

LifeDate

Fall
2017



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

God's Adopted Children

A look at our adoption through Christ as well as life-affirming adoption opportunities found domestically through foster care, international adoption, and more

www.lutheransforlife.org/life-issues/adoption



www.lutheransforlife.org • info@lutheransforlife.org • Order resources at www.cph.org

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

Inside this edition of LifeDate ...

page 3

From the Executive Director

Ten Blessings of Adopting

pages 4-7

Abortion/Post Abortion/Alternatives

Who Sinned? by Rev. Charles St-Onge
Fostering a Culture of Grace Within the
Church by Diane E. Schroeder

pages 8-9

Family Living

To Make One's Own by Lynette Auch

pages 10-11

End of Life

Always and Forever a Daughter of God
by Linda D. Bartlett
POW 1523: Captured, But Not Captive
by Linda D. Bartlett

pages 12-15

Worldview and Culture

How Luther Nailed It on Life Issues
by Rev. Michael W. Salemink
Communicating with Your Legislator
by Carolyn McElfratrick with
contributions by Minnesota State
Representative Kathy Lohmer

pages 16-17

Lutherans For Life Resources

pages 18-19

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

page 20

World News

pages 21-26

Spotlight on Lutherans For Life

Meet Kailey Richard: The 2017 Y4Life
Summer Intern! by Laura Davis
2017 Lutherans For Life Retreat – "LFL
Pioneers"
Including Charity in Your Will – Some
Interesting Facts by John Hawkins
Considering an Offering for Lutherans For
Life? There Are at Least 21 Days You
Can Choose by John Hawkins

pages 27-30

2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Like and follow us on ...



Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life

LifeDate is a free, quarterly publication of
Lutherans For Life (LFL). Please notify us of
address changes. Letters to the editor, articles,
and photos may be sent directly to the editor,
Lowell Highby: lhighby@lutheransforlife.org.

Lutherans For Life

1101 5th Street
Nevada, IA 50201-1816

**888.364.LIFE (5433)
515.382.2077**

**info@lutheransforlife.org
www.lutheransforlife.org**

National LFL Office Staff

Rev. Michael W. Salemink – Executive
Director
Rev. Scott Licht – National Director
John Hawkins - Director of Development
Lowell J. Highby – Director of
Communications
Hilary Haak – Mission and Ministry Director
Laura Davis – Director of Y4Life
Jerilyn Richard – Data Analyst
Kim Nessa – Accountant
Debra Freese – Office Clerk
Katie Friedrich – Office Assistant
Virginia Flo – Regional Director of Minnesota
& National Conference Director
Barb Geistfeld – Regional Director of Texas
Chrissie Gillet – Director of Word of Hope

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations
are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®,
copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing
ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission.
All rights reserved.

GOD'S WORD Scripture quotations are taken from
GOD'S WORD®, © 1995 God's Word to the Nations.
Used by permission of Baker Publishing Group.

Scripture marked NIV is taken from THE HOLY BIBLE,
NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright ©
1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by
permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Scripture marked NKJV is taken from the New King
James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas
Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

facebook **twitter**

Ten Blessings of Adopting

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

“**G**od sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (Galatians 4:4-5).

God adopts. The Gospel is about adoption. Salvation’s story can’t be told apart from adoption. Christianity can’t happen without it. The Old Testament features an adopted leading man. Pharaoh’s daughter adopting Moses leads to the Hebrews ending up liberated. The New Testament also stars an adopted hero. Joseph adopting Jesus sets in motion sinners getting forgiven. Father Almighty offers His Son and adopts human beings for us to have a faith relationship with the Lord God and the hope of resurrection to everlasting life in His heavenly kingdom.

No wonder early Christians opened the world’s first orphanages. Psalm 68:5-6 proclaims God “**Father of the fatherless and protector of widows. God settles the solitary in a home.**” James 1:27 NIV describes “**look[ing] after orphans and widows in their distress**” as “[r]eligion that God our Father accepts as **pure and faultless.**” Articles in this issue of *LifeDate* emphasize adoption’s importance. The blessings of adopting are plentiful:

1. Adopting embodies God’s own self-sacrificial love and unconditional grace. He chooses for His own those who once did not belong.
2. Adopting rescues a child in need into a forever home and a better life (and sometimes also provides relief to the family of origin).
3. Adopting bestows the treasures and joys of a son/daughter (and sibling, grandchild, cousin, etc.) upon the receiving family: “**Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. ... Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!**” (Psalm 127:3, 5).
4. Adopting enriches families even when not facing infertility and alongside their biological childbearing.
5. Adopting helps heal the hurts of a child feeling (often repeatedly) abandoned.
6. Adopting extends also to children older than infants (and not only as an alternative to abortion!). Many orphaned or fostered teenagers still want to become part of your household.
7. Adopting forges the deep and strong bonds of facing difficult challenges together.
8. Adopting connects hearts across cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities and forms unions from around the world.
9. Adopting enlists whole communities (especially congregations!) in support, cooperation, and fellowship.
10. Adopting speaks and shows the boundless preciousness of every human life—created, redeemed, and wanted forever by the Lord Himself!

Who Sinned?

by Rev. Charles St-Onge

Jesus and the disciples pass by a man born blind. They ask Jesus a simple question: “[W]ho sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” (John 9:2b). Blindness is not a natural thing. We are born to have two eyes to see the glory of God reflected in His creation. If someone is deprived of vision, something has gone wrong.

It’s our instinct to protect ourselves from things that seem to disturb the natural order. We want to shield ourselves from the wrongness, assuring ourselves that it won’t affect us. Surely the blindness is the man’s fault, or his parents’, but it isn’t something that could happen to us. We keep the sin as far away from us as possible and as close to the source of the trouble as we can. That way we don’t feel obligated to get involved, to show empathy, to realize that the man born blind is one of us.

Netflix has released a new series, *Anne with an E*, based on the classic Canadian *Anne of Green Gables* novels. The first two episodes focus more than the books do on Anne’s status as an orphan. She has been abused and treated as a servant by foster “parents” before being brought into the household of aging brother and sister farmers Matthew and Marilla. But even the Cuthberts, at least at first, are thinking less about giving an orphan a home and more about the future of their homestead.

The community, including many local church members, finds Anne suspect and the Cuthberts a little crazy for taking in this girl. Aren’t orphans thieves? Didn’t one burn down his family’s home just recently? Who would trust their children to play with her? Behind all these suspicions one can hear the voice of Christ’s disciples echoing across the ages: “Who sinned, Anne or her parents, that she would be left an orphan?”

Protestants in certain circles used to have the habit of uttering a “there but for the grace of God go I” when considering tragedies like a man born blind or a child in need of a home. Behind the phrase is the idea that nothing good we have is merited. All of it is a gift. After all, **“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights”** (James 1:17a). We did not and do not deserve parents, even the imperfect ones we may have been blessed to have. They are gifts given to us by the undeserved kindness of a God who, through Jesus Christ, is our heavenly Father.

The same James who wrote about the good gifts of God distills the good works our Father desires from us in this way: **“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world”** (James 1:27). After all, apart from Jesus we would also be orphans, without true family in the world. Why else would Paul call us God’s adopted sons and daughters or compare us to a bride for Christ our husband? (Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 5:29-30).



