



Lutherans For Life of Illinois

AFFIRMING LIFE IN ILLINOIS

Speaking of Crowns...

Corona. The word is in the news a lot these days. It means "crown" and is used to name a group of viruses because the points on the virus reminded somebody of the points on a crown. It has me thinking about crowns in the Bible. As we near the end of Lent, we see Jesus' earthly life ending under the weight of a crown made of thorns.

What a reminder that He died to pay for all the brokenness we suffer because of sin...including this latest thorny covid-19!

In James 1:12, we learn of another crown: "*Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for*

when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life,"

How do we remain steadfast as Gospel-motivated voices for life under the restrictions imposed to combat the Covid-19 virus? God enables and empowers and provides the means, including modern technology. Let's be creative and consider how we can serve our churches and communities for Life. As we seek to honor the vulnerable who wear a *crown of glory* (gray hair- Proverbs 16:31), perhaps we could use a well-established form of technology and organize a phone tree to do well-being checks



for our shut-ins. Our calls could include a verse for the day from a daily devotional, a word of encouragement, the question, "Is there anything you need?", a listening ear, and an offer to pray with each person we call. Follow up could include determining how any need mentioned might be met. A phone call to connect them with a desired service? Picking up a prescription and delivering it to the front porch and a call from the car to let them know it's there? As we remain steadfast in serving, that crown of Life will outshine and outlast the corona of death. Ideas to serve will be through-out the newsletter this month. —LL

A President Affirming Life at March for Life, Chicago

More than 1,500 people came to the March for Life Chicago Convention January 11th. Most came after the March for Life Chicago ended right in front of the Congress Plaza hotel where the convention was held. Our LFL of IL display was one of the more popular ones up front in the main display area. None of us were prepared for the crush of hundreds of people after the



march. It was awesome! It was amazing to hear many ask us what LFL of IL was all about. It gave us opportunities to shine our Life Light on Jesus and share our LFL mission and ministries. The first and last speakers of the pre-March rally stood out for me. First was LCMS President Harrison who also spoke at the post-march banquet. At the march he said repeatedly that "61 million is enough!"

The last speaker was Claire Culwell, a twin who survived abortion. Check out her website: www.claireculwell.com/my-story.html. She shared three reasons why she was life-affirming: 1) Her mother, 2) Her sister, and 3) Her daughter. She went on to say that because she was a twin, **YOU COULD SEE THE FACE OF ABORTION WHEN YOU LOOKED IN HER FACE BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE LOOKED LIKE HER ABORTED SISTER'S FACE...** That gave me goose bumps!

Lutherans For Life of Illinois Newsletter

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Spring 2020

Save the date, Illinois

© Easter—April 12, 2020

© The Lenten 40 Days for Life vigil began February 26 and ends April 5, 2020

© June 6, 40th Anniversary celebration of Pregnancy Matters, Carterville Community Center. More info at <https://pregnancymatters.org/support/>

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Life Comes in Chapters...

If you travel through the Mattoon area between Mother's Day and Father's Day, you may notice white cross displays honoring the lives of those lost to abortion since Roe vs. Wade. Those displays have been placed by the Coles County Chapter of Lutherans for Life. They are a chapter that is small in number, but they are very active in serving the

Lord with gladness in the Life arena. The Coles County Chapter also does a change for life baby bottle collection during the weeks between Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day. These funds are used to help support the Choices Pregnancy & Health centers. I recently spoke with Velma Price, leader for the Coles County Chapter and she reminded me of the need to evaluate

what is effective in changing times. Chapter members recently wrote letters to the editor of local newspapers, but she says that they no longer find it cost effective to publish Signature letters, as so few people read newspapers any more. You can read more about Choices Pregnancy and Health on p. 6 of this newsletter.

