered sin saps our strength. It shapes us more and more into a common vessel usable by our enemy.

However, there is hope. There is always hope! Hope came to us in the Son of God Himself. God comes to us in the mystery of water (Baptism), bread and wine (Communion), and His Holy Word. Wow! God really has come to you and me—to all who are “dying to live.”

May you know the power of forgiveness in Christ. May I know that power in Christ. And may we persevere—with our families and loved ones—on this journey through a strange and unfriendly land to our eternal home. Can you imagine? There, at the banquet table, we will be able to rest our eyes on the magnificence of God. He will no longer have to hide His fullness from us. We will know His glory in every way.

Your life took a dramatic and traumatic turn. Sin never improves us but, rather, beats us up. You have known guilt, regret, and great loss of relationships. Your family, friends, and loved ones have also suffered. But each new day is new opportunity. The past is what it is. We are affected by every choice that we make. Life becomes much more difficult and painful when we fail to use the Word to bring order out of the chaos of life. But no matter those choices and circumstances—no matter our sins, or lack of health or popularity—our identity never changes when we cling to our baptism. We are sons and daughters of God in Christ. Think of what this means! We really do have hope.

New hope every morning!

May you cling to your baptism even as I will strive to cling to mine. I am amazed that God continues to carry me. Forgive me. Work through me. It is for this reason that I have grown in a deeper appreciation of the Divine Service. God doesn't need my praise, but this empty vessel sure needs to be filled with His Word and Sacrament. I need to be divinely served by Him in a service distinctively different from the world and then, in response, I can praise Him in my work, relationships, and service to others all week long. I pray that you know his Divine Service in your life so that, no matter what the days ahead may bring, you will be able to say: *I am not common. I am uncommon in the hands of a mighty God. I am poor. I am miserable. I am unworthy, but I am chosen as a son of God in Christ.*

May you know the overwhelming mercy that only God Himself in the humility of Christ can bring to you. The cross changes everything for us. We are no longer captive to sin, but set free to leave old ways behind. Dear friend, let us both pray for a diminished pride so that we don't get in the way of the Spirit's work in us, through us—in spite of us.

*Linda. D. Bartlett is the founder of Titus 2 for Life.*

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Helping Christians make godly choices and to know that mistakes of the past do not have dominion over Christ's people.

## Abortion: The Evolution Connection

by Jake Hebert, Ph.D.,  
and Michael Stamp

Within a consistent evolutionary worldview, there is no logical basis for moral absolutes. If mankind is truly a cosmic accident, then there is no Creator-God to whom we must give an account, and there is no logical and objective basis for claiming that a given action is morally right or wrong.

In such an amoral worldview, it's perfectly "natural" for the strong to prey upon the weak, as often occurs among animals in the wild. And if it's natural for the animal, it's also natural for strong humans to discard the weak. An individual might claim that he prefers that a frail human not be harmed, but is one's mere preference an objective basis from which to make a moral claim that applies to all people?

The recent trial of American abortionist Dr. Kermit Gosnell dramatically illustrates this deep ethical problem with the evolutionary worldview. Gosnell is charged with killing four newborn infants who had apparently been born alive after surviving his attempted abortions. He is also charged with murdering a 41-year-old woman, but the grisly killings may have gone far beyond even this (see references below).<sup>1,2</sup>

Many of those familiar with this case (including evolutionists) have been horrified by it. But if evolution is true, why is Gosnell's behavior wrong? Some might argue that his behavior is wrong simply because he broke the law—but then *why* is breaking the law wrong? On what basis

can one claim that *any* behavior is wrong?

The essential question is straightforward: Is human life precious and sacred or not? When we witness atrocities like the Gosnell crimes, we recoil in horror because human life has been ravaged. Our collective consciences concur that his acts were wrong and even malicious. At these moments we all agree human life is sacred—it's uniquely precious—and that sacredness is the objective basis for our determining right and wrong.

Human life is sacred because humans are made in the "image of God" (Genesis 1:27). God alone has authority over life because He alone is its Author—this is the *objective, logical* basis for declaring that Gosnell's actions are wrong. Human life is sacred in every case simply because God made it so.

**"For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;**

**Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well"** (Psalm 139:13-14 NKJV).

Evolution denies God's existence and, in so doing, negates the objective and intrinsic value of human beings. Dr. Gosnell and his like are, in a sense, acting this belief out as they discard the weakest and most helpless human beings.

The Lord Jesus said, **"A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor [can] a bad tree bear good fruit."**<sup>3</sup> Bad ideas often have bad consequences, and evolution is one such *very* bad idea.<sup>4</sup> The theory of evolution sowed its amoral seed generations ago, and the desecralizing of human life is part of its bad fruit today.



1. Associated Press, "Babies treated worse than sick dogs, prosecutor alleges at abortion doc murder trial," Fox News, April 29, 2013.
2. However, witnesses have claimed that Gosnell may have killed more than one hundred newborn infants. Weigel, D. Kermit Gosnell: The Alleged Mass-Murderer and the Bored Media. Posted on www.slate.com on April 12, 2013, accessed April 15, 2013.
3. Matthew 7:18 (NKJV).
4. Women have long been told that their pre-born children pass through different evolutionary animal "stages" in the womb, and such a claim may make the prospect of abortion psychologically easier to accept. It has long been known that Ernst Haeckel, the zoologist who first proposed this evolutionary animal stages idea, falsified data in order to strengthen his argument. Unfortunately, many biology textbooks still present versions of this argument as "evidence" for evolution. Thomas, B. Do People Have 'Gill Slits' in the Womb? Creation Science Update. Posted on icr.org July 20, 2012, accessed April 15, 2013.

