



# LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

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## PREAMBLE TO POSITIONS

**“I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens ...” (Isaiah 45:12 ESV)**

God made this statement many times and in various ways throughout the Bible. God states that He is the Creator of the earth and every human being. Lutherans For Life believes God as He has revealed Himself to us in His Word. The following positions are intended to guide us in our relationships to others while we remain true to our beliefs concerning God and His revealed will for all people everywhere.

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## **Abortion**

WHEREAS, Scripture clearly states that God is the Creator of all human life (Job 10:12) from the moment of conception (i.e., fertilization) (Psalm 139:13,14); and

WHEREAS, Human life, even though marred by the Fall, has a unique and valued place in God's creation (Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:5); and

WHEREAS, God sent His Son to die and redeem all human life (John 3:16); and

WHEREAS, Willful abortion is murder, and God says murder is wrong (Exodus 20:13); therefore be it

RESOLVED That Lutherans For Life opposes willful abortion as a moral option, except as a tragically unavoidable result of medical procedures necessary to prevent the death of the mother, such as ectopic pregnancy; and be it further

RESOLVED That members of Lutherans For Life are committed to helping women experiencing crisis pregnancies and offering hope to those who suffer the aftermath of abortion.

## **Abortion Healing**

WHEREAS, Although abortion ends a pregnancy, it can neither “undo” the pregnancy nor return a woman to the person she was before; rather, it changes the way she perceives herself, her sexuality, her relationships, and her ability to make good decisions; and

WHEREAS, Individuals involved in an abortion decision are likely to suffer from guilt, grief, isolation, depression, and other life-disturbing experiences and are in need of compassionate support and constant reassurance of the forgiveness of sins; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes that the Scriptures declare that:

1. all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); and
2. if we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He [God] is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:8-9); and
3. the Lord is near to the brokenhearted (Psalm 34:18); and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes the need to provide assistance to persons and families affected by abortion (I John 3:11); therefore be it

RESOLVED That Lutherans For Life continues to support ministries such as Word of Hope which offer assistance to those experiencing the aftermath of abortion (women, men, grandparents, families, and siblings) and to inform and care for those individuals to the end that they may receive from Christ comfort in their time of grief, forgiveness for their sins, and the power to forgive themselves and others.

## **Biblical Instruction on Sexuality**

WHEREAS, Lutherans for Life believes the Bible is the only authoritative and infallible guide for doctrine and practice concerning sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Bible teaches that:

- God created man male and female, and the two sexes are to complement and complete each other. Genesis 2:18: “Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’” Matthew 19:4: “He answered, ‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female...?’”
- God created marriage, which is defined as the monogamous union of one man and one woman. Genesis 2:23-24: “Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Hebrews 13:4: “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”
- God has confined sexual intimacy to the marriage relationship, and therefore sex outside that relationship is contrary to the will and command of God. Exodus 20:14: “You shall not commit adultery.” cf Matthew 19:18. Ephesians 5:3: “But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.”
- Teaching these Biblical principles is the primary responsibility of parents, to be supplemented and supported by the Church. Deuteronomy 6:6-7: “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” Proverbs 4:1-2: “Hear, O sons, a father’s instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching.” Ephesians 6:4: “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that all Biblical teaching on sexuality should impress upon children their uniqueness as males and females, the need for abstinence until marriage, the dangers of sex outside marriage, and sex as a gift from God. If exposure to teaching contrary to these principles is unavoidable, parents and the Church should counter that teaching with the solid truths of the Word of God. Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Matthew 18:6: “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” Hebrews 12:9: “Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?”

## **Capital Punishment**

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes the right of the government to carry out capital punishment, which is a life-related issue; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life acknowledges significant differences between the issues of capital punishment and abortion; and

WHEREAS, These differences are substantive in that capital punishment involves a rational adult who has been charged with a capital crime and found guilty through due process of law, while abortion involves taking the life of an innocent, defenseless, living but preborn child (without due process of law) who neither has been charged with, nor found guilty of, any crime; and

WHEREAS, In the case of capital punishment the state is empowered to take the life of a criminal (Romans 13:4), while in the case of abortion a private citizen is empowered to take an innocent life; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life will continue to give witness to the inconsistency of the law of the land which accords due process to those persons charged with a crime while granting other persons license to impose the legal equivalent of capital punishment upon preborn children who are guilty of no crime whatsoever. Be it further

RESOLVED, Resolved, that Lutherans for Life recognizes that Christians can differ on the issue of capital punishment.

