

LifeDate

Spring 2015



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

**We
continue
our look
at end-
of-life
issues**

**"I have set before you
today life and good ..."**

(Deuteronomy 30:15)

Some in our day say
death is "good"—a way
out.

What does God's Word
say?

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

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Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
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Choose Life, But First ...

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Remember the giving of the Ten Commandments? God did not go into Egypt and say, “Here are My commands. Keep these and I will see what I can do about getting you out of here.” No, God got the Israelites out of there first. He did it by the blood of the Passover Lamb. He did it by destroying their enemies in the waters of the Red Sea. He brought them to Sinai and said, **“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery”** (Exodus 20:2). He starts with His redemptive work, then He gives the commandments. In other words, He redeemed them and then told them how redeemed people are to live.

We are God’s redeemed people. He redeemed us through the blood of Jesus our Passover Lamb. He destroyed our enemies of sin and death and the devil in the waters of Baptism. His Spirit lives in us. We can trust Him, and we can make good choices based on His commandments.

Most of us life-affirming folks love the phrase, “Choose Life.” That’s good. But when using this phrase among God’s people, something else needs to come first. The choice of life flows from trusting in our God who gave us life. This in turn flows from faith in God who has given us new life in Jesus. You may not be able to trust a god who says, “Choose Life or else.” But you can most certainly trust in a God who says, “I chose to give My life for you.”



So, when the Christian is faced with that crisis pregnancy or that end of life decision, our first question should not be, “What would God have me do?” Rather we should remind ourselves of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. This assures us that He loves us, forgives us, and will be with us to strengthen us. This assures us that nothing is ever hopeless. Then the “What would God have me do?” question really doesn’t even need to be asked. It is usually pretty clear anyway! We can choose life because we have a God who chose us.

This is what we mean when we say Lutherans For Life equips Lutherans to be **“Gospel-motivated Voices For Life.”** We want everyone to choose life, but we do not start with the Fifth Commandment. We start with the Second Article of the Apostles’ Creed. We start with the incarnation of our God in the person of Jesus and His suffering, death, and resurrection on our behalf.

Then we can go to the First Commandment and say, “I will have no other gods before this, my redeeming God.” Then we can go to the Fifth Commandment and say, “I will respect and honor all life as a gift from God. I will not hurt nor harm. I will love my neighbor as myself. I will speak up for those who cannot speak.”

So, choose life, but first ... trust in your God who has chosen you in Christ.

Life – Faith – Miracles

by Lynette Auch, president of Lutherans For Life

It was Christmas Eve Day, and even though she was a teenager, Crystal awakened with all the child-like anticipation of Christmas! But something was dreadfully wrong: she could not see out of one eye. During an emergency visit to the doctor, the condition of Optic Neuritis, often a preliminary symptom of Multiple Sclerosis (MS), was diagnosed. The family was in shock! “What? How could this be?”

Scared for her life and future, Crystal had no idea what all this meant. Along with her regular high school work and extracurricular activities, she was on course to begin an advanced placement (AP) college class and was in the middle of the dance season preparing for a recital. She could only see large objects with her affected eye. Fear gripped her heart as questions consumed her mind. Will I ever see properly again? Will I be able to dance? Will I be able to walk in the future? Who will want to marry me? What is going to happen to me?

It took many weeks for her eyesight to improve after her first round—many followed—of intravenous steroid therapies. She went ahead with her AP class and did the best she could with dance, despite the vision loss. More doctor visits and testing followed, along with months of waiting and more testing before a final diagnosis of MS.

During those months, Crystal experienced an almost full recovery, physically, and had no other symptoms. Crystal and her family could almost forget the diagnosis, except for the overwhelming depression that darkened Crystal’s heart, clouding her normally cheerful demeanor. For someone so young, any potentially debilitating disease is nothing short of a death sentence, and that is how Crystal felt. She was angry and lashed out at every one, including herself, as suicidal thoughts entered her mind.

Being diagnosed with a long-term health condition (or chronic illness) can be frightening and disorienting. Once beyond the shock of the diagnosis, one “must adjust to the demands of the illness itself, as well as to the treatments for their condition. The illness may affect a person’s mobility and independence and change the way a person lives, sees him or herself, and/or relates to others. For these reasons, a certain amount of despair and sadness is normal. In some cases, a chronic illness may actually cause depression.”¹ Depression also “appears to result from specific bio-



Crystal with her son, Isaac, and husband, Marcus.

logic effects of chronic medical illness ... central nervous system disorders—such as Parkinson’s disease, cerebrovascular disease, or multiple sclerosis—as well as endocrine disorders—such as hypothyroidism.”²

God brought just the right people into Crystal’s—and her family’s—life to help all of them through this very dark time, including a compassionate, Christian doctor, who had MS himself. He cared for and walked alongside them. Through God’s Word, prayer, medical treatment, professional Christian counseling, and the continued loving support of family and friends, “the body of Christ,” Crystal was able to get past the suicidal thoughts. She was able see herself as a valued child of God, someone for whom Christ Jesus died. She was able to realize that her life was worth living.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus ...” (Hebrews 12: 1-2a NIV)

This favorite scripture empowered Crystal. She saw the “body of Christ” as “the great cloud of witnesses.” Fixing her eyes on Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice helped her look beyond her own entangling needs to the needs of others, chasing away her own depression. It gave her a reason and a purpose to run the race of life with perseverance.

Crystal’s life, of course, has never been the same. Along with other medications, she must remain on an anti-depressant. Her life has been filled with one health challenge after another, including becoming totally debilitated, confined to a wheelchair, and dependent on others, for a time. Again God brought the right people and doctors into her life. Nothing short of a miracle happened. After nearly a year of medical treatments, physical and occupational therapy, and lots of tender loving care from the body of Christ, Crystal became a walking miracle! (She touts this proudly in her text messages.)

God speaks His Word into Crystal through music. “What Faith Can Do”³ by the Christian group Kutless became Crystal’s song of comfort during the countless treatments and trips to the doctor. The lyrics speak to overcoming the odds, moving mountains, and hope that never ends, even when everything in life is falling apart. Miracles happen, silent prayers get answered, broken hearts become brand new, and we have the strength to rise. That is what faith can do.

Miracles happen! Just choosing life over death is a miracle in itself, especially in this culture that glamorizes death over the promises of God. Crystal could have chosen death. Those who know and love her are so blessed and grateful that she did not. Had she done so, the world would never have witnessed the miracles in her life and been encouraged by the life message that she generously shares with those she meets. That’s what faith in Jesus can do.