Thanks to Adam, our human father, we lost the right to consider God our heavenly Father. We became spiritual orphans. But the Father of lights sent His treasured possession, His one natural Son, into our world to die for Adam's rebellion and our own. Now we have a forever family—the family of God. Unlike Anne, we find a Father and a Brother who welcome us into Their eternal home, by giving us Their Spirit to live in us.

Who sinned that people are born blind or that children are born orphaned—or even killed by their own parents before having a chance to exit the womb? All of us, all of Adam's true children, bear responsibility. But now in Christ our consciences have been cleaned. Now we can turn to orphans and welcome them into our earthly homes. We see in them ourselves, apart from Jesus. We visit them with the love we have been shown in Christ at the cross.

In adoption, we take the question of who has sinned and turn it into a statement of Who has brought salvation. We no longer see children who need a forever home and turn away. Now we see an opportunity to show the glory of God, while it is still light. Because Christ wants the works of God displayed in the mercy we show in Christ Jesus.

Rev. Charles St-Onge serves the Lord through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) in Latin America. In his role as an area facilitator for this region, Rev. St-Onge helps strengthen Christ's work in the Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. He is also a member of the Lutherans For Life Board of Directors.

National Adoption Awareness Month/Orphan Sunday

The opportunities for LFL's Frontlines to apply the For Life message are endless. For example, November is **National Adoption Awareness Month**. Check out and order LFL's resources on adoption (booklets, brochures, bulletin inserts) and share them with your congregation:

www.lutheransforlife.org/life-issues/adoption

Here's one more: **Orphan Sunday** (cafo.org/orphansunday) is November 12. The Christian Alliance for Orphans (www.christianalliancefororphans.org) offers a wealth of resources to help Christians stand up for the orphan ... defend the fatherless ... care for the child that has no family ... visit orphans in their distress.



Fostering a Culture of Grace Within the Church

by Diane E. Schroeder, Former President of Lutherans For Life

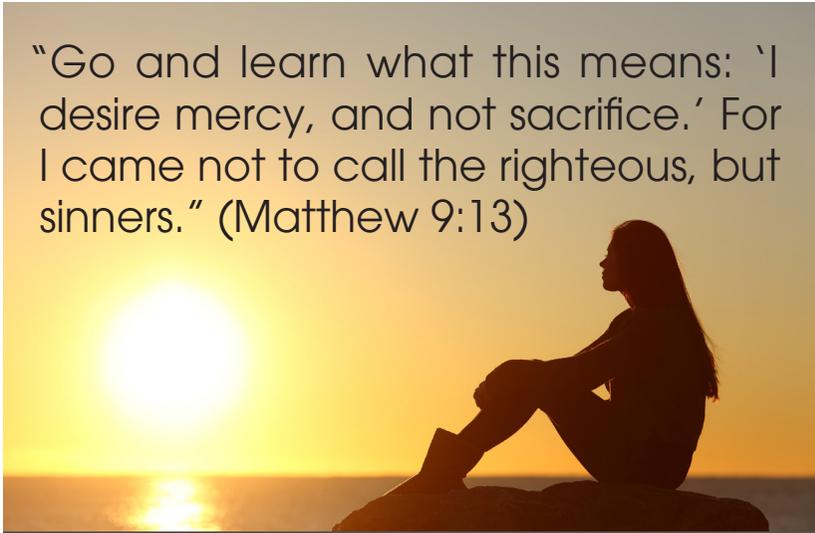
After years of working with Lutherans For Life and CareNet, I have heard many horror stories of young Christian women trying to deal with their unplanned pregnancies. In a local Christian high school in my area, I was told of a young student who, upon finding out she was pregnant, threw herself down the stairs hoping to cause a miscarriage. In another local church, a church youth worker became pregnant, and after pressure was exerted by the parents, she was eventually dismissed from her position. I remember talking to the Christian mother of a daughter who as a member of a pro-life Lutheran congregation felt only condemnation and judgment from her church friends when they learned of her daughter's pregnancy.

According to a 2015 LifeWay Research study, only seven percent of churchgoing women who have had abortions have discussed their experiences with anyone at church. Two-thirds of these post-abortive women said church members judge single women who are pregnant, and fewer than half believe churches are prepared to help with decisions about unwanted pregnancies.

The church has a hard time balancing an abstinence culture with a prolife culture that wants women to choose life for their unborn child.

As Christian author Julie Roys notes, “Christians often fall into one or two ditches when dealing with sin in their own communities. Either we completely overlook it and err on the side of compromising holiness—or we fail to forgive, punish harshly, and miss the heart of the gospel. What’s needed is a proper view of biblical discipline—a practice that seeks to restore and heal, not wound and punish.”

Which ditch are you in? Is there a compro-



“Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matthew 9:13)

“Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience ...” (Colossians 3:12)

mise position? To me, the extreme danger is pushing young Christian women in an unplanned pregnancy to abortion because of the shame they feel and the judgment they expect from their church. Aren't we only compounding the sin when through our actions we push young women to abort their children? Can't we as the church encourage sexual abstinence until marriage and yet provide compassion for those who fail and become pregnant? I remember talking to my girls when they were growing up. "Yes, God's design is for sex within marriage, but if you make a mistake, I will always love you. You can come to me and I will help you." Can't we in the church take the same approach? Educate our youth on God's plan for their sexuality realizing that some will fail and we will need to welcome the new lives that God has created.

At CareNet, we worked with women's groups within churches to provide support for some of our clients who were keeping their babies. What a wonderful way to live out Christian compassion. The young girls were encouraged, prayed for, loved unconditionally, and given a baby shower. We did not judge their behavior. That was up to God. Certainly, young women within our church deserve the same, if not better. Young women within our churches are watching how we as the Christian community treat unplanned pregnancy within our own four walls. Yes, it is very important to educate our people on the dangers of abortion and the value of life. But we will fail as life advocates if we do not demonstrate compassion for those among us who find themselves caught in the web of unplanned pregnancy.

Owen's Mission

Over 28,000 students have now heard about Owen's Mission!

Horton the elephant was right! The Bible agrees! In fact, the Bible says more: A person's a person created by God (Psalm 139:13-14), a person redeemed by Jesus (Galatians 3:13), and a person the Holy Spirit wants to call to be His child (1 Timothy 2:4)—no matter how small!

The goal of **Owen's Mission** 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 970 schools affecting 133,000 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. www.lutheransforlife.org/about/owens-mission



To Make One's Own

By Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

Lowell never dreamed that a short summer stay by a little eight-year-old boy from Russia in 2009 would change both of their lives forever. Shortly thereafter, that same little boy, Alex, became a member of Lowell's family. Likewise, Lowell never, in his wildest dreams, thought that several years later a temporary summer stay at his parents' farm site—and getting involved in a local pageant about the life of Laura Ingalls Wilder—would lead to the adoption of three daughters, all sisters!

Lowell, who himself was adopted as a child, has a heart for kids, especially kids without a family or who have been neglected or abused in their present living conditions. To that end he is an advocate for adoption and foster parenting. He is a licensed foster parent. That process taught him a wealth of parenting skills and continues to provide learning opportunities that help him through some of the hard knocks of parenting.