Find a Chapter

Coles County Chapter LFL

Meets 1st Tuesday of the month
At St. John's Mattoon
Contact: Velma Price,
217-246-2553

Dupage County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Beth Kraegel,
630-279-0041

Four -S Chapter LFL

Meets 2nd Tues of Month
At member homes
Contact: Dale Wetherell,
dwet@hofnetinc.com

Heartbeat Chapter LFL

Meets quarterly
At Trinity, Roanoke
Contact: Trinity, 309-923-5251

Illinois Valley Chapter LFL

Meets via email and as needed
At Salem Lutheran, Jacksonville
Contact: Libby Nobis,
217-491-3026

McHenry County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Genny Hertel,
815-568-8425

Metro East Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Ruth Walther,
618-277-5744

New Hope Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At Faith or Calvary in Watseka
Contact: Lowell or MaryAnn Cluver,
815-923-273

Northwest Suburban Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At St. Peter Lutheran, Roselle
Contact: Greg Frey,
630-215-3062

Peoria Area Chapter LFL

Meets 4th Monday of the month
At Bethel, Morton
Contact: Robert Wegner,
309-481-4886

Southwestern Illinois Chapter LFL

Meets via Facebook & email
Contact: Jennifer Roscow,
618-972-5366

Will County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At St. Peter's, Joliet
Contact: Kelley, Riley,
815-723-9158

Chapter Outreach -DuPage County LFL Chapter

This LFL chapter has supported the work of what is now called Caring Network. (more on p.6) The churches of the DuPage County Chapter have served as collection points for baby items. Several of the congregations participate in the baby bottle collection called "Coins for Caring Network." Some participate in their "Walk for Life" and they also have a faithful group that attends their annual fundraising banquet in the fall. On an annual basis, chapter members

visit the LCMS circuits in our area at one of their fall meetings. At these visits, we can meet with pastors and let them know about LFL. Members "take their orders" for Life Sunday materials right then and there and the chapter pays for them. Some members take the time to deliver the orders to each church.

DuPage County chapter also has a set of wooden crosses that were made many years ago by chapter members and assorted other friends. At one time, they had about 3000 and they

were loaned out on a regular basis, along with signs explaining their significance. ...they still have them and the crosses are still available for anyone to borrow. They are a little weather-beaten, but they still are effective. Some churches have used a smaller number, perhaps representing the number of abortions per week. A sign explaining the significance is a good idea.

Chapter activity reported by Beth Kraegel of DuPage Country LFL Chapter

Youth Essay Contest—Deadline Extension



With schools closed and students now at home, turning essays in via teachers may take awhile. Therefore the deadline for submission of essays to the Lutherans for Life Essay Contest will have a later than expected Due date.

You will find the Essay Contest application form and guidelines attached once again., now with the new

deadline of May 1st. Since these are handled electronically students will not need to leave the house to take part. We can also accept submissions sent in from pastors, so if your students are no longer able to send in essays through their teachers, that is a route you may wish to pursue. Ask your pastor if you can email it to him for submission.

If your High School or Middle School student needs something to

do while school is out, maybe this could keep them in learning mode. The Lutherans for Life website provides many resources to help them as they write. While online research can help with facts and figures, students will do their best work when they write from the heart about their own experiences. The pandemic may have given them experiences that lead to deep thoughts about life and how precious it is. **Please pray for more essays to be written and submitted...more youth on board!**

Teaching For Life

I was recently asked how others are using the Owen's Mission Models to teach for Life. Here is one answer From LCMS Mid-South District: By Rev. Phillip Young, District Life Coordinator

"For the past month [December] I have used the models at our Sunday School openings. It has been pure joy to watch the young children **hold each baby model and pass it on** to his or her neighbor. I have enjoyed teaching that the Almighty Son of God went through each stage of development in the womb after being conceived by the Holy Spirit and prior to being born of the Virgin Mary. My favorite moment was to hold the 26-week old model in my hands and read from Luke 1:26-45:

In the sixth month [perhaps around 24-26 weeks into Elizabeth's pregnancy] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. . . . In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby

in my womb leaped for joy."

What made this even more interesting is that the accompanying data with the fetal models teaches this about week 24 (around 6 months): "The baby will be able to hear by next week."

How delightful to have that piece of information and a life-like model when reading to the children about John the Baptizer leaping for joy in his mother's womb!" (used with permission)

In this district, models are lent to congregations for a month at a time. The congregations are encouraged to send out a letter inviting parents and grandparents to come by the church to "Touch, Hold, and Learn about Life" as a family.