1. Depression caused by other illnesses on MedicineNet.com (MedicineNet)
www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=55170
2. Treating depression in patients with chronic disease (Western Journal of Medicine)
By: Simon, Gregory E.
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1071593
3. “What Faith Can Do” lyrics (KUTLESS LYRICS)
www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/kutless/whatfaithcando.html

Ecclesia Reformata – Semper Reformanda **(The Church Reformed, Always Reforming)**

by Pastor Mike Stangeland

“[I]f the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Psalms 11:3).

“For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

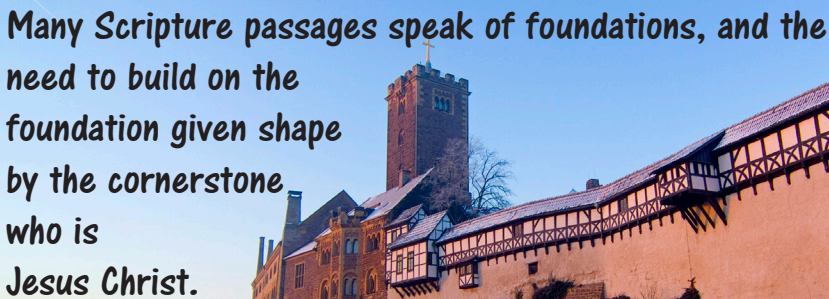
“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Basic Reformation Idea: The church is always to be measuring itself by Scripture and thus always seeking to change in ways that make its testimony more faithful to God’s revelation.

Today many pick up the theme of the need for reform and use it to emphasize change. It is thought that we must bring the church and its message up to our modern sensibilities. We need to modernize our attitudes toward sexuality, toward marriage, toward sin and to fully understand the depth of God’s love, which now means total acceptance of anything we do.

While the church does need change, these are not the changes to which this reformation principle pointed. In fact, any move toward giving the people what they want within the church must be viewed with suspicion and apprehension. In Exodus 32, Aaron gave the people what they wanted, and out came a golden calf. It was not to the benefit of the community but to the destruction of many.

Many Scripture passages speak of foundations and the need to build on the founda-



Many Scripture passages speak of foundations, and the need to build on the foundation given shape by the cornerstone who is Jesus Christ.

Wartburg Castle (Germany) - Martin Luther stayed here from May 1521 to March 1522. While there, he translated the New Testament from Ancient Greek into German. (Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wartburg)

tion given shape by the cornerstone who is Jesus Christ. We are called to recognize the way storms and trials shake the church, but the imagery is right. If we lose the foundation, the whole structure will fall. We can't shape the church to our own design because God has given shape and direction to us. Paul tells us, **"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect"** (Romans 12:2).

Luther placed primary emphasis on the Word. He understood that scripture is the final authoritative source for the church's life and doctrine. Everything the church says or does is to be consistent with God's Word and is to be regulated by God's Word. God has spoken, His Word is truth, and it is the church's responsibility to regulate her speech in the light of God's speech. That is what continual reformation is.

In Genesis 3, the serpent's temptation began with the words, "Did God really say?" That temptation confronts us daily. We listen to that voice and sin constantly. But God keeps calling us back to His Word, to Christ as our Savior. **"Then Pilate said to him, 'So you are a king?' Jesus answered, 'You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice'"** (John 18:37). May we listen and learn, and in learning from Him be built into a spiritual house, holy and acceptable to God.

Rev. Mike Stangeland is pastor at Highwater Lutheran Church, Lamberton, Minnesota, and Old Westbrook Lutheran Church, Westbrook, Minnesota.



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Healing the Shockwaves of Abortion

by Janet Morana and Georgette Forney

This year, the Silent No More Awareness Campaign will embark on a project called Healing the Shockwaves of Abortion.

But what do we mean by “healing” the shockwaves of abortion?

When most people think of abortion, it is often as a contentious social or political issue or a closely guarded secret that is best left alone, in the past. We may struggle at times with the moral dilemma of abortion, but we tend to think of it as a private and personal decision. It’s none of our business, right?

But the truth is, many of us have been impacted by the premeditated death of an unborn child.

You may be a mother or father who was part of an abortion decision or felt powerless to stop it.

You may be a grandparent who tried to prevent the death of your grandchild, or you may have been active in encouraging your son or daughter to have an abortion.

You may have lost a sibling to abortion. If you were born after 1973, you escaped the fate of one-third of your generation because you were a “*wanted child*.”

Perhaps you are an ultrasound technician who reveals the child in the womb to a pregnant mother, hoping she will choose life, but she decides to abort her unborn child.

Some of you may have been active accessories in a child’s death if you:

- Drove your friend to the abortion clinic or paid for your sister’s abortion.
- Knew a young couple was considering an abortion and told them they were doing the right thing, or you said nothing.
- Are a health-care professional, counselor, teacher or minister who was in some direct way part of an abortion decision or procedure.

All those involved with an abortion decision want to flee from the emotional fallout of the event as quickly as possible, but the truth is that abortion triggers a series of powerful physical, emotional, and spiritual *shockwaves*.

Think of what happens before, during, and after an earthquake. Along fault lines in the earth’s crust, rocks under great stress shift violently, causing shockwaves to spread out in every direction. Sometimes these shockwaves can be felt by people thousands of miles away.

With abortion, the “fault line” is the conditions that made ending the life of the unborn child seem like the right choice. The violent shift takes place in the abortion clinic, where a child is literally torn from what should be the safest place on earth. The shockwaves of that abortion extend far beyond the epicenter of the procedure.

Abortion changes the mother of the unborn child and how she interacts in all her relationships, present and future. But all those closely associated with the abortion decision and procedure can also experience a variety of aftershocks. The thoughts, feelings, and memories from the event are often relegated to a distant, dark corner of the soul. This repression can lead to depression and anxiety, anger issues, addictions, and difficulties in marriage and family relationships.

What we are hoping with our shockwaves project is that, as people gain greater clarity and understanding, they will see the blessing of reconciliation and healing for themselves and their loved ones.

The gentle but powerful waves of forgiveness and healing are stronger than the destructive shockwaves of abortion.

Every month this year, we will focus on a special group that has been directly impacted by abortion loss, with helpful information, resources, and most importantly, abortion-recovery programs.

Recently, the pro-abortion author of a book who hopes to help remove the stigma of abortion gave an interview to an online news site and had this to say about the Silent No More Awareness Campaign:

“I go every year to the Right to Life March in Washington, around the anniversary of Roe v Wade, and there are always these women, and I write about this in my book, and they stand up there and they read from these laminated cards the story of their abortion. And the story of their abortion always is, ‘Someone pushed me into this. And it ruined my life. And now I’ve found Christ.’ That’s always the story.”

We couldn’t agree more. Finding forgiveness in Christ is the first step towards healing everyone who is impacted by the shockwaves of abortion. It’s always the story.