## **Contraceptives/Abortifacients**

WHEREAS, God is the Creator and Giver of life, and we believe that our ability to artificially control conception must always be subject to His design for us and for our children; and

WHEREAS, Scriptural and scientific witness agree that life begins at conception; and

WHEREAS, Some abortifacients, such as the IUD, the “morning after pill,” and RU-486, which destroy the fertilized egg or prevent its implantation in the uterine wall have been mislabeled as contraceptives; and

WHEREAS, “Birth control” pills, promoted as contraceptives, thin the uterine lining as a back-up mechanism and, therefore, can be abortifacient in nature; therefore be it

RESOLVED That Lutherans For Life opposes the use of abortifacients and urges its members to become educated on the nature and effects of all forms of contraception and abortifacients.

## **Determination of Death (with Special Reference to Organ Donation)**

- WHEREAS, The point of death is when the spirit leaves the body (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 23:46; James 2:26), but no present scientific test can determine that point; and
- WHEREAS, According to the Scriptures (Leviticus 17:11; Ezekiel 37:1-10; Luke 23:46), the total cessation of breath and heartbeat is the primary means of determining when the spirit has left the body and therefore the point of death; and
- WHEREAS, Scripture furthermore teaches that God alone is the One who determines one's time of death (Deuteronomy 32:39; Ecclesiastes 8:8; Small Catechism: Seventh Petition of Lord's Prayer) and that when it pleases Him to call her/him out of this vale of tears, even medical intervention will not stop it from happening (Matthew 6:27); and
- WHEREAS, With the development of organ transplantation in the mid-twentieth century, outcomes data demonstrated that vital organs removed while the heart was still beating performed better in the one receiving the transplant than did those removed after the heart had stopped, due to damage to the latter from lack of oxygen; and
- WHEREAS, The concept of "brain death" was developed in part to avoid the transplant team being charged with murder, as it allows individuals in a persistent coma who appear to no longer have central nervous system activity and thus deemed unlikely to survive, to be considered dead, even with still-beating hearts; and
- WHEREAS, The 1981 Uniform Declaration of Death Act, enacted in 39 American states and jurisdictions, includes "brain death" as a criterion for determination of death, and others rely on "accepted medical standards," which essentially do the same; and
- WHEREAS, The criteria for "brain death" include persistent coma with no response to noxious or painful stimuli, absence of brainstem reflexes as tested at the bedside, and failure to breathe when removed from a mechanical ventilator for ten minutes (apnea test); and
- WHEREAS, These bedside assessments do not measure all of the functions of the whole brain; as evidenced by continued hormone secretion, wound healing, successful completion of pregnancy, movement during surgery, survival after brain death declaration and even complete recovery on occasion; and
- WHEREAS, The guidance on "brain death" determination is based on opinion and not evidence, changes from time to time, and furthermore, studies have shown that not all medical centers apply "brain death" criteria in a uniform manner; and
- WHEREAS, Sometimes organ donation factors into end of life decisions; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms that the concept of "brain death" as the sole determinant of death comes from outside of the Bible, and that the use of "brain death" as the criterion to remove vital organs is likely to cause death prematurely,



and this is contrary to the express will and Word of God in the Fifth Commandment (Exodus 20:13); and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms complete cessation of cardiopulmonary function as the Scriptural determinant of physical death and thus opposes using “brain death” as the sole criterion for removing vital organs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life encourages Lutherans who wish to be organ donors to indicate so on their Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care paperwork, and to specify in writing that they wish their medical teams to use the Scriptural criterion of cardiopulmonary failure to determine that their physical lives are ended; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life assures those who regret having allowed loved ones or other neighbors to be declared dead on the basis of the “brain death” criterion that there is forgiveness in Jesus’ blood shed at Calvary, and encourages them to seek the comfort of Pastoral Absolution.