*Dr. Hebert is Research Associate at the Institute for Creation Research and received his Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Texas at Dallas. Michael Stamp is an editor at the Institute for Creation Research (www.icr.org). Hebert, J. and M. Stamp. Abortion: The Evolution Connection. Creation Science Update. Posted on icr.org May 3, 2013. Copyright © 2013 Institute for Creation Research, www.icr.org. Used by permission.*

## Learn More About the Value of Every Human Life!

### Video:

#### Handiwork of God with

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb – The value of human life comes from what God has done and continues to do! Life is His handiwork! Item LFL1401DVD. **\$5.00 ea.**



#### Brochure: Handiwork of God –

Item LFL1007T. **\$0.50 ea.**

(Quantity discounts available)

[www.lutheransforlife.org/article/the-handiwork-of-god/](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/article/the-handiwork-of-god/)



#### Best Way to Order LFL Resources:

At [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040.

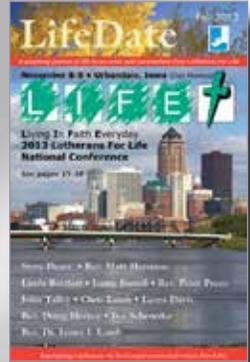
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## Share the Life Message All Through the Year!

Lutherans For Life offers several easy ways to keep the life message before your congregation!

**LifeDate** is available in bulk quantities for congregational use for the cost of shipping and handling. Call 888.364.LIFE to order!



### Life News

is a monthly bulletin insert with life-issue news, great quotes, facts and stats, and an encouraging devotion.

### Life News

is available as a free, reproducible PDF at the LFL website.

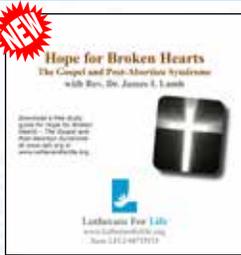


## And there's more ...

**Life Notes** is our weekly email update. Sign-up at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org).

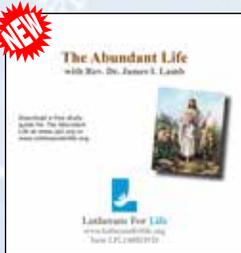
**Life Quotes** are quotations on life issues for use in weekly congregational bulletins (or monthly newsletter). **Life Quotes** are available at the LFL website and are included in each week's Life Notes.

**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**.



**NEW DVD!**  
**Hope for Broken Hearts**  
 – The Gospel and Post-Abortion Syndrome, with Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb,

examines how the Gospel of Jesus Christ speaks so powerfully to women and men struggling in the aftermath of an abortion. It offers ways for congregations to create an “atmosphere of hope” so those who carry this burden will feel safe and welcomed. *Item LFL1 407. \$5.00 ea.*



**NEW DVD! The Abundant Life**  
 – Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb helps us better understand what Jesus meant when He said

in John 10:10 that He came to give us an abundant life. Is it really a life of abundance? Key Concept: The “abundant life” is not necessarily a life of abundance and the absence of suffering. It is following the Shepherd and understanding that God's good and gracious will for His people is at work even in the midst of suffering. Gospel Focus: The greatest good of all time came from the greatest suffering of all time—Jesus on the cross. *Item LFL1 408DVD. \$5.00 ea.*

**Free Downloadable Posters**



[www.lutheransforlife.org/media/posters/](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/media/posters/)

**NEW RESOURCE!**  
**In Vitro Fertilization - Ark or Tower?** – Is in vitro fertilization (IVF) “Ark Technology,” technology used in accordance with God’s will and to glorify Him, as was Noah’s Ark, or is it “Tower Technology,” used according to the will of man to glorify himself, as was the Tower of Babel? *Item LFL1009. \$0.50 ea.*



**Living In Faith Everyday**

**2013 Lutherans For Life National Conference CDs/DVDs/Audio/Video**

Go to [www.lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference) to find ordering info for CDs and DVDs from our 2013 Lutherans For Life National Conference.

Selected plenary and workshops will be posted on the LFL website. (Also check out audio/video from our 2012 conference.)

**CHECK OUT OUR CLEARANCE SALE!**

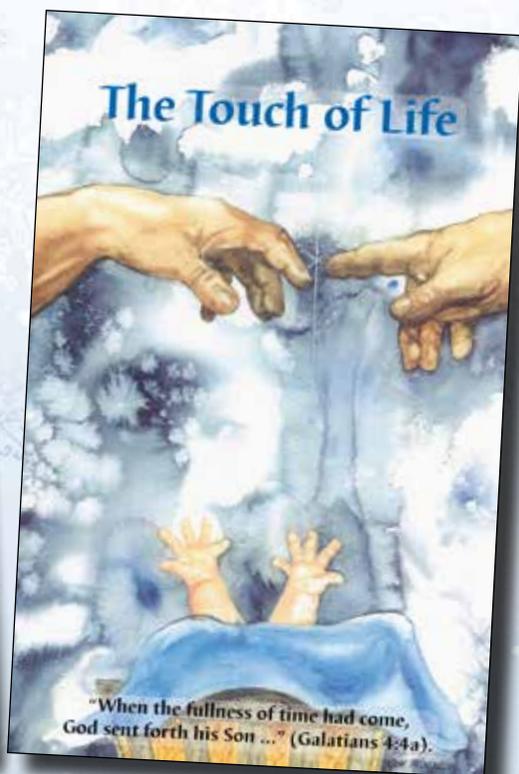
[www.lutheransforlife.org/clearance-sale](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/clearance-sale)

## Christmas Bulletin Inserts!



**Fear Not!** – The message of Christmas changes hearts and lives. After all, we serve a God who works best in weakness—even in poverty—you know, like showing up in a manger!  
Item LFL1631BI. **\$0.10 ea.**