Janet A. Morana serves as the executive director of Priests for Life and the co-founder of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign. Georgette Forney is president of Anglicans for Life and co-founder of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign. (Both Priests for Life and Anglicans for Life are members, along with Lutherans For Life, of the National Pro-Life Religious Council—www.nprcouncil.org.) The Silent No More Awareness Campaign (www.silentnomoreawareness.org/shockwaves) is the largest international mobilization of women and men who have gone through healing and regret their abortion.



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Word of Hope is a ministry of Lutherans For Life



Fighting for Life in Bulgaria

by Linda Phillips, Helping Hands Bulgaria

It's impossible to calculate the loss of life and suffering that communism created in Bulgaria—and in many other countries throughout the world. When I lived in Bulgaria from 1994-1997, part of my work as a medical missionary was exposing the false information about abortion that communists had disseminated to the Bulgarians for so many years. The primary lie was that the unborn, during the first few months of gestation, were just “a blob of tissue,” soul-less and unable to feel pain. Thus abortion was nothing more than just another procedure.

The communists propagated an equal contempt for the disabled. If they escaped abortion, the disabled were usually housed in orphanages in remote areas. Once, I set out to bring supplies to such an orphanage, and after driving up treacherous mountainous roads, found the dilapidated building filled with naked, emaciated children. The chronically ill, those with psychiatric disorders, and the elderly were often just as deprived of care. Although there is less of that “survival of the fittest” philosophy now, economic problems since the fall of communism have made improvements in the care of the vulnerable slow in coming.

When I first started working in Bulgaria, it seemed impossible to change the thinking of people, but that kind of discouragement was a lie Satan told me so that I would give up before I ever started. I also imagined that any sort of pro-life work would get me kicked out of the country—or at least make it impossible to get my visa renewed. None of those things happened, and indeed, God brought about many miracles during my stay in Bulgaria and, after I left, through the Bulgarians who carried on my work. During the last ten years, through Helping Hands Bulgaria, the non-profit organization that I help run, there have been more successes in this fight for life. In fact, there are things we did and are doing in Bulgaria that I could never do in the U.S.!

One of the most amazing feats was having the movie *Living Proof* dubbed into Bulgarian. The medical student who did the voice-over in Bulgarian in 1996 is now Dr. Kiriel Svilenov (pictured right), the head of the Christian Medical Association of Bulgaria. That precious movie has been shown repeatedly to groups of high school students, teen-aged students at an orphanage, and groups of women all over Bulgaria. Shortly after it was dubbed, we were able to have it broadcast on one of the television stations in Bulgaria!



Helping Hands Bulgaria primarily has programs in institutions, including three full-time staff working at an orphanage for babies and small children, two nurses at a daycare for disabled children, and a nurse who runs a program for thirty hours a week at a nursing home. We also have a home visit program that includes spiritual care to those in twenty-five homes in a city south of the capital of Sofia. We added limited pro-life talks and counseling work this last fall. Although this work is in its infancy (no pun intended), we have the trained staff to expand in the near future.

Abortion is very common in Bulgaria. One advantage we have over pro-life work

in the U.S. is that Bulgarians are often open to hearing pro-life messages. There are still very few Christians in Bulgaria, but as we show models and films illustrating embryonic development and describe the amazing complexity involved, many Bulgarians have come to understand that even a fertilized egg traveling down the fallopian tube is far from a blob of tissue. Such education efforts, the humanitarian aid we provide, and clear presentations of the Word are reaping the blessed wonderful results that are promised by God. If you want to know more about our work go to www.helping-handsbulgaria.net.



A few photos
from Bulgaria ...



Lutherans For Life – An International Outreach

www.lutheransforlife.org/about/international

Learn more at the link above about LFL's international outreach. In recent years, through special gifts and grants to LFL, we have been able to offer several of our resources in Russian and Spanish. Read these articles to find out more about recent efforts in Latvia, Russia, and England:



An Update from Latvia (November 21, 2014)

www.lutheransforlife.org/article/an-update-from-latvia-november-21-2014

Dr. Lamb Travels to England, Latvia, and Russia - October 2012

www.lutheransforlife.org/article/dr-lamb-travels-to-england-latvia-and-russia-october-2012

Also see: Confessions of an Executive Director

www.lutheransforlife.org/article/confessions-of-an-executive-director

No Fear of Death: Teach the Resurrection to Your Children

by Ryan C. MacPherson

“Daddy, why are they taking Mrs. Abrahamson away?” My initial impulse was to shush my four-year-old daughter for interrupting the pallbearers’ recessional. But she wasn’t really interrupting the funeral. Her question was quite on task, so I whispered a reply. “They are taking her body to be buried in a grave, to wait for Jesus to raise her body up and make it new again.”

My daughter and her younger sister had both accompanied me to the hospital those last few weeks. Mrs. Abrahamson had terminal cancer. Her organs were failing. Food became like poison to a body that no longer could digest it. When her kidneys failed, even water would hasten death rather than prolong life.

Her smile, however, gave a different prognosis. Although she would soon leave her husband behind, her face was radiant with expectation to be united with the Heavenly Bridegroom. That, too, is why the pallbearers were taking Mrs. Abrahamson’s body away.

I choked up as the body left the sanctuary, knowing it would never return to this place where so many times Mrs. Abrahamson had been comforted with Christ’s forgiving love through Word and Sacrament. But then I blinked my eyes to defy the tears—swallowing hard and shouting at Satan inside my head that he had lost and she had won.

In the same congregation, I also had served as the preschool superintendent. I recall a concern that a teacher relayed to me from a parent: “I don’t want you telling my child that Jesus died on the cross.” The parent meant well. In fact, God gives parents to children precisely so that they can shelter children from things that are harmful, including emotional trauma. No question about it, death traumatizes us. Death traumatized Jesus, too.

Jesus, however, never tried to conceal death. Instead, He acted like my four-year-old daughter, only more so. He interrupted every funeral He ever attended.

Death disrupts our lives, but Jesus disrupts death even more. He put a stop to the funeral for the only son of that widow in Nain, raising the boy back to life (Luke 7:11–17). He raised Jairus’s daughter before they even had a chance to bury her (8:40–56). As for Lazarus, four days rotting in the grave did not matter at all. Jesus raised him, too (John 11:38–44). When Jesus Himself died, numerous tombs broke open as fallen saints arose to walk the city of Jerusalem (Matthew 27:51–52). Jesus even interrupted His own embalming by arising from the tomb as the One whom the church fathers called *Christus Victor*, the victorious, risen Messiah.

Another grand escapade is yet to come. Countless more bodies will rise on the Last Day, as “the dead in Christ will rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). The greatest comfort Christians have as they face death is the knowledge that Christ already has died and risen again. The second greatest comfort is like unto it: the knowledge that we, too, have been buried into Christ’s death through baptism so that we may rise again to newness of life with Him (Romans 6:4).