Calling all Teachers!

School teachers, Sunday School teachers, Home schooling parents...there are many of us who teach in one way or another. How about sharing your ideas for teaching for Life? As our state takes on a new level of disregard for Life, it becomes more important than ever to instill a respect for all human life in our children. How are you doing this? What have you done with the

Owen's Mission models at your school? In religion classes, how might you have used the story of baby Moses being saved from drowning to teach for life? What about God's care for baby Jesus when Herod was determined to kill him? Or the prophet Jeremiah who was set apart before birth. Health classes, biology, and sex-ed also provide opportunities to discuss human development.

How have you used the models to enhance these discussions?

Could the models be useful in discussion of "anti-bullying" themes? We care for those smaller and weaker than ourselves, after all. I'm brainstorming here, but we would love to hear from those of you who teach for life out there. Help the rest of us follow your lead!

Email me at laeschfamily@gmail.com

What is a Life Team? Answers from LFL...

A Life Team exists for the purpose of equipping Lutherans to be Gospel motivated voices for Life. A Life Team exists to help the pastor with what otherwise might be an overwhelming task. It is unified—working together with pastoral oversight and the support of church leadership. It is a team the pastor can confidently trust to provide life-issue expertise, consistent initiatives, and access to dedicated resources. A life team is

multi-faceted, addressing multiple life issues: Crisis Pregnancy, Purity, Integrity, Adoption, Creation, and End of Life. A typical Life Team Action plan: Pray, Meet with church leaders, Team and leader train, Create a mission statement, Hold regular meetings, Proceed with the mission. The actual mission will vary from church to church as far as its emphasis, as each team will be a good fit for their own congregation, helping it address the

life issues needed in that particular community.

If your church does not yet have a Life Team, why not pray about starting one? Meet with church leadership to explore the topic and then give Lutherans for Life Director of Mission and Ministry, Rev. Jeff Duncan a call. Pastor Duncan will be happy to help you get started: 316.708.0791 or jduncan@lutheransforlife.org (taken from "What is a Life Team?" Brochure)

Team Work — Life Team of Trinity, Roselle

It was originally scheduled for April 19th. But chances are that date will be changed. We all have to practice some flexibility in the face of the current health crisis. But, whenever it finally happens, the Life Team at Trinity, Roselle has an idea worth sharing.

The Life Team is hosting the Youth Group for a joint service project. They will be assembling "Mom Care Packages" for their local pregnancy resource center. I spoke with Ginny

Milas about this project today and learned that the care packages will contain onesies, diapers, a blanket and the Tiny Hands book. These gifts will be given to the moms who have had a sonogram and decided to choose life for their babies.

The Life Team is planning that the youth will be able to work to with a background of some up-beat life-affirming music. While it would be fun to have "cutesy" baby bags for their gifts, they will restrain them-

selves on that count. Like many pregnancy help centers nowadays, theirs has discovered that having cute baby items around frightens those who are abortion-minded.

If you are looking for a way to engage your youth group, you might consider a service project you could do together with them. Find out what the local center needs and share the idea with your youth leaders. It may be just what they are looking for. I think the Life Team at Trinity is on to something!

New Maternity Home ⇨ Elizabeth's House ⇨ Beth's House

Thank you for praying for the steering committee of the new maternity home in the Northern Illinois District! Many details have been dealt with; many yet to go. The name has evolved from Elizabeth's and is now Beth's House. Checks can be made to "Northern Illinois District," BUT please be sure to put, "**Life Task Force - Beth's House**" in the memo line. Mail to 2301 S. Wolf Road, Hillside, IL 60162. I've always had a view of Elizabeth as warm and inviting. Remember how she took Mary in with open arms when the news of her unexpected virgin pregnancy turned

Mary's world upside down? Maybe I got my view from my grandmother who was a poet. Here is how she shared it:

MEMORIES FOR TWO MOTHERS

By Dorthea Maria Hinds

I like to picture Mary as she went
To see Elizabeth on that Spring day,
I like to think that violets bloomed and trees
So blossom-filled they muted birds, till they
Sang scarce above a whisper as she passed.