Lowell will tell you that adopting older children is not an easy task. Each child is different and comes with his or her own baggage from his or her past, which can be quite frustrating at times, but he loves his kids and is grateful for this journey of fatherhood that God has placed him on.

One definition of adopt is “to make one's own.” I imagine that this definition could have a negative connotation for some, especially for those with no family or who have come from a home of abuse and neglect. But, for those who long to be part of a loving family, it is a wonderful definition!

Lowell's concern for children in need of a parent's love and care reminds me of our Heavenly Father's concern for us. We were in great need of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. We were in great need of being saved from our sinful and wretched state. The Bible is very clear about our relationship with God. God is our Father; we are His children. Scripture reveals 265 times that God is identified as our Father.



(l-r) Alex, Callie, Kierra, Eva, and Lowell Highby on the girls' adoption day.

Through Christ, we are the adopted sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father. God sacrificed His only Son to make us His own, to adopt us into His family.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:3-6).

God, our Heavenly Father, is a good Father—a Father who cares for you. He knows you so well that **“even the hairs of your head are all numbered”** (Matthew 10:30).

“[D]o not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ... But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 6:25-31).

Our Heavenly Father has a plan for our lives: **“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”** (Jeremiah 29:11).

Just as Lowell prepared a place for his children, God, our Heavenly Father, has a place for us.

“In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:2-3).

A prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, You have made us Your own. We praise You for calling Lowell, and parents like him, who have been called to foster and adoptive parenting. Help parents everywhere to follow Your example, through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Children of the Heavenly Father

*Children of the heavenly Father
Safely in His bosom gather
Nestling bird nor star in heaven
Such a refuge e’er was given*

*God His own doth tend and nourish
In His holy courts they flourish
From all evil things He spares them
In His mighty arms He bears them*

*Lo their very hairs He numbers
And no daily care encumbers
Them that share His every blessing
And His help in woes distressing*

Author: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832-1903. Translator: Ernest W. Olson, 1870-1958

Text copyright © Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

Always and Forever a Daughter of God

by Linda D. Bartlett

Dear Gary,

It is with sadness too deep for words that you, my friend, mourn the death of your beloved wife. Through the months and days to come, you will think of Verdeen and all that she was to you.

She was your bride. She was the mother of your children. She was a role model and mentor. She was a skilled craftswoman. She was the love of your life.

But do you know that Verdeen was—and still is—so much more?

At much too young an age, your beloved began to change as she suffered the progressive disease of Alzheimer's. How many times did you hear someone say, "She isn't the person she once was"?

But do they know that the person, Verdeen, was—and still is—so much more?

How difficult it must have been when you understood that your wife could no longer be a homemaker but would, instead, be a patient in the care center.

But, oh my friend, do you know that Verdeen was—and still is—so much more?

Do you know that as a baptized Christian, Verdeen has an identity that never changes no matter her appearance, abilities, or circumstances in life? Illness did not change who Verdeen really is. Nor did her funeral. Verdeen will always be the person she has been since her baptism. On that day, she was washed with water and the Word, given faith, and dressed in righteousness and purity. She was marked with the sign of the cross and made a daughter and heir of God because of what Jesus her Savior and Lord did for her.

Think of it, my friend! Jesus invited both you and your beloved wife to pray, "**Our Father, Who art in heaven.**" The Apostle John writes, "**See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are**" (1 John 3:1a).

But the world does not know who Verdeen is because it does not know God. If the world does not know God the Father, it cannot know His sons and daughters.

My friend, you are not like the world. Even though it was difficult to watch the changes in your wife, you treated her with the honor and dignity that an heir of God deserves. It would be a lie to say that you didn't suffer with her, or that you never experienced frustration, impatience, and even anger. But when we see another human being in the way that God does, our attitude is transformed. Indeed, each human life is a treasure for whom Christ gave all He had.



Dear friend, in all your years of courtship and marriage, did you see that Verdeen was dressed in Christ's Robe of Righteousness and proclaimed "holy" in the eyes of God? Yes, I think you did. That is why you held her in high esteem and put her needs before your own. That is why you read to her, held her hand, looked at family photos with her, brought her flowers, sang hymns with her, wiped her bloody nose, combed her hair, and prayed with her.

Here, my friend, is your comfort and peace. You did not love as the world loves. You loved with compassion, which means to "suffer with." You loved more than a bride, the mother of your children, a role model and mentor, a craftswoman, and the romance of your life. You loved a daughter of God who now enjoys her "**inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for [her]**" (1 Peter 1:4).

My friend, you defended the life of your beloved and honored her as her Father desired. You helped her navigate her earthly journey until her Father said, "Well done, good and faithful husband. Now let Me carry My daughter home."

Oh, and there is one more thing, promises the Lord, "You will see her again."

POW 1523: Captured, But Not Captive

by Linda D. Bartlett

Howard Linn was born an Iowa farm boy. Today, at 94, he confesses that he was also born a sinful creature. Indeed, he had inherited the sin of his ancestor Adam. But on his Baptismal day Howard was washed clean by water and the Word. The gift of faith was given to him, and his identity was forever changed. He was marked with the sign of the cross, and, because of what Jesus Christ did for him, Howard became a son and heir of God ...

On May 19, 1944, Sergeant Howard A. Linn was forced to evacuate the gun turret of his B-24 Liberator while on a bombing run over Germany. Under attack from a group of German Falke-Wulf 190s and with engines engulfed in flames, Sergeant Linn had no choice but to parachute. "Our Father who art in heaven." His prayer was answered when Howard landed safely, undetected by the enemy ...

Howard has vivid memories of going to church with his parents and family. Like most Lutheran children, he was catechized in the Christian faith. Would he ever appreciate the liturgy, hymns, and Scripture verses he committed to memory?



The complete article can be read at www.lutheransforlife.org/article/pow-1523-captured-but-not-captive.

How Luther Nailed It on Life Issues

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

Life issues didn't arise overnight. Their frequent connection to medical technology can make them seem like recent developments—and advances in understanding physiology and pharmaceuticals have made abortion and euthanasia more efficient and available of late. But these circumstances have been causing society's difficulties—and providing opportunities to proclaim the Gospel—since ancient times.

The Hippocratic Oath explicitly forbade both aborting and assisting suicide. This famous physician's pledge stated, centuries before Jesus, "Neither will I administer a poison to anybody when asked to do so, nor will I suggest such a course. Similarly I will not give to a woman a pessary to cause abortion." *The Didache*, a Christian text attributed to the apostles and as old as the New Testament, likewise declares, "Thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill that which is begotten."

Martin Luther also applied his voice to life issues. As we celebrate the Reformation's quincentennial, listening to him can still enlighten us. His view of family matters proved revolutionary in its time. Luther promoted marriage, encouraged childbearing, and praised parenting. He concluded even unborn babies qualified as full-fledged human beings.

Look at your infancy, and give thought to whether you remember that you were in your mother's womb, that you lay in a cradle, that you sucked your mother's breasts, cried, ate pap, grew, etc. Yet we are certainly alive even during the first year, when the fetus is carried in the mother's womb. (LW 5:75)

For no one of those who are alive today knows where he was during the first two years, when he lived either in the womb ... Yet he lived at that time, and he was a body joined to a soul—a body adapted to all natural functions. (LW 8:316)

Luther derived this truth directly from God's Word. He observed how Holy Scripture testified about the prenatal humanity of Jesus and John the Baptist. "Moreover, when Christ, the Son of God, was to be conceived in his mother's womb and become incarnate, he certainly had to be already present in essence and in person in the Virgin's womb, and had to assume humanity there" (LW 37:62). "And St. John was a child in his mother's womb [Luke 1:41] but, as I believe, could have faith" (LW 40:242).