Every year without fail, several of my college students ask to be excused from class to attend a funeral—usually for a grandparent, but sometimes for an uncle, an aunt, or even a parent or sibling.. Recently one student shed tears in my office as she told

me that her grandmother had been placed into hospice care and was not expected to last many weeks. As I listened to her tell me of her memories with Grandma, I, too, teared up. Death devastates us, it angers us, and it makes us feel guilty.

No wonder a preschool parent desired to shelter her child from death. College students, no less than preschoolers, suffer tremendously in death's path. Why do people die? It is because people sin. I have sinned. I, too, deserve death. **“For the wages of sin is death”** (Romans 6:23a).

Yes, parents must teach their children this sad fact—but let us continue into the second half of that verse with rejoicing (v. 23b): **“the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Let us, therefore, face death square on. Let us also gently guide our children to do the same. Jesus died on Good Friday. That was sad, that was horrible, but the death that our Lord suffered worked for the good of us all. Grandpas and grandmas and other people whom we love also die from time to time, but their deaths also work out for the good. On Easter Sunday, Christ became the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20). Because He lives, Mrs. Abrahamson shall live. Because He lives, you and I shall live and never die (John 11:25–26). This joyous message is for all ages because all who believe in Jesus have life in His name (John 20:31).

Ryan C. MacPherson, Ph.D., a member of the LFL speakers bureau, teaches at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. He also is the founding president of the Hausvater Project (www.hausvater.org) and the author of “The Culture of Life: Ten Essential Principles for Christian Bioethics.”

**All praise to Thee, my God, this night
For all the blessings of the light.
Keep me, O keep me, King of kings,
Beneath Thine own almighty wings.**

**Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son
The ill that I this day have done,
That with the world, myself and Thee
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.**

**Teach me to live that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed.
Teach me to die that so I may
Rise glorious at the awful Day.**

**O may my soul in Thee repose,
And may sweet sleep mine eyelids close,
Sleep that shall me more vig'rous make
To serve my God when I awake.**

(“All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night,” *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (1996), #565, verses 1–2; Lyrics: T. Ken, 1637–1711; Tune: Evening Hymn, C. F. Gounod, 1818–1893)



Find more music—and learn about **Concerts for Life**—at:
www.lutheransforlife.org/media/music-concerts-for-life.

Brittany Maynard – Her death in November is still in the news. Here are two posts from LFL friend Maggie Karner that are still well-worth reading and watching:

Brain Cancer Will Likely Kill Me, But There's No Way I'll Kill Myself

www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog/brain-cancer-will-likely-kill-me-but-theres-no-way-ill-kill-myself

A Letter to Brittany Maynard

<http://www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog/a-letter-to-brittany-maynard>

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

by Rev. Terry Forke

“We can give him more morphine to aid the process, if you wish.” That is what the attending nurse volunteered late one evening as the family and I sat by the bedside of their dying husband and father. He was snoring loudly but expected to die soon as a result of a head injury which had left his brain stem severely compromised. He was not exhibiting any agitation, nor had the family requested anything to quiet his all too familiar snoring. In fact, the doctor had just noted that it was unlikely, due to the condition of his brain, that he would feel any pain. When the nurse left, I explained to the family that sometimes the dosage of morphine is increased to the point that it actually speeds death. They agreed that they were not comfortable with such an action but desired to put their loved one into the hands of his loving Heavenly Father.

The nurse, however, was not to be put off. She asked four more times that evening whether they wanted her to increase the morphine. Each time they politely declined. So, when I left the hospital at 2:30 a.m., I asked for the nurse. I explained to her that they did not want morphine to speed death because their standing by his side was their way of demonstrating their love for him and their confidence that Jesus knew what was best. I am sure she had never heard anything like that before—and she was impressed (if not confused).

I was back in the room by 7 a.m. His condition was deteriorating rapidly. We sang hymns. We prayed. We read Scripture. I was thankful when his wife asked to sing “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.” Our voices were soft and emotional, but the message was clear, God is faithful even to the point of death. What better way to die than to have your hand held by your loved one and to be listening to the Word of God when you come into His presence? This was the testimony given to the nursing staff by a faithful Christian family in a very difficult circumstance.

By God’s grace I have read a number of my members into the presence of their Savior. God does not abandon His people in this time of need. **“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints”** (Psalm 116:15).

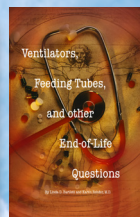
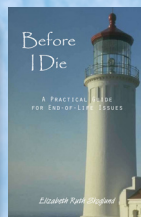
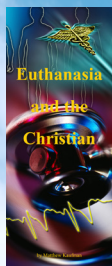
The attitude of that nurse, however, demonstrates the fears of the world regarding death. It is likely that many people in similar circumstances are put to death for the sake of the suffering of someone other than the patient. I don’t make light of such suffering. The family does suffer when a loved one is dying. The nurses do suffer. Yet, why should our suffering break our confidence in God’s love? How can our suffering justify hastening the death of our loved one? How many medical personnel could benefit from a calm confidence in the faithfulness of our loving Savior?

These are difficult questions. The answers are best found, not in the medical capacity to avoid suffering, but in the faithfulness of God in Christ Jesus.

Rev. Terry Forke is pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Harlowton, Montana, and the president of the Montana District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.



LFL End-of-Life Resources



Euthanasia and the Christian – What is and is not euthanasia? Who decides? What is the role of the Church?
Item LFL800T. \$0.50 ea.

God's Love in Human Suffering (Or Why I Didn't Housebreak My Cockroach) – Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb discusses the blessings of suffering. *Item LFL805A. \$0.50 ea.*

A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions – Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer offers guidance in Christian decision-making and in being a faithful witness to God's presence in your life.
Item LFL 801R. \$0.50 ea.

The Right to Die - Rhetoric, Reality, Response – This booklet examines the rhetoric and reality of euthanasia, while outlining what our response should be as Christians. *Item LFL802T. \$0.50 ea.*

The Basics on Advance Directives: Thy Will Be Done – This booklet has basic information about living wills and other advance directives that will help a Christian answer that question. By Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb. *Item LFL807B. \$0.75 ea.*

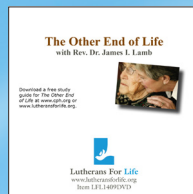
Before I Die - A Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues – This excellent booklet by noted author and licensed marriage and family therapist Elizabeth Skoglund shares principles for the Christian at life's end along with words of encouragement.
Item LFL809B. \$2.00 ea.

Ventilators, Feeding Tubes, and Other End-of-Life Questions – This booklet answers tough end-of-life questions for individuals, families, and pastors. By Karen Rehder, M.D. and Linda Bartlett.
Item LFL800B. \$0.75 ea.

DVD – The Other End of Life – 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.

Note: A free DVD study guide can be downloaded at both the CPH and LFL websites.