**The Touch of Life** – This insert, based on Galatians 4:4-5, reminds us all that people today desperately need to know the value God's touch gives to life—life in all circumstances, life in all stages of development, and life in all conditions of health. His touch changes hearts and changes lives. Item LFL1627BI. **\$0.10 ea.**

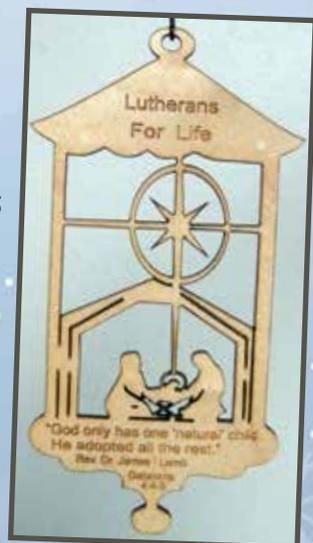


## Christmas Ornament

This one-of-a-kind wooden Christmas ornament highlights Galatians 4:4-5 with a quote from Dr. Lamb:

**“God has one ‘natural’ child. He adopted all the rest.”**

Item LFL1305.  
**\$2.00 ea.**



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Shipping/handling applies to all orders.  
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# Teaching For Life®

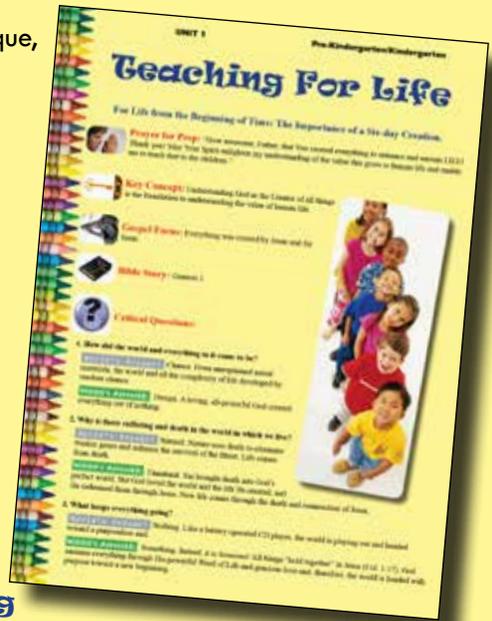
Order at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org).

**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.

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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!



*Lutherans For Life offers Word-based resources on abortion, adoption, bioethics, Creation, end-of-life, family living, fetal development, Life Sunday, sexual purity, and more! Here is a sampling of what is available!*

## GOD'S WORD for Life Bible

A ONE-OF-A-KIND RESOURCE – **ON SALE!**

**Paperback:** Item LFL1618, **\$7.50 each;**

**Hardcover:** Item LFL1619, **\$10.00 each;**

**Leather:** Item FL1619C, **\$12.50 each**

## DVDs

**The Other End of Life** takes a look at end-of-life issues. Item LFL1409DVD. **\$5.00 ea.**

**Choosing Life**, a touching, life-affirming, and award-winning film, includes a Bible study guide from Lutherans For Life.

Item LFL100av. **\$5.00 ea.**

## Top Ten Suggested Resources to Share with Pastors

**A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions**

– Spiritual insight into end-of-life issues by Rev. Richard C. Eyer. Item LFL801R. **\$0.50 ea.**

**A Lutheran Catechism on Abortion and Life**

Item LFL104B. **\$1.00 ea.**

**Abortion and the Message of the Church:**

**Sin or Salvation?** The Church has long called abortion sin. Item LFL205T. **\$0.50 ea.**

**Biblical Manhood** – By Dr. Francis Monseth.

Item LFL304B. **\$2.00 ea.**

**Implementing a Pro-Life Theology in a Lutheran**

**Congregation** offers help on speaking up for life.

Item LFL208B. **\$0.75 ea.**

**Life Issues and the Pulpit**

– Dr. Lamb's letter to fellow pastors. "Lutherans For Life truly wants to help you!"

Item LFL1629. **\$1.00 ea.**

**Scripture Quotations** –

Quotes from the English Standard Version.

Item LFL204T. **\$1.50 ea.**

**Speak Up For Life** – This booklet takes a look at life issues based on Luther's Small Catechism—and is sized to insert right into the catechism itself! Item LFL212B. **\$0.50 ea.**

**The 3 Bs of When Life Begins** – Biology, Bible, and Baptism. Item LFL1004T. **\$0.50 ea.**

**Word of Hope** offers information on LFL's post-abortion ministry.

WOH – Abortion. Item LFL404T. **FREE;**

WOH – Abuse. Item LFL909T. **FREE**

## More Resources

**Marriage – A Statement by Lutherans**

**For Life** – God is clear about what He still intends marriage to be.

Item LFL905T. **\$0.50 ea.**

**Ancient Pro-Life Document Discovered!** – It is amazing just how pro-life the Apostles' Creed really is. Item LFL1630. **\$0.50 ea.**

**Educational Resource Manual – Digital Edition** – A credit-card sized USB drive featuring PDFs and video files of many of LFL's resources. Item LFL1607USB. **\$15.00 ea.**



**Ten Pro-Life Object Lessons** for children – Item 701R. **\$3.00 ea.**

**Tips for Teens On How to Say "No"** – Item LFL602T. **\$0.50 ea.**

## Posters

**Watch Me Grow Posters** illustrate the growth stages of a baby in the womb. Several options available.

## Spanish/Russian Resources!

LFL offers several resources in Spanish and Russian (funded by designated gifts)—and more are on the way! Check the CPH and LFL websites.