Adopted 10 October 2023

## **Embryo Adoption**

WHEREAS, God is the Creator and Sustainer of all life (Nehemiah 9:6; SC Creed First Article); and

WHEREAS, Through *in-vitro* fertilization (IVF), medical science has attempted to assist couples who are unable to conceive children, in the process creating multiple human embryos for further development until the baby is ready to be born; and

WHEREAS, Not all embryos thus formed are transferred to wombs immediately, and many are frozen for future transfer or research, and the freezing and preservation process itself in some cases is lethal; and

WHEREAS, This process has resulted in a population of untransferred embryos currently set aside in long-term storage; and

WHEREAS, The endpoint for these embryos, if left untransferred, is eventual death via discarding or use in medical research; and

WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are more than 1.5 million frozen embryos in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Each of these embryos is a human being for whose salvation Jesus died and rose again (Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 2:4); and

WHEREAS, Since 1999, it has been possible for couples to adopt these children who are undesired by their biological parents, by transferring them into the adoptive mother's womb; and

WHEREAS, Having been so adopted during the embryonic stage of their development, more than 8,500 children have been born alive, each of whom may then be brought to the saving waters of Baptism (John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7; 1 Peter 3:21) and catechized in the Christian faith (Deuteronomy 6:7; Ephesians 6:4); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That although Lutherans For Life continues to firmly oppose the practice of IVF, nevertheless, we affirm that embryo adoption is a method to rescue imperiled children that is consistent with Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life encourage the biological parents of these embryos to prayerfully consider completing the process of carrying and bearing them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That, Lutherans For Life commends those families and homes that recognize the inherent value and dignity of these embryos and wish to adopt them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life urges couples interested in embryo adoption to test the spirits (1 John 4:1-6), seeking the counsel of their pastor, and working through a Christian agency such as Lutheran Family Service of Iowa.

Adopted 10 October 2023

## **Embryonic Stem Cell Research**

WHEREAS, There is continued discussion about the subject of embryonic stem cell research and the benefits claimed to be available from such research; and

WHEREAS, Much of this discussion appears to indicate that proponents of such research are following the utilitarian philosophy which suggests that the end justifies the means, or claim that good might be brought from evil, and fail to appreciate the issues involved relating to the sanctity of life; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes there have been successful clinical applications using non-embryonic stem cells—e.g. stem cells from adult tissue, placental tissue, and umbilical blood—in the healing of humans; and

WHEREAS, Human life is a gift from God from the moment of conception regardless of the circumstances of that conception and regardless of where that new life resides, whether in a womb or a fertility clinic; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes embryonic stem cell research, whether involving existing stem cell lines or newly destroyed embryos, for the reason that such research either involved, or involves, the intentional destruction of a human life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life further opposes embryonic stem cell research for the reasons that Christians are not to do evil that good might result (Romans 3:8); and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life is in favor of research on stem cells from sources that do not involve the intentional past or present destruction of the gift of human life.

## **End of Life Documents**

WHEREAS, There is a legislation in various States and by the Congress regarding what has been called the “right-to-die” and documents which may be executed to implement a claim to such a right; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life believes that it is within the purview of God alone to decide on the moment that a person is to be called from this life and that whether we live or die, we belong to God; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life disagrees with the American Medical Association’s designation that food and water are considered extraordinary treatment if taken any way other than orally; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes the need to exert caution with end-of-life decisions and written documents known as living wills, advance directives, and durable powers of attorney for health care; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life urges its members to heed God’s word and to prepare to discuss and express their wishes to family and friends, preferably prior to becoming sick or disabled, and to provide information and assistance to help them do so; and be it further

RESOLVED, That any end-of-life documents should be executed with a recognition of a person’s dependence on God and may direct that futile attempts to keep a person alive if irretrievably dying not be instituted or continued, while at the same time taking steps to keep the person comfortable; and, although such steps may hasten death, they should not be taken intentionally to cause death.

## **Equal Rights Amendment**

- WHEREAS, Congressional sponsors of the proposed equal rights amendments to the Constitution of the United States have refused to reveal clearly their intent regarding the application of this amendment to abortion, arguing instead that the federal courts will have to make such determinations; and
- WHEREAS, Groups favoring public funding of abortion have argued in state courts that an equal rights amendment to the state constitution mandates public funding of abortion; and
- WHEREAS, Groups favoring abortion have claimed that the proposed equal rights amendment to the United States Constitution would lead to the invalidation of abortion funding restrictions and other abortion-related legislation; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes any equal rights amendment which discriminates against the preborn, who are most in need of legal protection to secure an equal right to life.