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

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).



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.**

Hope for Broken Hearts – The Gospel and Post-Abortion Syndrome – 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. Item LFL1407. **\$5.00 ea.**

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. Item LFL1408DVD. **\$5.00 ea.**

Suggested Resources to Share with Pastors

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 – Find 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.**

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.**

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.**

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.

Free Downloadable Posters: www.lutheransforlife.org/media/posters



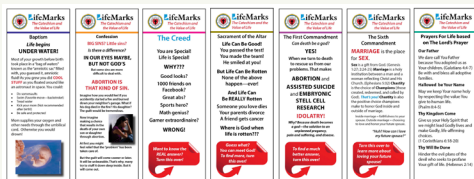
For Life Resources for Confirmation and Sunday School

Consider sharing these resources with your favorite confirmand.



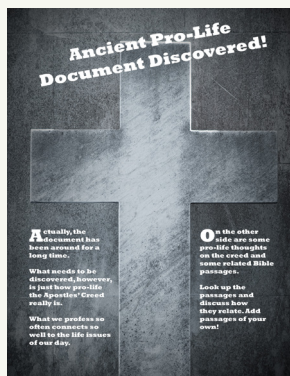
LifeMarks

The Catechism and the Value of Life



LifeMarks is a set of seven bookmarks designed to directly apply the Bible's teachings on life as found in *Luther's Small Catechism*. Item LFL1632. **\$0.25 per set.**

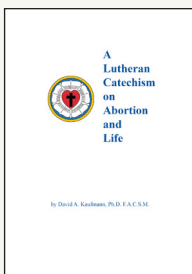
"Very attractive and easy to understand." "Wonderful, perfect for confirmation students."



Ancient Pro-Life Document Discovered!
It is amazing just how pro-life the Apostles Creed really is. What we profess so

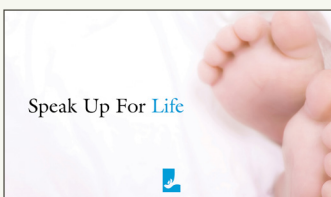
often connects so well to the life issues of our day. This Bible study includes pro-life thoughts on the creed and related Bible passages.

Item LFL1630. **\$0.50 ea.**



A Lutheran Catechism on Abortion and Life – A question and answer primer on abortion and life in the format of Luther's Small Catechism. Written

by David A. Kaufmann, Ph.D., F.A.C.S.M.
Item LFL104. **\$1.00 ea.**



Speak Up For Life takes a look at life issues based on

Luther's Small Catechism—and is sized to insert right into the catechism itself. Does the catechism have anything to say about life? Yes! Item LFL212B. **\$0.50 ea.**



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

Since Roe v. Wade in 1973: 57,762,169 abortions in America

Source: www.lifenews.com/2015/01/21/57762169-abortion-in-america-since-ro-v-wade-in-1973

Teaching For Life®

www.lutheransforlife.org/store-teaching-for-life

Teaching For Life® teaches nine key pro-life concepts by giving ideas on how to integrate them into religion, math, social studies, etc.

Teaching For Life® offers lessons for five grade levels (PK-K, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8) and provides the teacher with all that is needed to teach a key life concept each month.

Lesson Plans and CD

Grades PK-K. Item LFL720C. \$49.99 ea. **Grades 5-6.** Item LFL725C. \$49.99 ea.

Grades 1-2. Item LFL721C. \$49.99 ea. **Grades 7-8.** Item LFL727C. \$49.99 ea.

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

Complete package/45 lesson plans/CD/all grade levels: Item LFL729C. \$199.99 ea.



Order LFL's **Teaching For Life®** at www.cph.org!

Teaching For Life®

Teaching For Life® Online

NEW is LFL's latest means of "equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life"! This self-study, online course is designed for junior high through adult. **And it's FREE!** The course is based on nine key For Life concepts and instructs on all the basic life issues.

ONLINE

Each of the nine lessons contains an engaging Bible study that will help the student apply God's Word of Life to the lesson's topic. The Bible study is followed by "Case Studies," which will help apply what has been learned to practical situations. Then, for those who want even more, there is "Digging Deeper," which will allow the student to link to a variety of readings, videos, YouTube clips, and ideas for action.

It's easy, fun, self-paced, and packed full of Word-based and Gospel-centered For Life information. So go to the link below and let the For Life learning begin.

We pray you will enjoy learning and that you will become equipped to help others become Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

www.lutheransforlife.org/media/teaching-for-life-online

The Supreme Court in England has rejected the opportunity to uphold the right of conscientious objection for senior midwives who refuse to supervise abortions performed in a labor ward. Connie Wood and Mary Doogan were in a seven-year legal battle to secure the right to work in the National Health Service without being involved with abortion in any way. Paul Tully, General Secretary of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC), said of Connie and Mary, “They have fought not only for their own careers, but for all current and future members of the profession who uphold the right to life of everyone, from the time of conception, without discrimination. We are bitterly disappointed for them.” (*SPUC*, 12/17/14)

Just over a decade since assisted dying became legal in the Netherlands, as many as 1 in 33 Dutch people are thought to have died by euthanasia, including 650 babies a year diagnosed with a disability or disease, as reported by the Royal Dutch Medical Association ... Even people in the Netherlands with psychological problems and non-terminal illnesses are now being granted assistance in dying. Official figures indicate thirteen patients with mental illness were euthanized in 2011; by 2013 the number had more than tripled—to 42 patients ... Although the number of deaths remained steady since its legalization in the Netherlands in 2002 and through 2008, even falling back in some years, over the last six years the number of assisted dying cases has risen exponentially. In 2002, 1,882 were euthanized, and by 2006 the number rose slightly to 1,923. Yet by 2012, 4,188 cases were recorded, and in 2013, nearly 5,000. [2014 figures are not yet available.] (*National Review*, 1/2/15; *CLR Life News*, 1/16/15)

Udo Schuklenk, a Canadian euthanasia advocate, said he believes doctors “can justifiably euthanize certain severely impaired neonates,” and that parents “should be able to freely decide on what would amount to postnatal abortion” ... Schuklenk argues that there is no moral difference between killing a disabled newborn infant (known as infanticide) and letting the child die a natural death, except that killing an infant is quick and is more “compassionate.” “Once we have concluded that death is what is in the best interest of the infant, it is unreasonable not to bring about this death as painlessly and as much controlled in terms of timing by the parents as is feasible,” Schuklenk states. “If his prolonged dying is harmful to them (the parents) a further quality-of-life based argument in favor of terminating the infant’s life is established,” Schuklenk wrote. Alex Schadenberg of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition countered, “The concept that the lives of some people are not worth living leads to the death of newborns with disabilities and infanticide. This concept also leads to the continued devaluation of the lives of people with disabilities and people with chronic and other vulnerable conditions.” (*alexschadenberg.blogspot.ca*, 12/5/14; *CLR Life News*, 12/11/14)



**Number of abortions worldwide:
Per year: approximately 42 million
Per day: approximately 115,000
Source: abortionno.org; National Right to Life**

Speaking Life in a Culture of Death

by Lori Trinche

It has been an amazing start to the New Year! I find myself flooded with questions and so many new requests for Life Teams all across the country! (www.lutherans-forlife.org/about/chapters-and-life-teams) Praise God for new teams starting up in California, South Dakota, and Ohio in January. Here are a few experiences from the field I would like in particular to share.