I like to think Elizabeth looked out
And quickly put the kettle on, before
She waved to Mary coming up the path.
She stood in welcome at the kitchen door;
And their embrace a memory to hold fast.

I like to think those months were perfect months.
Shared morning tasks and happy woman-talk,
With restful afternoons, and twice-bright stars
To guide them as they took their evening walk
And dim what happened to their sons at last

Let's continue to pray for the steering committee, as they continue to grapple with logistical details. Let's pray that the welcoming spirit of Elizabeth will bless women and girls in need at "Beth's House." And because of what happened to Mary's Son, let's celebrate with praise this Easter season as we remember that He rose again so Life could be an eternal gift for us!

-LL



Help Needed

10 years ago, a dear lady by the name of Donna Moody began serving Lutherans for Life of Illinois as Treasurer. For all those years, she has done the bookkeeping, received bills, paid them, received checks and deposited them and kept a balance for the LFL-IL state board. She attended meetings in April and November, as well. Now Donna is ready to step down and we need a Treasurer. If you know someone who could serve in this way, let us know!

Please pray that God would lead us to someone who could fill the role of Treasurer, as Donna is stepping down. Thank God with us for her willing service and pray His continued blessing upon Donna and LFL-IL.

Life Song for Orphans

Thanks to those of you who have chosen to help Illinois Lutherans with their adoptions! The current balance in our Life Song account is \$2908.43. Our goal is to have \$8,000.00 in the fund so that we are in a position to

Honoring the Creator of Life

In my part of Illinois, the robins are barefoot in the snow today. But there are 5 new baby kitties in the barn. In spring new life is everywhere and reminds us how precious the gift of life is.

I recently received a message from Lad Allen of Illustra Media. He mentioned that a few short weeks ago none of us could have imagined the things we are seeing today because of the corona virus. Then he shared the following: None of this is a surprise to God. In fact, Jesus said: *'In this world you will have trouble'* (John 16:33). Notice that He didn't say, you might have some problems or there may be a few bumps ahead on the road of life. No, He told us that we will have trouble. Absolutely. Guarante-

ted. No doubt about it.

But He also promised something else. Look at last phrase of John 16:33: *'But take heart. I have overcome the world.'* In other words, Jesus is much bigger than the coronavirus or anything else,"

Lad included a link to "My Only Hope" a 2-minute video in the John 10:10 Project. The work of Illustra Media has proven helpful in sharing the Gospel with those for whom Darwinian evolution stands in the way of belief. They gently question the assumptions of evolution, promote intelligent design, and encourage awe of the Creator. To His glory and your blessing: <https://thejohn1010project.com/my-only-hope.html>

help more LCMS families who are pursuing adoption. Donations need to go directly to Life Song with the words, "Lutherans for Life, IL #P576" written in the memo line.

Remember to pray for those families whose heartstrings are being tugged

toward adoption, that God will make a way for them to bring children into their families just like God brought us into His family, through adoption!

Here's the address: LifeSong for Orphans, 202 N. Ford Street, Gridley, IL 61744

March for Life Convention Must-Share Blessings

Thank you to all of you who stopped by the Lutherans for Life tables at the March for Life Chicago Convention! We met some wonderful people, receiving so much more than we gave.

One young man shared a song his mother wrote for the unborn lost to abortion. It is a beautiful instrumental if you want quiet background music for a prayer vigil. The title is "Song of the Doomed Unborn" You can Google or have a listen at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3_8Uiq_sFQ

A Congressional Candidate stopped and asked about Lutherans for Life. He had a lot of questions, one of which was, "May I pray for you and your organization?"

Pastor Dave Bottorff of LFL-IL was greeting folks and answering questions at our table, but we all got turns to walk around and see the other For Life displays. He noticed what looked just like a set of Owen's Mission models at the table of Students for Life. He commented that it looked familiar. The representative for Students for

Life said, "Well it should look familiar; Lutherans for Life donated it to us!"

A number of priests stopped to pick up copies of "How Luther Nailed it on Life Issues". A number of Catholic Lay people told us how glad they were that the Lutherans had joined the effort for Life.