**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.



**A blind Dutch woman has been granted her request for euthanasia in The Netherlands.** The *Daily Mail* newspaper reported that: “Medics have killed a woman by lethal injection because she could not cope with becoming blind. In one of the first cases of euthanasia for a disability, the 70-year-old was deemed by doctors to be ‘suffering unbearably.’” Anthony Ozimic of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) told the *Mail*: “It is medical negligence of a high order for the doctors in this case to have gone along with her suicidal ideas, rather than find effective means of managing whatever psychological issues may have been causing her to consider suicide ... these doctors in their callous arrogance have deemed that at least some blind people should be killed rather than treated.” (*Mail*, 10/8/13; *SPUC*, 10/9/13)

**Results of a survey by a United Kingdom student dating website suggest that a quarter of students contract a sexually-transmitted infection in their first**

**year at university.** The results also suggest that the vast majority of student sexual encounters were conducted without condoms (89%) and whilst drunk. Almost half of those students who had contracted an infection could not remember which sexual partner had infected them. Anthony Ozimic, SPUC’s communications manager, commented: “This survey and a wealth of similar evidence shows that self-styled ‘safe sex’ campaigns, promoted heavily by pro-abortion groups, are a total failure in protecting students and instilling responsibility. The people who profit most from this failure are the



money-hungry abortion industry, which admits that the single largest group of its customers are women who fell pregnant due to so-called ‘contraceptive failure.’ Condom and pill-pushing simply serves to promote a culture of casual sex which the pro-abortion lobby has helped create through its irresponsible promotion of sexual license.” (*Huffington Post*, 10/17/13; *SPUC*, 10/21/13)

**Sir James Munby, president of the Family Division of the High Court (UK), has said that only “secular” judges can serve a “multicultural” society, and that judges must not “be swayed by Christian values.”** Sir James made the comments in a keynote address to The Law Society. Anthony Ozimic,

SPUC’s communications manager, told *LifeSiteNews.com*: “This is not the first time that Sir James Munby has used his position to give succour to the idea that the move away from Judeo-Christian morality represents progress. In SPUC’s 2002 case against the British government over the morning-

after pill, he used his position as judge to recount the history he referred to as ‘the crusade for sexual enlightenment in England’, concluding ‘We are at last in the modern world.’ He referred to pro-abortion witnesses as ‘very eminent medical experts,’ praised the pro-abortion Family Planning Association to the skies and argued passionately that the state had no right to restrict contraception. Far from being an impartial advocate of blind justice, Sir James is a promoter of the ideology of choice.” (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 10/31/13; *SPUC*, 11/6)

## God at Work in Life Teams

by Lori Trinche  
Mission & Ministry  
Coordinator



God is busy in Indiana creating new Life Teams—and lots of interest there in local congregations! LFL of Indiana State President, Keith Alabach, facilitated a Life Team 101 training event in October at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne. The event attracted members from Emmanuel, St. Michael's, St. Paul's, Concordia, and Holy Cross in Fort Wayne; Living Waters in Wolf Lake, and St. James in Marion, encompassing seven congregations, two LFL chapters, and a pastor who attends classes at Concordia, Fort Wayne—all interested in working with a future Life Team there.



Life Team 101 training in Fort Wayne, Indiana

God is busy in Texas with our new Life Team at St. Paul Lutheran (NALC), Yorktown! Jean Amundson, Renewal For Life Director of Texas, facilitated a training session there for new members in September.

God is busy in Illinois with our Life Team at Cross Yorkville that has just finished up a major project in organizing a baby memorial at Cross to honor the lives of those lost to abortion and miscarriage or any other pregnancy loss. Their desire was to create a place to grieve, a place to draw close to God, and a place to receive His comfort and healing; as well as to recognize the value of each life God has created, regardless of how

small. As part of this effort they will host an annual memorial service for anyone in the community who wishes to honor the life of an infant lost.

We are also thankful for the new Life Team starting up at St. John's in East Moline, Illinois, under the leadership of Vicar Alex Lange. Vicar Lange is starting the team as part of an evangelism outreach into the community and will work with the congregational leadership to continue the team when he returns to Concordia, St. Louis to finish up his seminary work.

These are just a few of the many places Life Teams are starting and at work across the country. If you have a story to share about your Life Team, or want more information on starting a Life Team, please contact me at [ltrinche@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:ltrinche@lutheransforlife.org). To God be the glory!



Lori Trinche talking about Life Teams at the 2013 LFL National Conference



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## L.I.F.E. – 2013 LFL National Conference!

Over 280 Lutherans gathered November 8-9 in Urbandale (Des Moines), Iowa, from across the United States, for the 2013 Lutherans For Life National Conference. The theme: **L.I.F.E. – Living In Faith Everyday.**

In his Friday night keynote address, *L.I.F.E. in the Church*, Rev. Matt Harrison, president of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod challenged the conference attendees to “be who we are: “Little Christ’s—Christians” as we share and apply the Gospel. “Hurting people are being produced by the boatload—right in your family.” He commented on how “the culture has affected us enormously” with people marrying later in life and having fewer children. He asked, “How welcoming of life are we?” He encouraged all to share “the blessing of Christ” in this “drunken culture” and to keep in mind that no matter what, “the Lord is in His heavens.”

Earlier in the day, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad spoke at the pastors’ luncheon. “Thank you for what you do on behalf of the pro-life cause, on behalf of life at all stages of development—from unborn to the frail elderly.” He said, “We are making progress. I see many more young people today that understand and appreciate and respect life ... as pro-life citizens it is important we remain engaged in the public square.”