In January, I facilitated an Owen's Mission presentation at an urban Lutheran school at the invitation of the congregational pastor and principal. (www.lutheransforlife.org/owens-mission) The students there were delightful and very engaging in their questions about the development of the "babies"—the fetal models. They were in awe at how perfectly formed they were—while ever so small. I shared with them the message that "every person is a person, no matter how small" and each precious and unique and loved by God! After fond goodbyes with my new little friends, I noticed as I was heading back to the expressway that I drove right past a Planned Parenthood office. How innocent and inviting it looked with its bright pink awning. It was within easy walking distance from the beautiful church and school I had just visited—and those precious children. The extremely gracious and very life-affirming pastor shared with me that he'd never noticed the Planned Parenthood office before the prior Sunday and wants now to make sure he has life-affirming, helpful materials in the church to potentially save lives and help the surrounding community with better alternatives. The presentations, materials, and message we share are creating much needed awareness of the dangers that lurk all around us. We could not do this without your very generous support. Thank you! You are making a difference!

Another recent experience was at a ladies Bible study. The topic: end-of-life issues. The organizer, being familiar with me from other service projects but not so familiar



with LFL, invited me to talk about the practical aspects of advance directives and how to speak to your family about these issues. She shared that she was afraid people there would be offended. To her relief, the presentation was well-attended and well-received as something helpful, very practical, and an encouragement for all people to stop, think, and plan for Christian wishes to be carried out in what is becoming increasingly a culture of death. Assisted suicide legislation looms ominously in many parts of our country.

We must create awareness of this in our churches and in our communities to help both those struggling and those who will be dealing with these issues soon.

Many think that Lutherans For Life is just an anti-abortion group. We need to collectively share that our mission is multi-faceted. We uphold the sanctity of human life at all stages from conception to natural death. We choose life over death.

Finally, on January 18 (Life Sunday), I participated in the Chicago March for Life. I was surrounded by about 4,000 people of all ages, races, and walks of life. There was a myriad of speakers including Archbishop Cupich of Chicago; Abby Johnson, former Planned Parenthood Director; Katie Melody of Students for Life; elected officials; and those helped through pregnancy centers to choose life. A small but faithful band of Lutherans walked with me and added their voices and witness to the peaceful and family-friendly crowd. Students for Life of Illinois hosted the event and spoke about what it is like to be “coming of age in a culture of death,” knowing that in their lifetime it would have been perfectly legal for their mom to have killed them before they were born. Their fear now is that as assisted-suicide and taking one’s own life becomes more socially acceptable in the mainstream media and worldview, their friends caught in a life struggle might choose death over life. As Katie Melody said, “They are survivors in the culture of death.”

In his Life Sunday sermon, our host pastor, Rev. Dr. Vernon Wendt of Messiah Lutheran in Chicago, talked about how some may think it silly or a waste of time to go out and speak For Life. He asked, “What can we do in speaking to the culture of death?” He beautifully shared the story of Joshua and the wall at Jericho. The faithful saints in that story who gathered around and shouted out on God’s command probably looked crazy to some of those watching. Our job is to be faithful in speaking and to remember confidently that the victory is already won. The battle is God’s—not ours! The victory has been won through Christ on the cross. Thanks be to God! (LCMS Northern Illinois District President, Dan Gilbert, and the District Life Coordinator, Dave Bottorff, also participated in the service.) Pastor Wendt’s Life Team is busy sharing how impactful their participation was and already planning events for next year’s March for Life and how to encourage more Lutherans to participate! (Messiah Lutheran also took a door offering for LFL, for which we are thankful.)

Lori Trinche is the Mission & Ministry Coordinator for Lutherans For Life. 630.390.3076/ltrinche@lutheransforlife.org.



“Our job is to be faithful in speaking and to remember confidently that the victory is already won. The battle is God’s—not ours!”



Y4Life Travels to Texas and Washington, D.C.

by Laura Davis, director of Y4Life (Y4Life.org)

Y4Life Servant Event: Living Word

In December, Lutherans For Life co-sponsored the first Y4Life Servant Event in Texas. Hosted at Living Word Lutheran Church in Grapevine, Texas, seven high school students had the chance to learn about life-affirming ministries in the Dallas-Fort Worth Area. The students started by serving at Real Choices Pregnancy Medical Clinic in Grapevine, a ministry regularly supported by Living Word. One student commented, “My favorite part ... was



going to Real Choices and hearing the ladies there explain what the center was ... I could tell how important their job was to them.” On Saturday, they helped spread some Christmas cheer by singing carols with the residents of Woodridge Nursing and Rehabilitation. The residents shared their wisdom and some stories of Christmases past. Some of the students were surprised by how much they and the residents enjoyed the visit, with one student observing that sometimes “people just want someone to talk to.” Finally, the students learned about sidewalk ministry. The students from Grapevine left the event with a greater understanding of the resources available to support life in their community and an increased enthusiasm for serving their neighbors.

2015 March for Life • Y4Life in Washington D.C.

For the third year in a row, LFL was pleased to sponsor high school and college students to attend the March For Life in Washington, D.C. This year’s group had three high school students and two seminary students from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. In addition to the March For Life, the students were also able to attend the LCMS



Life Conference. The conference featured a wonderful line-up of speakers, including LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, Lila Rose of Live Action, National Right to Life President Carol Tobias, and many others. The students would like to thank all of the generous donors who made this trip possible for them. They are all excited about returning home and continuing their work For Life in their own communities.

Find out how Y4Life can help you speak up for life. Contact Laura Davis at ldavis@lutheransforlife.org.

Owen's Mission is a very special project of Lutherans For Life. The goal of this project is to honor Jesus by presenting a set of *Touch of Life* fetal models to every Lutheran elementary and high school in the country. (That's 1078 schools affecting 139,000 students!) We want students to understand the God-given value of each life from the moment of conception. We want students to be motivated by what God has done as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier that gives value to life. We want students to value themselves and to value others as persons because of this God-given value.