## **Eugenics**

WHEREAS, Eugenics is defined as the science that deals with the improvement of the races and breeds, especially the human race, through the control of hereditary factors; and

WHEREAS, Human beings are created by God in His image and therefore should not be subject to value judgments relative to superiority or inferiority (James 2:9) but are dependent upon the sovereign plan and purpose of God who knits people together in their mothers' wombs and fashions them according to the plan inscribed in Psalm 139:16; and

WHEREAS, Certain individuals or groups who consider themselves superior, elite, and responsible for establishing a "superior" race or class of people are advocating or utilizing the practice of selection, genetic manipulation, sterilization, or the physical elimination of certain individuals or classes of people by abortion, euthanasia, or outright killing; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes the following:

1. all methods of genetic experimentation, "engineering" or manipulation that would seek to "breed a superior class or race"; and
2. any practices of forced sterilization intended to "breed a superior human class or race"; and
3. any practice or process of elimination of presumed "inferior" races or the selection of some race or class of people deemed "superior."

## **Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide**

WHEREAS, Scripture proclaims that God is the Creator and Giver of life; and

WHEREAS, Scripture states there is a time to live and a time to die (Ecclesiastes 3:2a) and that time is in God's hands (Psalm 31:15); and

WHEREAS, Suicide and assisted suicide violate the Fifth Commandment, "You shall not murder," as explained by Martin Luther in the Large Catechism, "we must not kill either by hand, heart, or word, by signs or gestures, or by aiding or abetting"; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes euthanasia and assisted suicide; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life will assist and encourage:

1. all those caring for the infirm and the dying in showing true compassion ("to suffer with") by using pain management methods and providing food and water to sustain life as needed; and
2. clergy and laity alike to care for the infirm and the dying, to proclaim the message of salvation, and to be with them in their times of suffering, asking God's blessing of spiritual growth and comfort for all involved.



## **Evolution**

WHEREAS, Evolution is commonly understood by major science organizations and many educational institutions as “an unsupervised, impersonal, unpredictable, and natural process of temporal descent with genetic modification that is affected by natural selection, chance, historical contingencies, and changing environments”<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, God, in His divinely inspired Scripture, has clearly stated that He (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) created the earth and all that dwells upon it in six literal days and, on the sixth day, personally and lovingly created man and woman in His image (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21,22); and

WHEREAS, Theories of evolution are a result of our fallen, sinful state and are a rejection of God’s planned and orderly creation of the world; and

WHEREAS, The value we attach to human life, the way we live, the choices we make, and the way we treat one another are directly affected by our view of origins; and

WHEREAS, Wide acceptance of the human race being the result of mere chance has placed all human life at serious risk, as evidenced in abortion, infanticide, assisted-suicide, and euthanasia; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life supports the Biblical statements that “the God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth ... He himself gives all men life and breath and everything else” (Acts 17:24,25) and “through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life” (John 1:3,4); and be it further

RESOLVED That Lutherans For Life base its education and service on the inerrant Word of God which, through the Holy Spirit, reveals the truth of creation and, through the selfless love of Jesus Christ, gives purpose, meaning, and value to all human life.

<sup>1</sup> Official Statement of the American National Association of Biology Teachers (1995)

## **Fetal Tissue Research**

WHEREAS, The American public remains largely unaware or ill-informed of the serious and significant moral issues surrounding use of fetal tissue, to wit:

1. that the immorality of abortion cannot be erased by alleged humanitarian uses for the organs and tissues of aborted babies; and
2. that such use promotes a utilitarian ethic that sees the end as somehow justifying (if not redeeming) the means; and

WHEREAS, These tissues will be obtained from preborn babies intentionally killed by abortion and, in some cases, while the child is yet alive; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms the immorality of all complicity with abortion; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life endorses alternative methods of curing neurological diseases (such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's) but decries the exaggeration of the potential for successful fetal tissue implants because it diverts attention away from ongoing research in other areas; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life strongly condemns the use of fetal tissue from any preborn or aborted baby at any stage of development for research, donation, or any other so-called benevolent uses.