Focusing on the conference theme in his opening worship sermon, Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life said, “When we live in faith every day, when we live in His righteousness, then we have a righteousness and a truth from which to judge and to boldly, courageously, and unashamedly

call wrong things wrong but doing so in love as a fellow sinner ... We all know that sin is sin, but so many of you also know that sins against life can be more difficult to deal with than most sins. Some of you may know that on a very personal level because of an abortion decision in your past. If indeed you are here, allow me to pause and have a word with you, and it is a single word, ‘welcome.’ Welcome here with all the rest of us unrighteous ones ... And the same can be said for those here who may be dealing with guilt or uncertainty about an end-of-life decision ... Welcome here in the righteousness of Christ in which we all live, in which you live. Lean back in it and be lifted up by its constantly renewing grace.”

Nationally syndicated talk show host, Steve Deace, focused on the right to life as being the “cornerstone of civilization” and that the unborn are “souls—human beings made in God’s image.” He highlighted the confusion in our culture over the right to life by showing a video of people on a college campus signing a petition to allow “fourth trimester abortion.” Steve said, “If you don’t know when pregnancy ends, you don’t know when life begins.”

In her final conference address as president of Lutherans For Life, Diane Schroeder asked, “Does the reality of abortion fill you with a profound sadness that in our country and churches women have so little support that they believe they have to make that choice. Or do you come across as being harsh and judgmental ... Are you considered to be a safe person others can trust. Do you honestly believe deep down that you are a better person than a woman who makes that decision? The truth is that ... we are all guilty and deserving of God’s judgment! Your sin may not be as visible as that woman caught in an unplanned

pregnancy, but it is still there. And like everyone else, only Jesus gets rid of it ... Are you ready to stand in the gap offering emotional support and real help? Live these principles in your everyday life ... Let your love for fellow sinners shine and you too will see lives changed! This message of compassion must be part of the fabric of our churches. The stakes are very high.”

Commenting on the conference theme, incoming LFL president, Lynette Auch, said, “How can a follower of Jesus Christ live any differently? God puts people and incidences in our lives daily that painstakingly mold and shape us into the people God wants us to be and to be able to ‘speak life’ effectively and with passion. As an obstetric nurse of a women’s center, I have participated in countless miracles of birth, whether they were deliveries of healthy, happy babies or of young ones that God called home before they saw the light of day. I have seen the tears and concerns of families of children born with anomalies or syndromes. I have been blessed to see these same families take hold, love, and ‘speak life’ to these children ...”

Lynette also said that LFL’s mission is “to equip Lutherans so they understand that the life issues are grave spiritual issues. Our message is the heart-changing truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our manner is to ‘speak the truth in love.’ Love confronts people with their sin, but love does not condemn people because of their sins ... We have been given and forgiven much, how can we not speak hope, speak love, speak life ... by God’s word and wisdom ... Lutherans For Life will work as diligently as ever to equip ... pastors ... congregations and communities across the nation and around the world.”



**Go to the conference page on our website for much more on the 2013 conference including audio/video and photo gallery.**

## Living in Faith by Setting an Example



by Laura Davis

**“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).**

These words were spoken to Timothy, by his mentor, Paul. Timothy had been called to evangelize and preach the Gospel in a critical time in the early Church.

By these words, we can guess that, sometimes, Timothy felt his youth might be a stumbling block to those whom he was trying to reach. Maybe he felt inadequate, that he didn't know enough or have enough experience to do his job.

Either way, Paul's encouragement to Timothy was clear:

**Your age or your experiences do not stop you from setting an example to those around you.**

As a young woman, I have struggled with insecurities over my age and my ability to reach people with a message of life and I am sure there are many youth who feel the same way, who struggle to find the courage or the authority to speak up about difficult issues. For me, and for them, Paul's words can be extremely encouraging. Paul reminded Timothy

that, despite his youth (or maybe because of it), he was in a unique position to make a difference, by setting an example in his words and actions.

The amazing thing is that we are in the same position! We can be a witness to the world around us by simply living the lives God has called us to live. By doing so, we show the world there is a reason to be For Life, that there is something different and good about it.

But this doesn't only apply to youth! While Paul was directly addressing Timothy's fears about his youth, the second half of the verse applies to all of us and tells us how we can make a difference: by setting an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

We can set an example in speech by speaking the truth in love when the situation calls for it—maybe as a sidewalk counselor or a pastor, maybe simply a conversation with a coworker or another student at your school. Failing to speak may be seen as affirmation, but we can set an example and be a witness simply by telling the truth and calling wrong things wrong.

We can set an example in conduct by serving our community, by living out our faith in our own lives. In doing so, we can challenge the stereotypical image of a hypocritical Christian that so many people see when they think of us. We can show that behind our words are actions, done to show love to each other and give honor and glory to God.

We can set an example in love by showing love for our neighbor, compassion for those in need, and forgiveness for those who have made mistakes in the past.



No sin is too great for God to forgive and we have the awesome opportunity to share this love and forgiveness with others, especially those who have a sin against life in their past.

We can set an example in faith by spending time building our relationship with Christ and letting Him live through us. Too often we trust the solutions of the world instead of the promises of God, but by trusting Him at His Word, we can show those around us what true faith looks like.

Finally, we can set an example in purity by honoring God's plan for sexuality and relationships. For those of us who are single, we do this by living a pure and chaste life and not being ashamed of it. This can be a daily challenge and struggle but, by living differently, we show others how different, and wonderful, love in Christ can be!

We don't have to have a wealth of life experience to make a difference For Life. All we need is to set an example for a world that has looked to death for far too long. We can be the example that points them to life and the One who created it.