It was definitely a day filled with many surprises, blessings and the joy of Life.



Caring Network, DuPage County

I was recently blessed to speak with a representative of Caring Network. My first question for Mary Schutack, Director of Ministry Communications, was about their location. Her answer follows:

Caring Network has pregnancy centers in 6 locations in DuPage County: Darien, Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Naperville, West Chicago & Wood Dale. Our two newest centers in Darien and Elmhurst border on Cook and Will counties and provide access to previously unserved women. Mary also explained to me about their need for volunteers. They make use of volunteer receptionists, prayer partners,

drivers who can pick up and deliver material goods that are donated, and helpers with two annual fundraisers. She says, "Caring Network could not survive without our church partners. Our churches are the foundational "rock" upon which we build all that we are able to do to help women and save more lives. . ."

Caring Network maintains baby banks to provide material assistance, provides pregnancy testing, sonograms, and seeks to connect women to churches so they have good support networks, as well as working for abortion recovery.

You can find more about them, volunteer to help, or donate at:

<https://caringnetwork.com/>

Let's pray that as they take calls on the hotline and keep their centers open on an appointment-only basis, their workers and clients will be safe and virus-free. As any medical center would do, they screen at the door, so pray that they will have enough supplies to meet demand.



Choices Pregnancy and Health, Mattoon, Paris, Casey & Charleston

In conversation with Chris Bugle of Choices Pregnancy and Health, I learned that we have a Chapter member who has volunteered with Choices for 30 years! Thank you Pat Wetzel! I got the distinct impression that the Choices staff love all their volunteers. The mission of Choices is to minister with the love of Christ, to the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of those who are experiencing

the trauma of an unplanned pregnancy. Trained volunteers join the staff members in carrying out this mission.

The newest vision God has given Choices is a Mobile Medical Unit! They hope to use this state-of-the-art medical facility to better serve the 6-county area where they work. That area includes a college and a

University. They are very grateful to Immanuel Lutheran Church for allowing them to park at the back of their lot right next to EIU!



Read more or contact them at: 217-345-5000

<https://choices4pregnancy.com/>

Let's pray that God provides the trained medical staff they need to make the Mobil Unit fully effective!

Pregnancy Matters, Carbondale & Marion

Pregnancy Matters is celebrating 40 years of serving those with unplanned pregnancy! They have a lot to celebrate. Last year alone, they provided service to 866 children from 718 families and dispensed over \$51,000 worth of baby and maternity items, and provided 167 pregnancy tests.

Among the services offered by Pregnancy Matters, are workshops for first-time parents and car seat safety. At the end of the car seat workshop, Parents go home with a new seat for their baby. They also invite parents to call at any time for an ap-

pointment with a certified child passenger safety technician to be sure their child's car seat is properly installed and appropriate to their child's stage of growth.

Cassie Waldon Executive Director of Pregnancy Matters tells me, "We run on volunteers." Volunteer nurses help on ultrasound days and volunteers



help with many other services as well. Providing material support is one of the features of Pregnancy Matters that makes an impact on the 13 counties they serve, as few others are providing that service in this area. Last year, they logged 15,000 visits to their center, some of them repeat visits.

You can volunteer or donate to support Pregnancy Matters at:

<https://pregnancymatters.org/support/>

Let's pray that the June 6th 40th Anniversary celebration will go as planned and be a success!

Spring has come! Let's talk tools...

It's time to bring out the hoe, tune up the mower, and engage in spring cleaning. We are using lots of tools these days. In Exodus 4:2, God asks, "What is that in your hand?" He was speaking to Moses and the answer was, "A staff". Moses was tending his father-in-law's sheep, so a staff is a tool he would always have at hand. God was about to give Moses' staff some new and amazing work to do: bringing on plagues, ending plagues, parting the Red Sea, to name a few. David's answer might have been, "a sling shot", had God asked him just before beginning a new and

powerful work with his shepherd tools. At the feeding of the 5,000, a certain little boy must have answered, "My lunch.."