So Luther called abortion a sinful offense against the tiniest neighbors. "For those who pay no attention to pregnant women and do not spare the tender fetus become murderers" (LW 5:382). "How great, therefore, the wickedness of human nature is! How many girls there are who prevent conception and kill and expel tender fetuses, although procreation is the work of God!" (LW 4:304). In fact, he labels such acts the devil's works: "Hourly the devil seeks to destroy us all. No sooner are you bap-



tized than the devil lies in wait for you. If possible, he would kill you in your mother's womb" (LW 23:256).

In the same way, Luther saw suicide and its assistance as wrong. "Therefore those hotheaded spirits do wrong by scourging and beating themselves or by killing themselves and trying in this way to take heaven by storm" (LW 30:109).

Christ Himself explains and sums it up. He says that we must not kill, neither with hand, heart, mouth, signs, gestures, help, nor counsel ... So also, if you see anyone innocently sentenced to death or in similar distress, and do not save him, although you know ways and means to do so, you have killed him. It will not work for you to make the excuse that you did not provide any help, counsel, or aid to harm him. For you have withheld your love from him and deprived him of the benefit by which his life would have been saved (McCain, Paul Timothy, ed. *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, 2nd ed. [St. Louis: Concordia, 2006], 379-80).

God's limitless grace convinced Luther to regard life with such respect. Both Bible and experience led him to behold human beings and their bodies as gifts and privileges of infinite preciousness imparted by the Lord Himself. Neither ability nor disobedience, whether one's own or a neighbor's, could improve upon or invalidate the worth the Almighty instilled.

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them... He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life ... All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me (*Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* [St. Louis: Concordia, 2005], 15-16).

Finally, Luther found this grace great enough to forgive even evils against life. Jesus Christ died and rose to save sinners from just such guilt. "That is why all those should be absolved whose sins are hidden, whether they are sins of the flesh, or of every kind of lust, abortion, and the like" (LW 39:42).

When the devil throws our sins up to us and declares that we deserve death and hell, we ought to speak thus: "I admit that I deserve death and hell. What of it? Does this mean that I shall be sentenced to eternal damnation? By no means. For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Where he is, there I shall be also" (Tappert, Theodore G, trans. and ed. *Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel* [Vancouver: Regent College, 2003], 86-87).

LW refers to Luther's Works, 55 vols., Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut Lehmann, et al., eds. (St. Louis: Concordia and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1955-1986).

Communicating with Your Legislator

by Carolyn McElfratrick with contributions by Minnesota State Representative
Kathy Lohmer

There are many reasons people communicate with their state legislators, but for those who believe human life belongs only to God, speaking out in support of pro-life bills should be at the top of the list. Legal assault on life comes on several fronts.

One example of legislation that promotes death as the answer to problems is physician-assisted suicide. It is being debated in many states and has been legalized in several. While it seems to be making headway, it is an area in which Christians may have the greatest opportunity to affect public policy. Many people, including elected officials, may not yet have formed strong opinions. Cultural arguments often sound compassionate and are persuasive. “Why should we force people to suffer?” “If someone really wants to die, do we have the right to force them to live?” As Christians, we know these are false arguments, and we need to speak out against them.

Other legislation in which our voices of support need to be heard includes bills that limit the time during which abortions may be performed or that require safety standards on abortion facilities that are equal to those of other clinics, such as regular inspections or hospital admitting privileges.

How do we impact decisions that will be made? Obviously, it’s important to work hard to elect people at all levels of government who share your pro-life values. You need to know what they believe **before** they are elected. Many candidates use local office as a stepping stone to higher office.

Obviously, if you are to have an impact on legislation you should know what’s going on. Take advantage of communication from pro-life organizations or regular updates from the state legislature itself.



Influencing a legislator on upcoming life-related bills has no “one-size-fits-all” formula. Here are some suggestions, however, that may be helpful.

- **First, know what position the official took during campaigns.** That gives you a starting point. Even if this is a dedicated pro-death representative, you are still responsible to God to speak the truth. Be persistent in communicating your point of view. If possible, schedule an appointment to meet him or her in person. Know how much time you are allotted and plan your comments accordingly. Legislators are usually on very tight schedules so arrive early—be organized and concise.
- **Do your homework.** Have facts directly related to the proposed legislation that back up your assertions. For example, present accurate research data on how long it has taken some people to die with self-administered drugs or how many have severe side effects, such as choking, vomiting, seizures, etc. This would cast a different light on the “death with dignity” argument. Or take well-researched information on the dangerous or substandard treatment at an abortion facility. Having accurate, source-identified information is important to any pro-life argument.
- **Be prepared to talk about real-life stories.** Pro-death advocates often use emotion to convince listeners their position is the right one. Too often we fail to use that powerful tool.
- **If an in-person visit is impossible, letters and emails are good alternatives.** A personal note can be very effective. Mass emails will be counted as “yes” or “no” to a bill, but an original email or note shows more effort was invested and implies higher value was placed on the communication by the author. A phone call usually reaches only an assistant and will be counted simply a “for” or “against.” Even though it is unlikely you will speak with the representative, many calls to an office have an impact. It may not change the legislator’s mind, but it informs him/her there is a lot of public attention to what’s happening and that the vote will be watched.
- **Don’t forget to take advantage of town hall meetings.** It’s an opportunity to speak directly with your representative. A side benefit is that all the other people in the room will also hear your common-sense statements defending life. Go as a group and plan what you will say or ask.

In all forms of communication, be concise but thorough enough to get your point across accurately. Be clear. Be respectful but definite. Remember who you are representing—the Creator of life and the defenseless. You are a voice for both and you are presenting the truth. As always, pray for wisdom and guidance.

A final word: There are representatives at all levels of government who are doing battle for you and for your values. It is usually thankless work and is often costly to them in terms of vicious attacks from the left and the associated emotional drain. Discouragement is a constant threat. A handwritten note, even if you are not in their district, to say thank you and “I’m praying for you” means more than you will ever know.

New Resource: Tiny Hands that Hold My Heart book/booklet

We are offering, through Concordia Publishing House, this resource produced by Tiny Hands Ministries, Inc. of Concord, North Carolina. "Tiny Hands that Hold My Heart' celebrates life by chronicling the nine months of pregnancy with breathtaking photography from inside the womb and relevant Scriptures. It was written as one message for two unique audiences. Tiny Hands was written as a gift book for expectant mothers who are excited and waiting in anticipation for the birth of their baby. Tiny Hands was also written as a booklet to hand out free to women facing crisis pregnancies." 33 pages

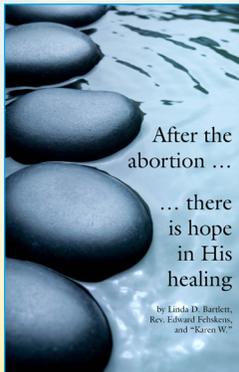


Gift book: *Item LFL111B. \$9.99 ea.*
Softcover booklet: *Item LFL110B. \$1.00 ea.*

Updated Resource: After the Abortion, There Is Hope in His Healing booklet

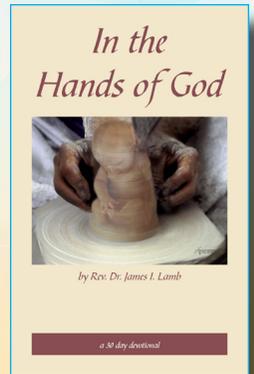
by Linda Bartlett and Rev. Ed Fehskens

This booklet offers hope to those who are struggling with an abortion decision. "Today can be a new beginning for you ... Through the power of Christ's death and resurrection, you are set free to rejoice in the newness of life!"
Item LFL405B.
\$1.00 ea.