*Laura Davis is the director of Y4Life. Learn more about Y4Life at [www.lutheransforlife.org/about/y4life](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/about/y4life).*



**Life News**  
**Monthly Bulletin Inserts**

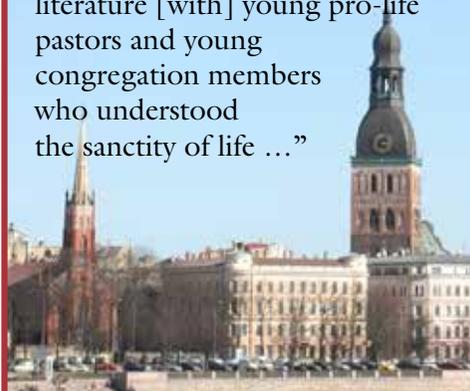
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[www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news)

## The Latest Update from Jānis Diekants in Latvia

*(Also see LifeDate – Winter 2012 & Spring 2013.)*

October 17, 2013

“I have just returned from Petrozavodsk in Russia. Two seminars took place [at the] Ingrian Lutheran Church in Petrozavodsk. I did the “Alpha of Life” presentation ... After the seminar, one woman came to me and said that she was carrying the guilt of abortion for many years, but now she heard what Don Richman and I told [her] and she could give it to Jesus through prayer. Many questions were asked about IVF, post-abortion syndrome and other life issues. We had answers. One man during the seminar changed his mind and decided not to divorce his wife and fight for his family. I heard that after the Don's presentation one woman called her friend to save the life of the baby who was going to be aborted ... Life issues were the top issues those three days in Petrozavodsk ... I hope that the impact will last for a long time. We left a lot of literature [with] young pro-life pastors and young congregation members who understood the sanctity of life ...”



## Selling Farmland through a Charitable Trust



by Jim Schroeder

The value of farmland has escalated tremendously over the last few years so if the farmland is sold there will be a very high gain in value that is subject to capital gains taxes.

One method of reducing this tax dilemma is to sell the farm through a charitable remainder trust. This type of planning makes sense if one of your goals includes supporting your favorite ministries (such as Lutherans For Life).

For example: Herb and Helen own a 160 acre farm and an 80 acre farm. They are both 75 years old and none of their three children have stayed home to help manage the farm. They have all married now and live with their families in cities far away from the farm. Herb and Helen rent both of their farms on a cash basis to a neighboring farmer. Their farm tenant has expressed an interest in buying the 80 acre farm next year.

Herb and Helen are considering this but are concerned about the large capital gains tax that would be due if they sell the farm for cash. When I met with them in their home I discussed some of the details of their situation so that I could share with them a charitable giving plan they may want to consider.

They had purchased the 80 acre farm 20 years ago for \$1,000 an acre for a total cost basis of \$80,000. They believe the tenant would be willing to pay \$10,000 an acre for a sale price of \$800,000. The total gain on the sale would be \$720,000. A sale of this size could put them in a 20

percent capital gains tax bracket. The potential capital gains tax on the sale would be  $\$720,000 \times 20 \text{ percent} = \$144,000$ . This is quite concerning for them as the tax would be more than the original sale price for the farm!

At our second appointment I shared another idea—a charitable remainder trust. Instead of selling the farm themselves, Herb and Helen would deed the farm to a charitable remainder trust managed by a trustee (which could be a national Lutheran church body foundation or a bank trust department).

The trustee of the charitable trust would sell the farm to the tenant instead of Herb and Helen selling it themselves. Because the trust will ultimately benefit qualified charities there would be no capital gains taxes due on the sale proceeds. Herb and Helen would receive a lifetime income of five percent of the trust investment assets. This amount would vary each year depending on the value of the trust assets. If the trust assets were \$800,000 and the payout rate of the trust was five percent the first year income from the trust would be \$40,000. The cash rent for the 80 acre farm was \$24,000 a year so the trust income would be more than they had been receiving. The income stream from the trust would continue for both of their lives and then for 20 years to their children after the second one of them dies. At the end of the income stream the trust principal would be divided among their favorite ministries—including Lutherans For Life. Herb and Helen liked this concept and I assisted them with all of the details of putting the plan in place.

If you would like more information about a charitable remainder trust, please contact me at [jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org) or 515.490.7371.

*Jim Schroeder is LFL's Christian estate planning counselor.*

## Blessed by LFL Supporters



by Kay L. Meyer

So many of you care about life—and Lutherans For Life—because God loves life! Thank you. With that in mind, I thought it might be helpful to share some ways you can support LFL as you include us in your long-range planning for the future.

### Outright Bequest

One of the easiest ways to include Lutherans For Life in your long-term gifting plans is to simply have a provision written into your will or revocable trust to leave a certain amount of money (dollar amount or percentage of your estate), or specific assets, to LFL at your death.

### Beneficiary Designation

If you have a life insurance policy, deferred annuity, or a tax-deferred Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can choose to make LFL the beneficiary of all—or a portion of—the proceeds at death.

### Charitable Remainder Trust

With this type of trust, you are able to make a currently deductible gift without giving up the future income on the asset. You make a gift to a trust, and that trust is designed to provide you with an income stream for life. Upon your death, the assets remaining in the trust are distributed to the charity you designated in the trust.

### Charitable Lead Trust

Conceptually, this is the opposite of a Charitable Remainder Trust. You contribute property to an irrevocable trust and the charity you designate in the trust receives the income stream. When the

charity's income interest ends, the assets in the trust are passed to a non-charity beneficiary, such as your children, or back to you.

With these types of future gifts, in most instances there is no immediate income tax benefit received because there is no immediate charitable gift made. An exception to this is the Charitable Remainder Trust. There are, however, significant estate tax benefits that can be achieved from these types of charitable gifts.

When you make a current donation to LFL, you receive a federal and state income tax deduction that you can immediately apply to your tax return.

Your annual gift allows us to carry out our mission each day and provides you with immediate tax benefits, while the planned or deferred future gifts allows us to build an endowment that we can rely upon to secure the mission for the future and provides you with tax benefits later. Both types of gifts will directly touch the lives of those we serve, and both are very much appreciated.