## **Human Cloning**

WHEREAS, God is the Creator and Giver of life, and each human being is a unique creation of God; and

WHEREAS, God has provided human beings with the gift of sexuality through which new human beings are to be procreated; and

WHEREAS, The cloning of humans, by which is meant the production of a second human embryo for either reproduction or therapeutic purposes, which will be genetically identical to a DNA donor, allows for the circumvention of the procreative process, and is an abuse of the gift of human knowledge in an attempt to usurp the authority of God; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life condemns the cloning of humans. Should cloned humans be produced, however, they should be regarded by society and especially by the people of God as possessing full value and dignity as individuals created by God and redeemed by Him through Christ Jesus our Lord. Be it therefore also

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life urges its members to become informed about the scientific efforts regarding cloning human beings and to express concern that human cloning contravenes the design of God for procreation and should not be pursued.

*(Lutherans For Life takes no official position on the cloning of or genetic engineering of plants and animals.)*

## **In vitro Fertilization**

WHEREAS, God is the Creator and Giver of life and has provided human beings with the ability to procreate; and

WHEREAS, Medical science has attempted to assist persons with the procreative process by developing methods by which multiple human embryos may be produced, preserved, and implanted for continuing development; and

WHEREAS, Although such methods may help persons who had been unable to conceive naturally to conceive and bear children, inherent within such methods at the present time is the loss of life—as not all the embryos produced survive—and potential for the necessity of making decisions to dispose of unused, excess human embryos; and

WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life recognizes the pain of childlessness and that some people, desiring to have children, have used *in vitro* fertilization without realizing or considering the potential consequences for the embryos involved; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life at the present time objects to and opposes the use of *in vitro* fertilization; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life does not condemn those married couples who have used *in vitro* fertilization but encourages ministry to them and to all people such that they may receive the comfort of Christ and His redeeming love.

## **Lutheran Hospitals and Ethics**

- WHEREAS, The purpose of hospitals is to heal and sustain life and to do no willful harm; and
- WHEREAS, Lutheran and other Christian hospitals by their very name, philosophy, and purpose indicate adherence to Christian principles of medical care; and
- WHEREAS, The Word of God clearly teaches that life is a gift from God from conception until natural death; and
- WHEREAS, It is important that the hospital administration and its board of directors be willing to affirm and administer a clear policy of protecting life at every age from conception until natural death; and
- WHEREAS, It has become known that Lutheran and other Christian hospitals engage in the practice of elective abortion; and
- WHEREAS, The practice of elective abortion in Lutheran and other Christian hospitals is an offense to God and a scandal to the Christian and Lutheran community; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life calls upon these hospitals to end the practice of elective abortion; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life through its state and local affiliates monitors hospital policy and practice and engages in efforts to restore a clear policy of protecting life at every stage from conception to natural death.

## **Lutheran Involvement with other Pro-Life Organizations**

- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life is a pro-life organization and therefore part of a large, pro-life movement made up of a variety of different groups; and
- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life is incorporated as an educational organization for Lutherans; and
- WHEREAS, There are many other worthwhile educational efforts organized by groups which would welcome involvement from Lutherans For Life, its members, and state and local affiliates; and
- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life, its members, and state and local affiliates may be asked to endorse, sponsor, or participate cooperatively in such educational efforts; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That individual members of Lutherans For Life should feel free to participate in the activities of other pro-life groups as they choose, acknowledging that they are speaking or acting for themselves only and not on behalf of Lutherans For Life; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That CHAPTERS (local affiliates) of Lutherans For Life give open and careful consideration to all requests for cooperative efforts in order to determine their impact on the unique Lutheran purposes of their chapter through consultation with their state affiliate, if one exists; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That STATE AFFILIATES of Lutherans For Life give open and careful consideration to all requests for cooperative efforts in order to determine their impact on the unique Lutheran purposes of their affiliate through consultation with the national office of Lutherans For Life; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That the NATIONAL OFFICE of Lutherans For Life gives open and careful consideration to all requests for cooperative efforts in order to determine their impact on the unique Lutheran purposes of the national organization through consultation with the national Board of Directors.