God still asks His people to use the tools he's given them for His kingdom. I was impressed at the March for Life Chicago Convention with the multitude of ways his people have answered. Got a bicycle? One group was Biking for Babies. They raise funds for pregnancy centers. You can learn about them at www.bikingforbabies.com. Do you have running shoes? Life Runners gives witness to the cause of Life

while running in jerseys bearing the words "Remember the Unborn—Jer. 1:5". This summer they will run a coast to coast relay that crosses Illinois south of Springfield. Got white gloves? One group of Chicago high school students was using theirs to "Mime for Life."

God asks each of us, "What is in your hands?" I wonder what new and amazing work God might have for our tools. Our paint brushes might refurbish pregnancy resource centers. Or our garden gloves might help seniors with upkeep. One thing's certain: if we ask God to use us and our tools, we'd better prepare to be amazed!

40 Days for Life

One thing you can do even while practicing "social distancing" is to pray. Even with the prayer vigils at Planned Parenthood cancelled, of course you know God hears when you pray, no matter where you are and that could just as easily be "in your inner room". As of this writing, 40 Days for Life has gotten reports of 282 babies whose lives have been spared because of prayerful witness at abortion cen-

ters. Now we walk by faith and trust that God can still move hearts, even when we don't see.

Another thing you can do using modern technology from within your own home is to keep learning and growing as a Gospel-motivated voice for Life. 40 Days for Life offers daily prayer thoughts, Scripture and devotionals to those who commit to pray and has some interesting podcasts. If you have not yet seen them, you can

watch at <https://www.40daysforlife.com/podcasts.aspx>

The Lenten Prayer vigil ends April 6th, so there are still a few days to take part. You and a friend could pray on the phone. You could pass the 40 Days' prayer request and Scripture along to your church prayer chain. Or create a Round Robin Prayer with your Life Team or Chapter, emailing it among yourselves, each adding a petition. **However you do it, let's pray for an end to abortion!**

Service to Children in need of Homes

When our prayers are answered, it seems like a good thing to share the answers. Last fall we were challenged to pray for children who were in the Illinois Foster Care system awaiting forever families. I am happy to report that 22 of the children we were praying for have achieved permanence! Because of privacy laws, there is no way to know exactly what that means. However it has happened, these 22 children are no longer in foster care. To God be the glory! This

does not mean our task as prayer warriors is over, however! In Illinois alone, there are 17,920 children in foster care. Of these, 3,347 are waiting for adoptive homes. **Let's keep praying for Godly foster parents, and forever homes...especially now as life is more uncertain than ever!**

I read the following in a newsletter from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption regarding covid-19: "We are all trying to maintain a sense of normalcy and stay connected while

protecting our health and wellbeing and that of those we hold dear. Now, imagine living through this pandemic without the stable love of a permanent parent, whose consistent presence, more than anything else, assures you that everything *will* be okay."

This might be another avenue of service to children in foster care. The donation boxes at Wendy's are out of sight now that only the drive through is open. We could ask the employee at the window to put our change in the box even though we can't see it.

How you can Speak for Life while Sheltering in Place

People who have never thought about it are open to the idea that "Life is Precious" in ways they never have been before. So how do we plant seeds that would grow that thought while we are practicing social distancing and sheltering in place?

One possibility might be taking time to write your lawmakers. Remind them that life is precious. Thank God that **their** lives have been spared. Thank them for the work they have done toward protection of human life during the Corona Virus outbreak. Share a prayer that God would guide them to use their lives in wise ways. Express your hope that the laws they develop might value and protect all life.

What about making a



yard sign? It might say something like...

"Life is Precious..."

"Your Life is Precious..."

"All Life is Precious..."

"Protect Life!"

While the immediate thought upon reading that may be to follow directions regarding covid-19, the seed has been planted to value life and, by the grace of God it will grow and bear fruit. Painting a sign together as a family might help young ones avoid going stir crazy if they can't do the usual play dates with friends.

You are still free to send greeting cards to elderly members of your church and community to let them know you are thinking of them.

Please moisten with a damp sponge, not your tongue! After all, many things can be passed from person to person; flu and the common cold are still problems, too!