Where did Owen's Mission come from? Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life, shares his story:

"I held my little grandson, Owen, in the palm of my hand. He died at twenty-one weeks during pre-natal surgery to remove a large tumor. The nurse brought him to our son as we waited in the recovery room for Owen's mother. I find it difficult to describe what I felt when I was able to hold him. I had held the twenty-week *Touch of Life* fetal model in my hands hundreds of times in front of students from preschoolers to seminarians. Holding Owen revived in me the reality behind those models. I will never hold them in the same way again."

As Owen's grandpa, Dr. Lamb wanted to do something special to remember Owen, honor Jesus, and help others understand the value God gives to even the smallest of lives. With the help of Owen's family, **Owen's Mission** was born. We are training facilitators to present these fetal model sets along with a DVD message from Dr. Lamb.



You can support Owen's Mission by:

- Giving a personal gift
- Encouraging your school to give
- Encouraging your congregation to give
- Encouraging groups within your congregation to give

Our Goal: \$175,000

To give a gift online to Lutherans For Life go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/give. You can also send your check to:

Lutherans For Life
PO Box 76
Garden City, IA 50102-0076

Please designate your gift to "Owen's Mission."

Amount Raised So Far: \$46,496

Leave an Estate Gift to LFL—in 15 Minutes or Less

by John Hawkins, director of development for Lutherans For Life

If you're like many folks, you've thought about leaving a gift via your estate to Lutherans For Life (and perhaps another ministry or two). However, the thought of having to redo your will (or even amend it) may be a bit scary when you consider the time, trouble, and cost.

What if you could leave a gift to LFL at no cost and with very little effort?

An easy way to do this is to leave a percentage of a savings account, tax deferred fund, or death benefit of a life insurance policy (such as Thrivent) to LFL (such as 10%, 25%, 100%, etc.). How is this done? Let's look at an example using a Church Extension Fund (CEF) account:

1. Mary has a CEF account with \$30,000 deposited, which she's never had to draw from.
2. She'd like to leave 1/3 of what remains in the account to LFL after her death.
3. To do so, she calls the CEF and asks that she be sent a "change in beneficiary" form.
4. Once the form is received, Mary changes the beneficiaries to LFL for 33% with the rest going to her to family members and/or other ministries (example: remaining 33% to son Martin and 33% to daughter Kirsten). She then forwards the new form back to CEF.

Now, how long does all this take? The phone call, completing the form and mailing it back should take about fifteen minutes—at the most! Of course, in making this change, you will need the proper language to make sure your future gift goes to LFL. We suggest this:

“_____ % to Lutherans For Life, 1101 5th Street, Nevada, Iowa; 515.382.2077; (EIN 41-1374293); to be used at the discretion of its board of directors in accordance with its mission.”

If your designation to LFL is less than 100 percent, then you will want to enter the percentage you wish to go to the other recipients and their location, etc. (e.g., family, other ministries or charities, etc.).

As an alternative to using a CEF account, leaving a percentage of a tax-deferred account (that is, via an IRA, 401k, 403b, tax deferred annuity, etc.) can be the best way to go tax wise. Why? Because if you leave what remains in this type of account to your children, they will have to pay ordinary income tax on what they receive. This is true whether payments are in a lump sum or “stretched out” over a period of years. If what remains is designated for LFL, however, the ministry will receive all proceeds because, as a charitable organization, LFL does not have to pay taxes. For example:

1. Mary* has a 401k account with \$10,000. Other than the minimum annual distribution required by law, she has not had to withdraw any of the principal.
2. She'd like to leave 100% of what remains in the account to LFL after her death.

3. To do so, she calls the holder of the account and asks that she be sent a “change in beneficiary” form.
4. Once the form is received, Mary changes the beneficiary to LFL for 100% and sends the form in.

Since all of Mary’s remaining assets are not tax deferred (e.g., savings accounts, home, etc.), and (like most of us) her estate is not large enough to incur estate tax, 100 percent of everything else will go to her family tax-free.

Now, what if Mary has to tap into either her CEF account or 401k account while she is living? She is free to withdraw as much of the principal as she deems necessary. This will mean that LFL (or family or other ministries) will ultimately receive less, but since she designated using a percent, it will automatically be adjusted.

In short, leaving a beneficiary designation for LFL can be a quick way to ensure the ministry will continue to affirm life after you are called home to heaven.

If you any questions or would like more information on leaving an estate gift to LFL, please feel free to contact me at 512.468.9777 or via email at jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Please note this article is not intended as legal or financial advice. For assistance in specific cases, you are encouraged to seek the advice of an attorney or other professional advisors.

Get Involved Today!

As a Lutherans For Life supporter, you decide how you can help! It might be through an **annual membership gift** or a **monthly or quarterly sponsor gift**.

Volunteers can become involved locally. (Start a Life Team in your congregation!)

Because of you, LFL is impacting thousands of people annually through the Gospel of Christ.



Contact us—or go to the LFL website—to find out more ways to help, including: **Combined Federal Campaign** – (LFL ID# 11508), **Automatic Bank Drafts**, **Employer Matching Gifts**, **Planned Gifts**, **Online Shopping Rebates through iGive.com**, www.goodsearch.com.

\$20,000 Christmas Challenge Goal Reached!

A heartfelt thanks to all who responded to LFL’s Christmas appeal which included a \$20,000 challenge gift from two generous families. The goal was both reached and exceeded thanks to you! An added thanks to those who made a first time donation or were prayerfully able to increase their annual contribution so we’d receive the full match. May all ministry supporters be blessed in 2015 as you have blessed LFL!

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

(Based on appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*)

April 5 – Resurrection of Our Lord – The women worried in vain. No one was needed to roll away the stone from Jesus’ tomb. “He is risen!” Death is “swallowed up” (Isaiah 25:8). No one will be needed to open the tomb of believers! We too will rise! This is the hope in which we live and in which we die. Prayer: Lord, help me live and die in the certain and living hope of the resurrection. Amen.

April 12 – Second Sunday of Easter – Believing and having “life in His name” is the purpose of John’s Gospel (John 20:31). God wants everyone to have this life. His Son gave His life for the sins of the entire world (1 John 2:2). This bestows value on every human life—born or unborn, residing in a nursing home bed or in a Petri dish. God wants them all to have life! Prayer: Father, help me value every life and give witness to each of “life in His name.” Amen.

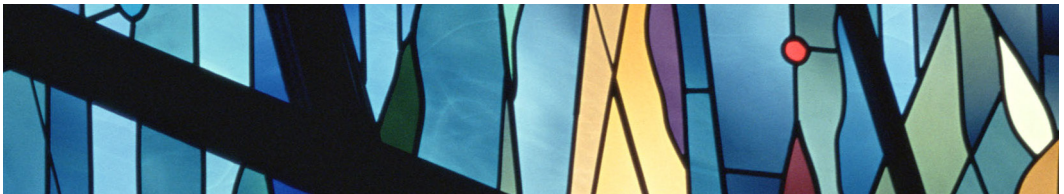
April 19 – Third Sunday of Easter – The theme of repentance and forgiveness runs through all three lessons. Those who view abortion or assisted suicide as only political issues need to be called to repentance. Those crushed by sins committed against life need to hear the message of forgiveness applied to them and to their sin. Prayer: Lord, I repent of my sins and plead for Your forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Amen.