## **Lutherans For Life and Lutheran Social Service Agency Cooperation**

- WHEREAS, Lutheran Social Service agencies provide various human service programs for people who are troubled or in need; and
- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life local affiliates include in their efforts volunteer time and support for the types of services often provided by Lutheran Social Service agencies; i.e. counseling for pregnant girls and women, adoption planning and placement, services to the elderly and handicapped children and adults, prevention and treatment of violence in the family; and
- WHEREAS, It is important that clear and mutual understanding exists between members of Lutherans For Life and staff of Lutheran Social Services as to the meaning of “pro-life policies and practices,” which includes providing alternative services to prevent the practices of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia but does not include counseling for, referring or promoting abortion; and
- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life members in some areas have expressed concern over the apparent lack of understanding of pro-life policies and practices by staff of Lutheran Social Service agencies and, even more seriously, have knowledge of cases where abortion-related activities are supported or provided by staff of Lutheran Social Service agencies; and
- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life members in some areas have developed good relationships with staff of Lutheran Social Service agencies that have pro-life policies and practices and work cooperatively in providing pro-life educational and supportive services to individuals in need; therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That the Lutherans For Life National Office establish a dialogue with LS/3, the umbrella organization for Lutheran Social Service agencies, along with the appropriate staff and committees of the Lutheran church bodies who oversee the certification and operation of Lutheran Social Service agencies for the purpose of developing better understanding and improved communication about the activities and pro-life policies and practices of Lutheran Social Service agencies; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life identify, publicize, and endeavor to change policies and practices of Lutheran Social Service agencies which continue to adhere to a pro-abortion position in counseling and referrals; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life state and local affiliates support state or local Lutheran Social Service agencies that engage in pro-life policies and practices; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life invite and encourage staff and board members of Lutheran Social Service agencies to become members of Lutherans For Life.

## Marriage

In God's "very good" creation, there was one thing "not good." "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Genesis 2:18 NIV). It was not companionship that the man needed. It was relationship, a relationship that would be like God's relationship with him. Adam may have found a companion as all the animals paraded before him, but he found no one suitable for this kind of relationship (Genesis 2:20). He who bore the image of God needed someone who also bore the image of God in order to have a God-like relationship. So God made a woman. She was created in God's image (Genesis 1:27). She was like the man in many ways (Genesis 2:23), but she was different from the man in others. She was created at a different time, in a different way, and for a different purpose (Genesis 2:22, 2:15, 3:20). It was that difference that made possible the kind of relationship God wanted.

Adam and Eve were capable of becoming one flesh and in that relationship could mirror their relationship with their Creator. God brought them together in this relationship called marriage (Genesis 2:24). Marriage was a part of all that was "good" in God's perfect creation. Marriage was not given as an institution to curb sin. There was no sin. Marriage was given as the foundation for the one-flesh relationship.

Marriage was also the relationship through which procreation would continue. "Be fruitful and increase in number" (Genesis 1:28 NIV). Marriage is intended to produce children.

The effects of sin upon God's biological process for procreation sometimes make it difficult or impossible for a marriage to fulfill this blessing. However, barring such unfortunate circumstances, children are to be the result of this one-flesh union.

Sin has certainly brought problems to marriage. The reality of problematic marriages, however, does not alter the essence of marriage. Jesus makes this clear. "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one" (Mark 10:6-8 NIV). What God intended marriage to be in the beginning, He still intends marriage to be.

Throughout Scripture marriage is a picture of God's relationship to His people. God is Israel's "husband" (Isaiah 54:5, Jeremiah 3:14, Hosea 2:19-20). As such, He rejoices over His bride (Isaiah 62:5). Jesus is pictured as the bridegroom and the Church His bride (Revelation 19:7). It was His unconditional love for His bride the Church that caused Him to give Himself up for her (Ephesians 5:25).

Lutherans For Life affirms the great blessing of the institution of marriage as revealed in God's holy Word. We affirm that marriage is a God-given institution between a man and a woman. We affirm that this one-flesh union reflects our relationship with our Creator and Redeemer. We affirm that it is the means God has chosen for procreation. Based on this, we are compelled to humble ourselves before God and ask His forgiveness for all the times we have dishonored marriage by trivializing its importance, by neglecting to reflect Christ's love in our marriages, and by failing to connect the importance of marriage and our relationship to God.

Based on this, we are also compelled to reject homosexual unions as contrary to the Word of God. The "sameness" of homosexuals prevents a one-flesh union as well as the possibility of the



procreation of children. Such unions do not and cannot reflect our relationship with our Creator and Redeemer. Such unions are based on a lie rather than the Word of God (Romans 1:25) and cannot constitute a marriage.