No stamps in the house? What about an E-card? You can find some with words of encouragement at

<https://www.dayspring.com/ecards>

Check in with family members, friends from church, those on your Life Teams or Life Chapters, on Face Book, by phone, or with email. You have the precious Gospel of Jesus to encourage others. We may be at a physical distance from one another, but will never be separated from the love of God...

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Refuel and Refresh

Taking care of yourself is good stewardship of the Life God has given you. So of course we will maintain social distance, wash our hands, cover coughs and sneezes with our elbows, and avoid large gatherings. However, God did not mean us to live in isolation and our souls need to be nourished to maintain our spiritual health. While not all of our congregations are equipped to put their services on the internet, some of you are. I've been checking out the websites of churches that receive this newsletter and want to share a list of some who are offering live stream services on the internet. This is not an all inclusive list, but does give choices from around the state of Illinois. I know I've left some of you out and I apologize in advance. Limits to space and time prevent the kind of thorough-

ness I'd like. If your home church is live streaming, by all means join your congregation. For those of you whose churches are not able to do this, feel free to tune in with one of these until you are once again able to meet together. Also stay in touch with others from your own congregation by means of Face Book, phone, or email while you wait.

Cross Lutheran, Yorkville

<https://www.hiscross.org/>

(select "Media" tab, livestream at 8:00 or 9:30)

Immanuel Lutheran, Steger

<https://www.ilcsteger.org/resources-svcsonline.shtm>

Mt. Calvary Lutheran, Decatur

<https://www.mtcalvarydecatur.org/>

(Select Resources Tab)

Holy Cross Lutheran, Collinsville

<http://www.holycross-collinsville.org/>

University Lutheran, Champaign

<http://universitylutheran-champaign.org/>

(click link to livesteam at 10:30 Sunday Morning)

St. John Lutheran, Wheaton

<http://www.stjohnwheaton.org/>

(select Resources, then Listen Live at 5:30 Saturday or 8:30 or 11:00 Sunday)

Others of your churches make use of local radio stations to broadcast services, or share them on Face Book, or have come up with other creative means of sharing the Gospel together while apart on Sunday mornings. I'm praying each of you will find nourishment for your soul that strengthens you to serve the Lord of Life...even in these trying times! —LL

Luther on Epidemics

Emmy Yang, a medical student, recently wrote an article for "Christianity Today" entitled *"Is it Faithful to Flee an Epidemic? What Martin Luther Teaches us about Coronavirus."* Of course, Luther did not deal with Covid-19. But in 1527, Black Plague broke out in the city of Wittenburg. At that time, Luther wrote an open letter, later entitled "Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague". Emmy has written a summary of this profound and practical reflection on the Christian Response to suffering and death. Here are her summary points:

First, Luther argued that anyone who stands in a relationship of service to another has a vocational commitment not to flee. Those in ministry, he wrote, "must remain steadfast before the peril of death." The sick and dying need a good shepherd who will strengthen and comfort them and administer the sacraments—lest they be denied the Eucharist before their passing. Public officials, including mayors and judges, are to stay and maintain civic order. Public servants, including city-sponsored physicians and police officers, must continue their professional duties. Even parents and guardians have vocational duties to-

ward their children. . . . Luther challenges Christians to see opportunities to tend to the sick as tending to Christ himself (Matt. 25:41-46). Out of love for God emerges the practice of love for neighbor.

But Luther does not encourage his readers to expose themselves recklessly to danger. His letter constantly straddles two competing goods: honoring the sanctity of one's own life, and honoring the sanctity of those in need. Luther makes it clear that God gives humans a tendency toward self-protection and trusts that they will take care of their bodies (Eph. 5:29; 1 Cor. 12:21-26). He defends public health measures such as quarantines and seeking medical attention when available. In fact, Luther proposes that not to do so is to act recklessly. Just as God has gifted humans with their bodies, so too he has gifted the medicines of the earth.

However, Luther himself was not afraid. Despite the exhortations of his university colleagues, he stayed behind to minister to the sick and dying., saying "This I well know, that if it were Christ or his mother who were laid low by illness everybody would be so solicitous and would gladly become a servant or helper. Everyone would

want to be bold and fearless; nobody would flee but everyone would come running. . . .If you wish to serve Christ and to wait on him, very well, you have your sick neighbor close at hand. Go to him and serve him, and you will surely find Christ in him."