**One more option: A Family Endowment Fund** – Research documents that upon your death, it will take 13 years or more to replace you as a giving partner at Lutherans For Life. Have you ever considered continuing your annual giving to us or other favorite ministries through a Family Endowment Fund? This could be funding during your lifetime or at your death. It will continue your giving long after you have gone to be with the Lord.

When you are updating your personal estate plan, we would be happy to answer questions. Contact me at [kmeyer@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:kmeyer@lutheransforlife.org); 515.441.6571 or Jim Schroeder at [jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org) or 515.490.7371.

*Kay L. Meyer is director of development of Lutherans For Life.*

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

**January 5 – Second Sunday after Christmas** – Solomon’s human wisdom came from God (1 Kings 3:4-15). We thank God for the wisdom He gives us. But we thank Him more for His Godly wisdom and, in Christ, “making known to us the mystery of his will” (Ephesians 1:9). When we face life’s difficult choices, we use both the gift of human wisdom and the gift of revealed, spiritual wisdom. The later always trumps and informs the former. Prayer: Thank You, Jesus, for wisdom. May Yours always take precedence over ours. Amen.

**January 12 – The Baptism of our Lord** – Imagine your underwater life before birth. Surrounded by amniotic fluid, protected in the womb, nourished by your umbilical cord—nothing can touch your life without passing through these. That describes well your new life in Christ. You live under the water of your baptism. You live surrounded and protected by God’s grace and nourished through His Word and Sacraments. Nothing can touch your life without passing through these. Prayer: Father, thank You for calling us in our baptisms and surrounding us with Your grace. Amen.

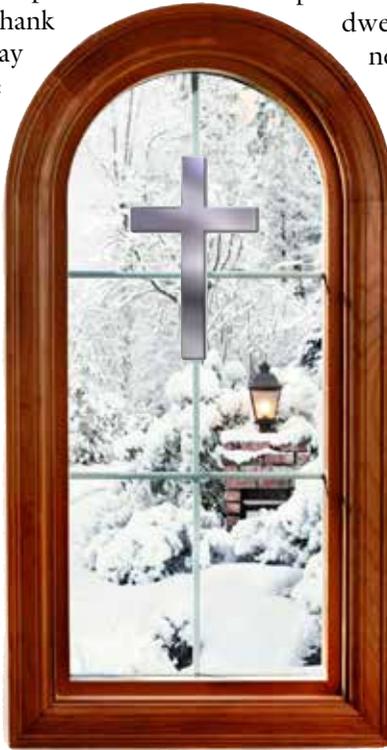
**January 19 – Second Sunday after Epiphany (Sanctity of Life Sunday)** – “The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name” (Isaiah 49:1b). These words about Jesus, the Servant, take us back, not just to Christmas, but also to the Annunciation, the conception of Jesus. “[T]aking the form of a servant” (Philippians 2:7) meant becoming a speck in

Mary’s fallopian tube. He demonstrates His love for life from that moment. He bestows value on life from that moment. Prayer: Lord of Life, give us joy and courage to speak up for the value and meaning You give to each human life. Amen.

**January 26 – Third Sunday after Epiphany** – We walk in the darkness of a sin-filled culture. We dwell in the deep darkness of our own sin-filled nature and sin-filled lives. Some sins, like sins against God’s gift of life, seem so dark that we feel no light can penetrate. Not true! “[T]hose who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone” (Isaiah 9:2b). His name is Jesus! His light always shines with forgiveness and hope. Prayer: Thank You, Light of the Word, for coming into our darkness revealing our sin and relieving us of sin’s punishment and guilt through Your suffering, death, and resurrection. Amen.

**February 2 – The Purification of Mary and the Presentation of Our Lord** – A peaceful departure (Luke 2:29) may not always mean the absence of pain and suffering. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, it is seeing the presence of our Savior accomplishing His will according to His timetable. Prayer: In our last hour, dear Savior, help us see You and be at peace. Amen.

**February 9 – Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany** – How does one *be* the light of the world that Jesus says we *are*? (Matthew 5:14) It must be more than railing against the darkness. Isaiah gives another approach. “Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover



him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn” (58:7-8a). Prayer: Light of the World, help us shine Your light in the things we say *and* in the things we do. Amen.

**February 16 – Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany** – Choosing life (Deuteronomy 30:19), whether when faced with an unplanned pregnancy or with the temptation to end a life prematurely by removing treatment, does not flow from some moral or societal obligation. For the Christian, it flows from trust in God as the God of our salvation who will not forsake His saved ones. Prayer: Father, forgive our lack of trust and turning to death to rescue us from our problems. Restore in us a trust in You who revealed Your love for us through Jesus. Amen.

**February 23 – Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany** – Although righteous anger may be appropriate, it is amazing how such anger is sometimes channeled by “pro-life” folks through hatred and malice toward those who oppose us. That is not the way of Jesus. “But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). Prayer: Lord Jesus, help us love our enemies as You loved us and gave Yourself for us when we were Your enemies because of sin. Amen.

**March 2 – The Transfiguration of Our Lord** – Peter says that the Transfiguration made “the prophetic word more fully confirmed.” Then adds, “to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19a). Unfortunately many in the Church do not pay attention. The abuse of sexuality, marriage, and life are but symptoms of the abandonment of the prophetic Word. Our hope in the midst of this comes from Jesus who left the glory of the Transfiguration and journeyed on to the glory of the cross and the empty tomb. Prayer: Lord Jesus, give us faith to ever cling to Your prophetic Word so that all we do will resound to Your glory. Amen.

**March 9 – First Sunday in Lent** – Because we receive “the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness,” we will “reign

in life through the one man Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:17b). Because of Jesus, death no longer reigns, we do! We win because of a crucified and living Savior. We will live forever deathless! We live now facing life’s temptations knowing that death is not our friend but a defeated enemy. Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for Your victory over temptation, sin, and death. Help us live joyfully in that victory. Amen.