Marriage is founded upon the promise publicly exchanged between one man and one woman. Similarly, our Redeemer binds Himself to His Church with His promise, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20 NIV); “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5 NIV). Living together without the public promise of mutual love, respect, and fidelity dishonors marriage and is fornication. Adultery breaks the marriage vow, whether by marital infidelity, abuse, or abandonment. We must reject as contrary to the Word of God these and all practices which would not keep the marriage bed pure—impurity of thought, word, or deed (e.g., the use of pornography). We also reject as contrary to the Word of God any reproductive technologies that violate or circumvent the institution of marriage (e.g., donated eggs or sperm and cloning).

We believe, as God says, “Marriage should be honored by all” (Hebrews 13:4 NIV). May God give us the faith, wisdom, and courage to bring honor to this great blessing from Him.

## **Picketing and Sidewalk Counseling**

- WHEREAS, Lutherans For Life opposes abortion at any stage of development; and
- WHEREAS, Picketing and sidewalk counseling have had significant results in sensitizing communities and individuals to the true nature of abortion, resulting in lives saved; and
- WHEREAS, Some recent interpretations of the law regarding the rights of those persons who peacefully and legally protest the destruction of preborn children by abortion have tended to erode the Constitutional right of free speech; and
- WHEREAS, The Scriptures state that “everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities” (Romans 13:1); and
- WHEREAS, Holy Scripture stands above any manmade law (Acts 4:19); therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life strongly advocates obedience to all laws of the land, including those related to abortion issues, unless otherwise directed by Holy Scripture; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That all methods of publicly expressing concern for the preborn child be done charitably with both the perpetrators and victims in mind.

## **Population Control**

WHEREAS, God is the Creator of life and Sustainer of life (Genesis 1); every conception is known to Him (Psalm 139:13-16); and every life is precious to Him (Matthew 6:26); and

WHEREAS, Certain individuals and organizations, influenced by evolutionary theory, view human beings as “mouths to be fed” rather than heads to think, hands to serve, and hearts to love; and

WHEREAS, These individuals and organizations have a “doomsday” and humanistic approach predicting that overpopulation will be the cause of severely depleted natural resources; and

WHEREAS, These groups advocate world population control through “family planning programs” which include abortion, euthanasia, and the distribution of contraceptives and abortifacients to youth as well as to single and married persons; and

WHEREAS, Making available contraceptives and abortifacients for use by youth and other persons, married or single, implies invitations to engage in sexual relations outside of marriage, which is contrary to God’s word in Scripture (Exodus 20:14), and to commit willful abortion, which is also contrary to God’s word in Scripture; and

WHEREAS, Population control is distrust in God, for God has said, “I am He who will sustain you. I have made you ... I will sustain you ... ” (Isaiah 46:4); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life condemns population control and the use of abortion and euthanasia to achieve it and also rejects the labeling of human beings as “predators” on this planet; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life members remain alert and informed concerning environmental and population issues.

## Surrogacy

- WHEREAS, Children are a gift and privilege from God (Psalm 127:3, 5); and
- WHEREAS, God bestows this gift through the one-flesh union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18, 21-24), a mutual self-giving love reflective of the love within the Trinity (1 John 4:8) out of which He created and redeemed man (Genesis 1:26; John 3:16); and
- WHEREAS, Children are the embodiment of the mutual self-giving love of their parents; and pregnancy reflects this reality in vocations of motherly and fatherly servanthood and sacrifice for their child's welfare; and
- WHEREAS, Surrogacy involves contracting with a woman to gestate a child with whom this surrogate mother may have no hereditary relation and whom she will not raise; and
- WHEREAS, Surrogacy may also involve donation of sperm and/or egg from one or both parents who will not raise the child; and
- WHEREAS, Surrogacy thus transgresses the divinely instituted one-flesh union of husband and wife by introducing up to three additional participants in procreation and gestation, and requires *in-vitro* fertilization; and
- WHEREAS, Surrogate women usually receive compensation for medical expenses and inconvenience, so that financial considerations may motivate their participation, and the economics dehumanize and commodify both women and children; and
- WHEREAS, Surrogacy intentionally separates a child from one or more biological parents contrary to the good design of God, and this may have adverse consequences for the child's physical and psychological welfare (in addition to emotional and spiritual repercussions for the adults involved); and
- WHEREAS, Pregnancy, according to God's design, connects even a surrogate mother physically and emotionally to the child she carries, and this further complicates the child's separation from her; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes surrogacy as contrary to God's good design; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life nevertheless recognizes the intense grief of infertility and commends the holy desire to bear and raise children; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life unreservedly celebrates children of surrogacy as gifts and privileges whose ultimate identity is in Jesus Christ; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life assures those who regret and repent any involvement in surrogacy of their forgiveness in Christ crucified and encourages them to seek the comfort of holy absolution. (Adopted 30 May 2024)