In the Hands of God - 30 Day Devotional Booklet

This booklet by Rev. Dr. James Lamb invites you to consider some of the ways God reaches down with His hands and touches His creation. Recently, a woman called our national office. She could not say enough good things about this booklet. She said when she lays it down and does not remember where she put it, she searches until she finds it. She was very touched by it.
Item LFL1604. \$1.00 ea.



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

Speaking of the Inconceivable – A Closer Look at Suicide’s Stigma brochure

Author Rev. Peter Preus writes, in this very personal reflection:

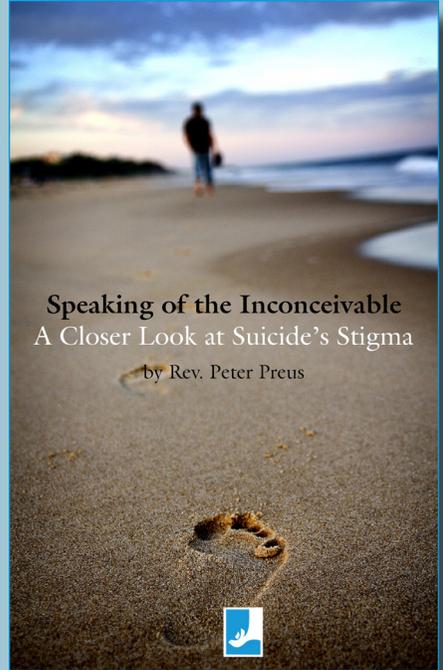
“When my wife took her life, I wasn’t as straightforward as I might be. I’d rather say something about her depression than mention that disturbing word that starts with an ‘s.’ I was affected in a major way by suicide’s stigma. Most people regard suicide as inconceivable. ‘How could he do such a thing?’ they ask. The stigma of suicide does not operate by a sense of understanding or compassion. Rather it targets those who have committed suicide and those who have had thoughts of suicide.”

Item LFL920T. **\$0.50 ea.** (This product qualifies for quantity discount pricing.)

Also see:

www.lutheransforlife.org/article/speaking-of-the-inconceivable-a-closer-look-at-suicides-stigma

www.lutheransforlife.org/sermon/peter-preus-life-and-suicide-2013-lfl-national-conference



Be sure to like/follow LFL on social media! See links below:

- www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife
- <https://twitter.com/ForLifers>
- www.instagram.com/lfly4life



Also see:

- www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife
- <https://vimeo.com/user4132928>



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

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

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

You can find Life Thoughts based on the historic One-Year Lectionary at:

www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-thoughts-in-the-church.

October 1 – Pentecost XVII (Proper 21A) – The lives, interests, and eternities of our neighbors have ultimate value and infinite purpose to our Heavenly Father. He holds each one as His special creature and precious child (Ezekiel 18:4, 32). This makes them also treasures to us (Philippians 2:3-4). The authority that assigns human beings their worth, even when unborn or impaired, comes from heaven and not from men (Matthew 21:23-27). *Heavenly Father, lend us Your eyes to take no pleasure in anyone's death but serve the least among us. Amen.*

October 8 – Pentecost XVIII (Proper 22A) – Some suggest that present and potential sufferings justify using death as a solution. Yet even seemingly unredeemable circumstances have hope (Philippians 3:10, 14) because of our Lord's incarnate presence and resurrection power. Our Almighty Maker never gives up (Matthew 21:36-37, 41) without cultivating life and joy for His people even where all appears lost. *Good Shepherd, lead our hearts to find hope and healing in Your promises and to embody Your life and love. Amen.*

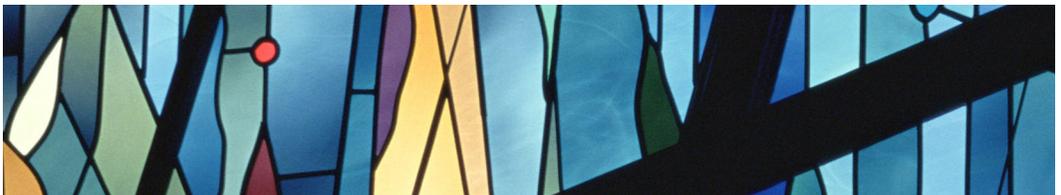
October 15 – Pentecost XIX (Proper 23A) – God works life (Isaiah 25:6-9) and joy (Philippians 4:4, 12-13) in death's domain. He welcomes especially those with broken souls and bodies (Matthew 22:8-10). How can we deny that immediate and everlasting invitation into His fellowship to any among us just because somebody judges them too little, fragile, or guilty? If this good news can change our stony hearts, then it can save any unworthy life! *Lord Jesus Christ, stretch out Your people's hearts and hands to cherish every human being as You do. Amen.*

October 22 – Pentecost XX (Proper 24A) – Since God created humankind in His image, their fate belongs in His hands above Caesar's (Matthew 22:21). Life issues are more than just private or political – they are matters of the heart, to which the Gospel of Jesus Christ speaks most directly and effectively. They must remain part of the Church's conversation for the sake of persons struggling with them. *Almighty God, impart unto us ears that rejoice to hear Your whole counsel and tongues that proclaim it with courage and compassion. Amen.*

October 29 – Reformation Sunday – The Reformation truths Lutherans have celebrated for 500 years apply beautifully and powerfully to life issues. A human being's identity and sanctity comes from God's grace in creating, redeeming, and calling each one. Abilities or accomplishments, efforts or emotions cannot establish anyone's value or invalidate anyone's worth. *Gracious Savior, let us honor with You the preciousness of every human person because of Your grace, forgiveness, and free salvation. Amen.*

November 5 – Pentecost XXII (Proper 26A) – God's people regard it as our privilege and delight to abstain from sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). The eternal joys of godly relationships and bodily service to neighbors (1 Thessalonians 4:9) more than make up for whatever momentary gratification we forego. *Heavenly Bridegroom, captivate our hearts by Your self-giving love that we desire in body and soul to receive Your blessings and serve Your kingdom. Amen.*

November 12 – Pentecost XXIII (Proper 27A) – Our Savior considers human bodies so precious that He eagerly anticipates restoring them on the Last Day (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). He has not designed



humankind's bodily existence as disposable but as indispensable to our identity and abundant life. How shall this affect our approach to illness, disability, conception, and age? *King of creation, increase our respect and protection for the bodies of others with the esteem You bestow upon our own. Amen.*