Plague in the house of Sir Jordan Fitz-Eisulf, Stained glass window, Canterbury Cathedral. Photo by Julian P Guffogg and licensed for reuse under this Creative Commons Licence. No alterations were made

You can read the full article at <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/january-web-only/martin-luther-coronavirus-wuhan-chinese-new-year-christians.html>

Luther's letter can be read at <https://blogs.lcms.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Plague-blogLW.pdf>

Shared by Barbara Geistfeld of Lutherans For Life-TX

Good News about Covid-19

Forgive my suspicious nature, but I am anticipating the next bit of false information from those who promoted the concept that unborn babies were mere clumps of cells or blobs of tissue. I wanted to be sure that all of you have access to this little bit of good news that I found on the Centers for Disease Control website: "In limited recent case series of infants born to mothers (38** in the study) with COVID-19 pub-

lished in the peer-reviewed literature, none of the infants have tested positive for SARS-CoV-2.* Additionally, virus was not detected in samples of amniotic fluid."

Translation: So far babies born to mothers with Covid-19 do not appear to be affected and the virus does not appear to pass into the womb. Illness of all types for a mom-to-be is to be avoided, so we want to protect moms with all the same measures taken to

protect others: handwashing, social distancing, etc. They will NOT need the "protection" of an abortion, and hopefully nobody will be saying they do! Even though For-Life people love and value all babies, this may alleviate the kind of fear that drives too many life-ending choices for young families who have not yet made that commitment.

Let's pray for God's protection for all moms and babies at this time.

(Number from an abstract by Schwartz, DA on Pub Med)

THANKS FOR YOUR GIFTS!

We really appreciate your support! Let's keep the Life-affirming attitude and share the love God has for us and all people. Let's gently give the word of forgiveness to those who are hurting and those who have hurt us...because love affirms life!

Lutherans in our state are disappointed and upset that so many in our society are continuing to cast fragile humans aside ... May God make us into Gospel-motivated voices for life!

Thanks be to God that He has paved the way through Christ for the gift of forgiveness and for us to belong to Him!

(Inspired by LFL-Kansas Newsletter)

Lutherans For Life of Illinois is a State Federation of Lutherans For Life, a 501c3 charitable organization dedicated to equipping Lutherans for becoming Gospel Motivated Voices for Life. We are on the web at <https://www.lutheransforlife.org/lfl-of-illinois/>

Send news items and prayer requests to the editor at: laeschfamily@gmail.com

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Prayer and Praise...Let's Give Thanks!

Top Ten List of Gifts to Unborn Children. By Jean Garton

- 1. The Seasoned Warriors** who were in the first wave of the battle and, ...years later, are still standing and devoting their time, talent, and treasure to the defense of unborn children.
- 2. The Angels** in supportive services who counsel and uphold women struggling with untimely pregnancies while providing a loving and practical response to crisis situations.
- 3. The Influencers** -priests, pastors, teachers, speakers and writers who promote the sanctity of human life.
- 4. The Whistleblowers** -men and women of honor and conscience who have testified to the cruel workings of abortion clinics and the brutality of abortion procedures.

5. The Mind-Changers who once favored abortion as a woman's right but who are now valuable witnesses in the vital struggle against an evil and killing movement that promotes death solutions to life's problems.

6. The Pray-ers who faithfully call on the greatest Power of all [the One] we thank for each success, recognizing that our victories can only be explained in terms of God.

7. The Parents who instill in their children an appreciation for the gift of life and the importance of protecting all members of the human family.

8. The Wounded -women and men who are also victims of abortion and, having been deceived by the seductive rhetoric of abortion, are now willing to publicly share their pain to save others from the suffering.

9. The Legislators -who continue to hold to their convictions and to seek legal protection for unborn children.

10. The Disabled -who are the greatest of teachers of the truth that human life is valuable regardless of age, stage, or condition because it is -simply and wondrously - human life.!

Thank God for these and for each other as we stand together for Life!



*"give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
—I Thessalonians*