April 26 – Fourth Sunday of Easter – The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep (John 10:11-18, 1 John 3:16). Herein lies our assurance that our Shepherd does not abandon His sheep. He loves them too much. He paid too much for them to forsake them. We live our lives, not in the absence of suffering, but in the presence of the Good Shepherd. Prayer: Good Shepherd, thank You for laying down Your life for me. Amen.

May 3 – Fifth Sunday of Easter – As branches attached to Jesus (John 15:1-8), one of the fruits we produce is love (1 John 4:11). Therefore, we should love as He loved. It should be a love especially for the vulnerable and weak. It should be a love that leads to action. Do we include the unborn in our Christ-like love? Does it lead us to speak up for them? Lord, help me love and defend the vulnerable. Amen.

May 10 – Sixth Sunday of Easter – It is easy to become discouraged in a world that constantly turns to death as a friend to rescue us from our problems. But we live in this world by faith in the victory of Christ who has overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5). We have a true friend in Jesus (John 15:15). Prayer: Jesus, encourage me as I live in Your victory. Amen.

May 17 – Seventh Sunday of Easter – God’s Word is truth (John 17:17). There are many and gross aberrations of God’s truth in our culture. But even in the church, many deny the truth that life is a gift from God from the moment of conception and has value



from that moment forward regardless of anything else. This may be a good Sunday to uphold that truth. Prayer: Father, thank You for your truth. Keep Your people in the truth. Amen.

May 24 – The Day of Pentecost – God gives Ezekiel a picture of complete hopelessness as he looks upon the valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14). But God’s Spirit breathes life into them! The Holy Spirit breathed life into the Apostles on Pentecost and into us in our baptisms. There is no circumstance, no matter how impossible, and no sin, no matter how horrible, that can steal our hope in Jesus Christ. Prayer: Holy Spirit, breathe the breath of new life into us daily through Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.

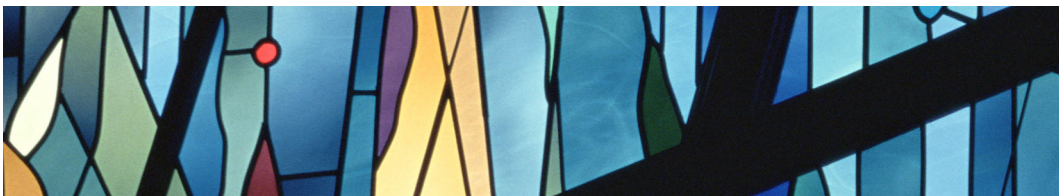
May 31 – The Holy Trinity – God so loved the world that He sent His Son for all and desires to pour out His Spirit on all. Therein lies the innate Trinitarian value of every human life. Prayer: Holy Trinity, help us uphold the value You give to life. Amen.

June 7 – Second Sunday after Pentecost – Today’s epistle from 2 Corinthians 4 is filled with hope for the death of a Christian and those they leave behind. There awaits a glory “beyond comparison” (vs. 17). But there is also hope for the ill and dying Christian as long as God gives them life. For God’s Spirit is at work in the “inner self” (vs. 16). We never know what that “working” might be, and we must protest vehemently any attempt to cut it short. Prayer: Father, help us understand that as long as You give life, You give life meaning. Amen.

June 14 – Third Sunday after Pentecost – It is such a small thing, the splashing of water in baptism. But a seed is planted and another child enters into the Kingdom of God and lives under His rule of abundant grace. The life we live and the choices we make flow from being children of the King. Prayer: King Jesus, help me make good choices as I rest secure in Your Kingdom. Amen.

June 21 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – God rides in the boat with the disciples, yet the storm frightens them (Mark 4:35-41). God is in charge of the entire universe (Job 38:1-11), yet so many things frighten us. We cannot always control our fears, but we can control the choices we make when afraid. The disciples turned to Jesus. We, too, can turn to Him no matter what circumstances may be tossing us about. When we are afraid, we must listen to His voice, “Peace! Be Still!” Prayer: Jesus, give me peace in knowing You control all things. Amen.

June 28 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – God “does not afflict from his heart” (Lamentations 3:33). Our salvation is in His heart. So when afflictions come, whether from Him or elsewhere, we know He works in them “according the abundance of his steadfast love” (3:32). We trust in this so we do not turn to the “quick fixes” offered by the world. Prayer: Lord, work in my heart and assure me of my salvation. All else will flow from this. Amen.



Thank you for your ongoing and often sacrificial support of Lutherans For Life during 2014. 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!

2014 Memorials and Honorariums can be found on the *LifeDate* and *Give* pages at www.lutheransforlife.org.

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"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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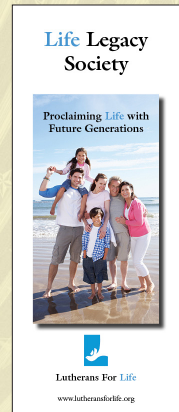
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We encourage LFL donors to prayerfully consider putting LFL into their wills or estates. If you need help with your will or estate, let us know—we can assist you.



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Lutherans For Life ...

- **Applies God's Word**, both His Law and His Gospel, to all the life issues-abortion, chastity, assisted suicide and euthanasia, and bio-technology.
- **Assists For-Life Christians** in offering the hope and help of the Good News of Jesus Christ to: women with an untimely pregnancy; women, men, and families suffering under the guilt of an abortion; young people with questions and concerns about sexuality; and the elderly and those with disabilities or terminal illnesses.
- **Believes God gives the gift of life to all people**-from the moment of conception until natural death.
- **Needs your support to continue to encourage, educate, and uplift with a Gospel-centered, Word-based message of hope, forgiveness, and new life!**

Lutherans For Life ...

Witnesses to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God.

Serves through individuals who volunteer at pregnancy care centers, with hospice, through prayer, and in a wide variety of caring activities.

Educates and Encourages through conferences and workshops, printed resources (including our *LifeDate* journal, *Life News*, *Life Quotes*, and *Directions*), Life Sunday materials and Bible studies, curricula (including Teaching For Life®), video, and through www.lutheransforlife.org.

Equips local congregations to speak out on life issues in their communities through chapters and Life Teams. Many Lutherans For Life state federations and chapters also support a variety of compassionate, caring pregnancy and post-abortion ministries that offer pre- and post-natal counseling, parenting skills workshops, and lifestyle counsel.

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Sign up for **Life Notes**, our weekly email update.

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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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