November 19 – Pentecost XXIV (Proper 28A) – Neighbors' lives occupy among the highest places of all God graciously lends us (Matthew 25:14-15). We may invest ourselves in them rather than burying them (Matthew 25:22-25) before they have borne the fruit and beauty for which He purposes them (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10). With this attitude we share in His own joy! *Merciful Christ, excite our spirits so to trust Your goodness that we find Your kingdom coming even amid suffering and weakness. Amen.*

November 26 – Last Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 29A) – Even death lies subject to God (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). Jesus has established His dominion over it, bending it into an instrument of His life-giving will. This victory enables us to guard the gift of life especially within the least of these – where mortal minds conclude life cannot flourish but faith beholds the firstfruits of the new creation (Matthew 25:37-40). *Lord of glory, let us bear Your cross alongside the undeserving and inherit the kingdom You have prepared. Amen.*

December 3 – Advent I – The hand of God tenderly, intentionally forms every human person (Isaiah 64:8). No life happens by mistake (though God's accidents would surpass humankind's grandest feats). Inabilities due to stage or state of life do not disqualify a person any more than our sins (Isaiah 64:6) disqualify us. Without our merit or worthiness does He make us each His own, on account of His Fatherly goodness. *Omniscient Lord of all, reveal to us the wonders You bring out of every human life until we cherish them all. Amen.*

December 10 – Second Sunday in Advent – The Gospel of Jesus Christ extends healing forgiveness to all those involved in sins against life (Isaiah 40:1-2). God's Word offers redemptive hope also to all those victim or vulnerable to intentional death. Our Lord does not wish that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9), and He lifts up those trampled underfoot (Isaiah 40:4, 11). *Son of God, make straight the ways for us to meet You among those who have been thought unfit. Amen.*

December 17 – Advent III – Lord Jesus specializes in bestowing dignity upon lives the world views as insignificant or inconvenient (Isaiah 61:1-2). Indeed, He has dealt with each of us according to this graciousness. Therefore we savor participating in it by speaking and showing it to both our neighbors and the culture (Isaiah 61:4). *Light of Life, anoint us with Your voice of grace to bring the poor good news. Amen.*

December 24 – Advent IV/Christmas Eve – Jesus brought God delicately amidst sinners, as humble in crucifixion as He was helpless in conception. Yet this estate did not hinder but in fact heralded the full realm and reign of God for us. And thereby He reaffirmed the worth of even the feeblest human beings. God's gift of life arrives all the better for the plain packaging He habitually hides it behind. *Lamb of God, make our taking hold of You to cradle Your little ones as well. Amen.*

December 31 – Christmas I/New Year's Eve – Since God has come born of a woman under the law to redeem (Galatians 4:4-5), neither age nor appearance nor ability nor any other illegitimacy will be able to separate from the love of Christ (Romans 8:38-39) and the right to life as His children (Galatians 4:5-6). In this fullness of time, let us not keep silent or stand still about it (Isaiah 62:1)! *Christ Jesus our Lord, raise us up as banners and lamps testifying to righteousness. Amen.*



Netherlands: 431 people euthanized without consent in 2015 – Every five years the Netherlands conducts a study to determine how people die in the Netherlands and whether or not there are concerns with the euthanasia law. The 2015 report was recently published, and it details the number of deaths by euthanasia, assisted suicide, and “terminations of life without request” ... In 2015, there were 7,254 assisted deaths in the Netherlands. Of these, 6,672 were euthanasia deaths (where the doctor administers the means of death, supposedly on request), 150 assisted-suicide deaths (the person is supplied with drugs to take him- or herself), and, most chillingly, 431 were “terminations of life without request” ... According to Alex Schadenburg of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, in “the Netherlands 2015 official euthanasia report there were 5,561 reported assisted deaths in 2015, and yet the data from the study indicate that there were 7,254 assisted deaths in 2015. Therefore, there were 1,693 unreported assisted deaths (approximately 23%) in 2015” ... This news comes as the Netherlands considers extending euthanasia to those who feel they have “completed life.” It also follows increasing evidence of patients with dementia being forcibly killed, including one woman who was held down by relatives when she tried to struggle. No wonder even the architect of euthanasia in the Netherlands says the law is “running amok.” (SPUC, 7/4/17)

Boudewijn Chabot, a Dutch euthanasia advocate, has written a lengthy opinion piece denouncing the eroding of safeguards for vulnerable patients ... Chabot is completely in favor of “self-determination” when it comes to euthanasia, writing chillingly that the continuing increase of cases “does not disturb me—even if the number exceeds tens of thousands in a few years.” However, he says, “what does worry me is the increase in the number of times euthanasia was performed on dementia patients, from 12 in 2009 to 141 in 2016, and on chronic psychiatric patients, from 0 to 60.” He recounts some of the horrific cases of patients of advanced dementia being euthanized without consent, such as one woman whose coffee was drugged, and when she tried to struggle was held down by her family, and another where a spouse mixed sleep medication in the porridge of his demented wife before the GP arrived with his deadly syringe. He describes both of these cases as “executions.” Read more at: www.spuc.org.uk/news/news-stories/2017/june/dutch-euthanasia-pioneer-law-is-running-amok. (SPUC, 6/22/17)

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has announced that it will freeze funding to organizations that have agreed to the Mexico City Policy ... “This is about women’s own right to decide when, and if, they want to have children and how many children they want,” said SIDA’s Director General, Carin Jämtin ... Alithea Williams, SPUC’s Communications Officer, commented, saying: “What an appalling, ideologically driven decision from Sweden. It’s really shocking that they would withdraw aid from organizations that provide real help and support to those in the poorest places in the world just to make a political point about the US’s refusal to fund the killing of the unborn ... As was pointed out so powerfully on the BBC a few days ago, what women in Africa are asking for is food, water, and education, not contraception and abortion.” Read more at: www.spuc.org.uk. (SPUC, 7/13/17)

To learn about the international outreach of Lutherans For Life, go to www.lutheransforlife.org/about/international.

Meet Kailey Richard: The 2017 Y4Life Summer Intern!

by Laura Davis, Director of Y4Life

We were so excited to have Kailey join our team this summer as the 2017 Y4Life Summer Intern. Read on to learn more about Kailey!

Name: Kailey Richard

Hometown: Garden City, Iowa

School: Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa

Major: Education

Activities/Hobbies: Music, team sports/games, writing, cheer/dance, traveling, watching movies, running/exercising



What are your passions or interests?

My passions include traveling and meeting new people, giving back to the community, empowering or helping others learn about themselves and find their passions, always seeking deeper knowledge, and investing in more relationships with others.

Why are you For Life?

God affirms the value of every human life, from children in the womb to the elderly. We reflect an eternal God and Savior Who knew us from before we were made, and purposely called us into being. I firmly believe that human life is sacred.

What motivated you to get involved with Y4Life?

I love the idea of having the opportunity to communicate with people and having the chance to potentially work through God's will. I love being able to talk and connect with so many types of people and having the chance to spread the word about something that I absolutely stand for, something I really believe in. I am interested in the idea of connecting with youth and really getting to know young people. Because I am going into a teaching profession soon, I think this would be very beneficial to really use this experience again to connect with the youth. I want the chance to speak from my heart and follow this plan I believe God is driving me towards. I know that there are so many people out there hurting or lost, and I realize that it is our goal to lean them towards Christ through grace and faith. After growing up in an LFL-supportive household and learning myself why I so strongly support LFL, I have really come to know what life in Christ looks like.