**March 16 – Second Sunday in Lent** – Today we not only see how we are justified but the results of justification. “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin” (Romans 4:7-8). The forgiven are blessed! A powerful message that you may want to apply to the sin of abortion or other sins that often seem too big to be forgiven. Prayer: Thank You, Father, for justifying us. Thank You for blessing us in our forgiveness. Amen.

**March 23 – Third Sunday in Lent** – What Good News! Jesus died for us “while we were still sinners” (Romans 5:8). What Good News! Jesus comes to us in the midst of our sins as He did the Samaritan woman (John 4:5-26). His love compels us to reach out in love to those struggling in sin helping them see the true source of their struggle and the true source of their forgiveness and hope. Prayer: Holy God, thank You for loving us just as we were. May we do so to our neighbors. Amen.

**March 30 – Fourth Sunday in Lent** – These days post-modernists may not have asked Jesus what sin the man born blind committed to end up as he did (John 9:2). But they may ask, “What purpose does he have? What quality of life does he have? “What can he contribute to society?” Jesus’ answer would be the same, “that the works of God might be displayed in him” (9:3). Our meaning and purpose in life do not come from what we are able to do or not do, but from what God does in and through us. Prayer: Lord, whatever my circumstances, may Your works be displayed in me. Amen.

## Compassion + Action

by Diane E. Schroeder



A pastor called me several years ago wanting to talk about his Life Sunday observance. He had been preaching about life and abortion for several years—how it was wrong and against God’s law. He felt as if his people weren’t listening. In fact, even after several years of preaching, some people would leave the service when they found out it was Life Sunday. He knew there were women in his congregation who had an abortion in their past. He had been told that by other women. But, they didn’t want to talk to him about it and when it was time for Life Sunday these women would not show up for the service. The pastor had met with his board of elders to discuss the situation—and then he had called me for some advice.

So what’s the problem? The people in his congregation heard his words of truth, but they weren’t really listening. The lack of compassion expressed by the pastor caused their ears to close and their eyes to glaze over. What he needed to do is start with compassion for those people who were caught in the cycle of fear and despair caused by an unplanned pregnancy or abortion; expressing love and concern for them and offering them help and support. This is a lesson well learned by all of us as we try to **Live In Faith Everyday**. Truth must be married to compassion.

So let’s begin with Truth. How do you express it? Do you come across as being harsh and judgmental? Do people see you

as someone who thinks they are better than everyone else? Christians sometimes forget that the process of sanctification is a result of the Holy Spirit living within us and not because of anything we did to make ourselves any better. The truth is that sin puts all of us on an even plane. We are all guilty and deserving of judgment! Let your love for fellow sinners shine!

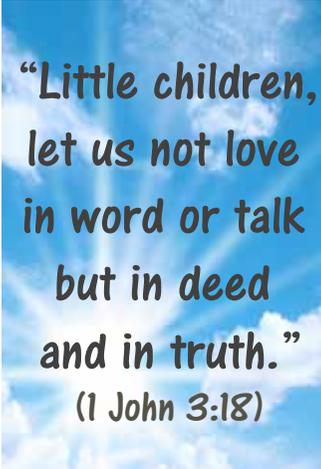
**Compassion** – Do you demonstrate compassion in both your words and actions? When you speak about abortion, do you acknowledge that women in unplanned pregnancies face tremendous pressures that cause them to think abortion must be their choice?

They are often alone, without support, and abandoned by the father of the baby. They are afraid of condemnation by parents, friends, or their church. Abortion seems like their only choice. Acknowledge their pain and their problems. Ears will then listen to the truth that God loves all people including the unborn. The truth that any child is a gift from God and abortion is not a

God-pleasing solution to an unplanned pregnancy.

**Actions** – Are you ready to stand in the gap offering emotional support and real help? What about your church? Can your women’s Bible study mentor a young woman and offer her a baby shower. Or can your church collect diapers for the local pregnancy resource center. Do you regularly pray for the women and their babies? When people see that your actions match your words, you then speak with authority and they will listen.

Years ago, I was NOT invited to a baby shower for a friend from my church whose



“Little children,  
let us not love  
in word or talk  
but in deed  
and in truth.”  
(1 John 3:18)

daughter was in an unplanned pregnancy. Why, because I was an active member of Lutherans For Life and it was thought that I would not approve. I had been speaking truth at my church, but apparently missed the compassion part. I sent a belated gift just to clear things up—but I learned. When an unplanned pregnancy occurred within my family, I was the one to have the baby shower. Why would we not welcome a child—a gift from God!

Another member of my extended family, who knew of my husband and my activity within LFL and the fact that we have adopted children, told me that of all the pro-lifers he knew, we were the only ones who lived out our convictions. Now I know that is not true, but it does demonstrate a point. Pro-lifers have a bad reputation. Many people equate those who speak against abortion as being harsh, judgmental, and unsympathetic to women. They don't want to be one of those people, so we must start with expressing and living compassion. If we don't, our message will not get through. This message of compassion must be heard also within our churches.

The stakes are very high. I heard of a young girl in a Christian high school near my home who when she found out she was pregnant threw herself down a flight of stairs to cause an abortion. She was successful. How much fear does there have to be for a woman to risk her very life to avoid being discovered by her religious community? So, as you go about your work for the Lord of Life, use Jesus as your example. He proclaimed truth, but had compassion on the sinners who surrounded Him and so should we. Let the light of your compassion shine through in all that you do and say. It will make a difference.

*Diane E. Schroeder is president of Lutherans For Life.*



**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, 120 local chapters, 139 Life Ministry Coordinators, 85 Life Team Leaders, and 47 Life Teams in the US.

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