What are you most excited about this summer?

I am most excited about talking to so many different people and starting something so positive in sharing life with these many different areas. I love traveling and exploring all of God's beautiful creation and being exposed to so many new opportunities.

I am completely optimistic about whatever is to come because I have that faith in God's ultimate plan through the process!

Please keep Kailey and her ministry in your prayers. Any questions and words of welcome and encouragement can be sent to ldavis@lutheransforlife.org.

2017 Lutherans For Life Retreat – “LFL Pioneers”

On June 9, the Lutherans For Life Board of Directors, State Federation Presidents, and national staff held their 2017 retreat at Lied Lodge & Conference Center in Nebraska City, Nebraska.

The current Lutherans For Life organization stands on the shoulders of wonderful people to whom God gave a unique vision and vocation. As we, this year especially, are endeavoring to discern God’s plan for LFL going forward, it’s also important for us to look back. So, we brought together a few of the “LFL Pioneers” to learn from them and to give thanks to God for the work that He did through them.

You can find our 2017 LFL retreat photo album as well as listen to and watch the following presentations at the link below (and on our YouTube channel):

2017 Retreat – “LFL Pioneers” – Opening Devotions (audio/video)

2017 Retreat – “LFL Pioneers” – Rev. Dr. Sam Nafzger (audio/video)

2017 Retreat – “LFL Pioneers” – Rev. Ed Fehskens (video)

2017 Retreat – “LFL Pioneers” – Rev. Don Richman (audio/video)

2017 Retreat – “LFL Pioneers” – Panel Discussion (audio/video)

www.lutheransforlife.org/article/2017-retreat-lfl-pioneers



Current LFL Executive Director Rev. Michael W. Salemink (center) with former executive directors Rev. Ed Fehskens (L) and Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb (R) at the 2017 Lutherans For Life retreat at Nebraska City, Nebraska.

Share the Life Message All through the Year!

Lutherans For Life offers several easy ways to keep the life message before your congregation! Go to www.lutheransforlife.org (MEDIA tab).

- **LifeDate:** Order **LifeDate** in bulk quantities at no charge. (Donations for shipping cost will gladly be accepted.) Call 888.364.LIFE (5433).
- **Life News:** Download **Life News**, our monthly bulletin insert with life-issue news and more!
- **Life Notes:** Sign up for **Life Notes**, our weekly email update.
- **Life Quotes/Life Thoughts:** Share **Life Quotes** and **Life Thoughts in the Church Year** in weekly congregational bulletins (or monthly newsletters).

Check Out “Life on the Web” on our Life Blog



www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog

Automatic Withdrawal of Your Bills—and LFL, Too?

Go to www.lutheransforlife.org and click “Give.” Then look for “**Automatic Monthly Debit from Your Checking or Savings Account (ACH)**.” Download the ACH Contribution Form. Follow the instructions, and your automatic gift withdrawal will be in place. Many thanks in Christ! – *John Hawkins*

For Those Who Have Had an Abortion, a Word of Hope



We all have grieved the loss of someone at some point in our lives ... But those who have lost a child because they had an abortion, or were part of an abortion decision, often do not allow themselves to grieve or don't know how to grieve. 888-217-8679 or help@word-of-hope.org • www.word-of-hope.org

Since 1973: 58,586,256 abortions in America

Source: www.lifenews.com/2016/01/14/58586256-abortions-in-america-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973

Including Charity in Your Will – Some Interesting Facts

by John Hawkins, Director of Development

At one time or another, everyone will be told they need a Will, but according to a recent survey, only about 40% of American adults actually have one. This is consistent with findings of other studies in previous years.

When it comes to preparing for the end of life, age is usually a key factor in people's planning. Among those 72 or older, 81% have prepared needed documents, while 58% of the "baby boomer" generation (ages 58-71) has likewise done so.

Conversely, those who are young typically don't have a plan in place. Indeed, 64% of Generation Xers (ages 37-52) and 78% of Millennials (ages 18-36) don't have a Will.

For younger folks, the risk of not having a plan can go far beyond neglecting to designate who will receive worldly assets. When it comes to minor children, a court will decide who will be their guardian, who will make financial decisions regarding the same, etc. Of course, the court may designate the same person(s) that the parent(s) would (such as an adult brother or sister or grandparents). Then again, it might not. The point is only by having the proper estate-planning documents in place can the actual wishes of the parent(s) be guaranteed.

A Will or estate plan first and foremost should and usually does make provision for loved ones at the time of death. In addition to family, many Wills and estate plans also designate charitable organizations as recipients. In fact, another recent study found that the percentage of adults aged 55 and older naming charity as a beneficiary actually grew by an additional one-fourth (that is, from about 8% to 10%) during the decade following 1998. One of the groups contributing to this growth is married couples, which showed an increase of over 28% during this period.

Of course, any charity, ministry, non-profit agency, etc., is eligible to receive bequests and estate gifts provided they are a 501(c)(3) or otherwise federally approved organization. As you can imagine, pro-abortion agencies are also among those groups that do all they can to encourage their supporters to remember them in their Will or estate plan. For example, in its annual report for the year ending June 30, 2016, the national office of Planned Parenthood noted that it received \$21.7 million in bequests. The year before, it received more than double that at \$53.8 million. Undoubtedly, Planned



Parenthood has tens of millions more in bequest commitments lined up which they will receive one day. Please note that none of this includes the hundreds of millions they receive annually in government revenue or fees from individuals for “services provided.”

For this reason, we prayerfully hope that some of the estimated 10% of those designating an estate gift to charity have remembered life-affirming ministries in their Will. We also hope that some of those dedicated to Lutherans For Life have included LFL.

Of course, it's not too late to designate a bequest to LFL. Just how can you do this? There are four basic ways:

- **Designate a fixed-dollar amount or percentage of your assets.** Of the two, a fixed percentage is popular because if your estate grows or shrinks before you are called home, the amount that is bequeathed to LFL will likewise be adjusted automatically.
- **Designate specific property** (such as Grandma's ring, a coin collection, vacation or farm residence, etc.).
- **Designate a percentage of the residuary.** This is a percentage of what remains in your estate after all specific bequests have been made (such as those made to loved ones).
- **Designate LFL as your contingent.** This is what might be called a “worst case scenario” bequest. In short, this is where an organization such as LFL is named as the beneficiary if (and God forbid!) any common disaster or incident should result in the death of all persons you have named as beneficiaries.

Now, what wording should be used in leaving a bequest to LFL? We recommend the following:

“Lutherans For Life, 1101 5th Street, Nevada, Iowa, 50201, 515-382-2077, (EIN 41-1374293), to be used at the discretion of its board of directors in accordance with its mission.”

Of course, you will want to consult an attorney to see if you should revise your Will (or create one for the first time) to discuss the specific ways mentioned above to leave a bequest to LFL (and possibly other ministries). Should you have any questions regarding the ministry, feel free to contact me at 512.468.9777 or jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org.

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.



Buying or selling a home or commercial property? You can support Lutherans For Life at no cost to you by taking advantage of the Real Estate for Life program. Call 877.543.3871 or email proliferealestate@yahoo.com for more information.

www.realestateforlife.org

www.lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life

Considering an Offering for Lutherans For Life?

There Are at Least 21 Days You Can Choose

by John Hawkins, Director of Development

Every year, dozens of churches collect an offering for Lutherans For Life (LFL) as part of observing Life Sunday in January. If yours is one, we thank you and praise the Lord! The number participating continues to go up, so if your church is considering holding one next time, our heartfelt thanks! This support has also never been more important since Thrivent pulled the plug on allowing its members to direct their funds to LFL.

But did you know that congregations alternatively collect special offerings or include LFL in rotating ones on many other observance days, too? This includes the following:

- Advent (either one Wednesday or for the season)
- Grandparent's Day (they are impacted by abortion decisions, too)
- All Saints Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Holy Innocents (December 28)
- New Year's Day
- Lent (either one Wednesday or for the season)
- 40 Days For Life (40daysforlife.com)
- Palm Sunday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday

Additionally, many churches have set Sundays and other days when they rotate offerings between worthy ministries, including LFL, such as:

Mission of the Month • Mission Sunday • 5th Sunday
Adult Sunday School Offering of the Month
Day School Offering of the Month

In 2016, about eight percent of all churches from pro-life Lutheran bodies gave an offering or gift to LFL. If yours is one, to God be the glory! We hope you have likewise given in 2017 or plan to do so before December 31. If you have not supported LFL, it's not too late to give yet this year.

Gifts and offerings may be sent to Lutherans For Life, 1101 5th Street, Nevada, IA, 50201-1816. Questions regarding LFL or its programs can be directed to me 888.364.LIFE or jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org. You can also go to our website at www.lutheransforlife.org.

Many thanks and best wishes this fall and always in Christ!

Hope For Life



2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Ft. Wayne, Indiana – Concordia Seminary, September 16, 2017

Mark Your Calendar!

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Ft. Wayne:

- **Rev. Michael Salemink** – “Standing Out in the Life Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- **Rev. Scott Licht** – “Hope Amidst the Lies – A Christian Perspective on Physician-Assisted Suicide”
- **Dr. Christina Francis** – “Yes, Abortion Pill Reversal Will Work”
- **Rev. Dr. Matthew Rueger** – “We’ve Been This Way Before” – Christians often feel thrust into a hopeless battle previous generations didn’t have to fight, especially in the culture wars raging over sexual ethics and life issues.
- **Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer** – “The Loss of Life and Liberty in the Pursuit of Happiness”

For additional information, including registration fees, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/conference.

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at vflo@lutheransforlife.org.

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

Concordia Theological Seminary • 6600 N Clinton St • Fort Wayne, IN 46825

Hope For Life



2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

New Braunfels, Texas – Cross Lutheran Church, October 7, 2017

Mark Your Calendar!

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in New Braunfels:

- **Rev. Michael Salemink** – “Standing Out in the Life Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- **Laura Davis** – “Defusing the Tension: Revealing the Heart of the Abortion Debate”
- **Dr. Barbara Geistfeld** – “Life ... a Gift from God” on the developing human being
- **Dr. Sheila Page** – “Pain Perception in the Developing Human”
- **Rev. Dr. Laurence White** on life issues and the church

For additional information, including registration fees, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/conference.

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at vflo@lutheransforlife.org.

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

Cross Lutheran Church • 2171 E Common St • New Braunfels, TX 78130

Hope For Life



2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Lincoln, Nebraska – Redeemer Lutheran Church, October 21, 2017

Mark Your Calendar!

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Lincoln:

- **Rev. Michael Salemink** – “Standing Out in the Life Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- **Laura Davis** – “Defusing the Tension: Revealing the Heart of the Abortion Debate”
- **David Zach of Remedy Drive**, with a pre-conference concert at St. John Lutheran Church gymnasium, Seward, Nebraska (7:00 p.m., October 20), and speaking on human trafficking
- **Brian Young** on Creation
- **Greg Baker** – “Christian Witness in the Public Square”

For additional information, including registration fees, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/conference.

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at vflo@lutheransforlife.org.

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

Redeemer Lutheran Church • 510 S 33rd St • Lincoln, NE 68510

Hope For Life



2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Pekin, Illinois – St. John’s Lutheran Church, November 11, 2017

Mark Your Calendar!

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Pekin:

- **Rev. Michael Salemink** – “Standing Out in the Life Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- **Dr. Sheila Page** – “Pain Perception in the Developing Human”
- **Kim Laube** on embryo adoption
- **Brian Young** on Creation
- **Sherry Sherwood** – “Pregnancy Centers vs Illinois Law Requiring Abortion Information” and the value of pregnancy centers

For additional information, including registration fees, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: **www.lutheransforlife.org/conference**.

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at vflo@lutheransforlife.org.

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

St. John’s Lutheran Church • 711 Court Street • Pekin, IL 61554-4735

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 Life Chapters and Life Teams. Many Lutherans For Life State Federations and Life 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.

Lutherans For Life ...

Is a **Recognized Service Organization** (RSO) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Is a **ministry partner** of the North American Lutheran Church.

Is not subsidized by any church body.

Is supported entirely by individual donations and grants.



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

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran, both individually and in community, 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 a Gospel-motivated witness, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post abortion healing, and family living. We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult situations.

National LFL Board of Directors

Lynette Auch, President – Lesterville, South Dakota
Rev. Everette Greene, Vice President – Cincinnati, Ohio
Sheila Page, DO, Secretary – Aledo, Texas
Ronald L. Soule, Treasurer – Mason, Michigan
Keith Alabach, State Representative – Marion, Indiana
Diane Albers, State Representative – St. Louis, Missouri
Dennis Di Mauro – Herndon, Virginia
Henry A. Gallmeyer – Decatur, Indiana
Renee Gibbs – St. Louis, Missouri
Bethany Glock – Wenona, Illinois
Stephenie Hovland – Portage, Wisconsin
Deaconess Tiffany Manor – New Hartford, Connecticut
Paula Oldenburg, State Representative – Rhinelander, Wisconsin
Rev. Charles St-Onge – Deux-Montagnes, Quebec, Canada

LFL Council of State Federation Presidents

Deb Lakamp, Illinois – East Peoria
Keith Alabach, Indiana – Marion
Rev. Rich Salcido, Iowa – Ida Grove
Jeanne Mackay, Kansas – Lenexa
Connie Davis, Michigan – Macomb
Diane Albers, Missouri – St. Louis
Helen Lewis, Montana – Great Falls
Bob Saeger, Nebraska – Waco
Rev. Chris Brademeyer, North Dakota – Oakes
Jill Johnsen, South Dakota – Wessington
Paula Oldenburg, Wisconsin – Rhinelander

LFL has 11 State Federations, 96 Life Chapters, 110 Life Ministry Coordinators, and 58 Life Teams in the US.



LifeDate

Lutherans
For Life

1101 5th Street • Nevada, IA 50201-1816 • ISSN 1098-5859

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Des Moines, IA
Permit No. 589

Mark your calendars ...

Hope for Life - 2017 LFL Regional Conferences

Ft. Wayne, Indiana - September 16

New Braunfels, Texas - October 7

Lincoln, Nebraska - October 21

Pekin, Illinois - November 11

Like and follow us on ...

facebook

twitter