## **Therapeutic Incubation**

WHEREAS, The potential exists for human embryos to be produced, developed, and nurtured in order to be harvested for purposes of medical treatment, and

WHEREAS, The use of both *in vivo* incubation (incubation taking place within a living organism) and *in vitro* incubation (incubation taking place within a non- living apparatus) of a human embryo, whether cloned or not cloned, with the intent of utilizing the human embryo as a source of tissues or organs represents a utilitarian approach to life which fails to recognize God as the Creator and Sustainer of life and subordinates the intrinsic value and dignity of one individual to that of another; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life condemns therapeutic incubation of human embryos.

## **Transgenderism**

- WHEREAS, God created man in His image as male and female, with complementary vocations, especially with regard to marriage and procreation (Genesis 1:27, 2:18; Matthew 19:4); and
- WHEREAS, God personally designs each person (Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5; Ephesians 2:10), bringing together a sperm and an egg of His choosing from father and mother and genetically selecting the sex of each at fertilization; and
- WHEREAS, sex refers to the configuration of the body for procreation as male or female, and gender refers to the carrying out of one's vocations as male or female (with masculinity or femininity); and
- WHEREAS, God connects gender directly to sex (Deuteronomy 22:5); and
- WHEREAS, Gender dysphoria, which consists of significant and persistent tension between one's sex and one's sense of gender, may develop in response to relational trauma, disorders of sexual development, mental health impairments, and social pressures; and
- WHEREAS, Transgenderism is a false and idolatrous belief system that insists that individuals determine their own identities in defiance of created reality and demands that others affirm this sinful pride (Genesis 3:5); and
- WHEREAS, Neither hormones nor pharmaceuticals nor surgical mutilations change the biological sex our Almighty Maker gives from the moment of fertilization (1 Corinthians 6:19-20); and
- WHEREAS, Reliable research concerning "gender-affirming care," including puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones, and reassignment surgeries, remains lacking; no studies currently and conclusively demonstrate achievement of desired "benefits;" and the repercussions of these measures are serious, life-threatening, and often irreversible (including infertility, cardiovascular disease, emotional distress, and increased risk of suicide or other self-destructive behavior); and
- WHEREAS, For most young persons who experience gender dysphoria, it resolves as they continue development into adulthood, and their sense of gender corresponds to their sex; and
- WHEREAS, We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), including with reference to sexuality and gender, and even within the realm of heterosexuality; and
- WHEREAS, Our Savior Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected to atone for, forgive, rescue, redeem, and relieve all the weaknesses of the flesh, including gender dysphoria and other sexual deviance, and God desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4); therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms that one's sex and its corresponding gender is given by God from the moment of fertilization as one of the blessings of abundant life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes hormonal and surgical manipulations intended to change one's sex or gender, while affirming that neighbors suffering gender dysphoria need appropriate spiritual and psychological care to help them to appreciate their bodies and lives as God's gifts to them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life advocates for research into possible medical or psychiatric etiologies of gender dysphoria, with the goal of appropriate therapies to treat any underlying causative conditions; and be it further

RESOLVED, That as Gospel-motivated voices For Life, Lutherans For Life takes these positions out of love and strongly condemns hatred and physical violence toward these individuals; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms that neighbors experiencing gender dysphoria, along with advocates of transgenderism and the rest of humankind, are sinful creatures to whom God extends grace through Jesus Christ, that God's forgiveness is for them, and that they may avail themselves of this Holy Absolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That even under pressure from the devil, the world, and the sinful nature, Lutherans For Life affirms that "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Adopted 20 February 2024

## **Transhumanism**

- WHEREAS, Scripture clearly states that the Lord God Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, created and still preserves all human life (Job 10:12); and
- WHEREAS, God has authoritatively and intricately knit each as He wills, in the mother's womb (Psalm 139:13-16); and
- WHEREAS, Human life, even though marred by the Fall and resulting in sin and death, has a unique and valued place in God's creation (Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:5); and
- WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ sanctified human life by His incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; and
- WHEREAS, God, through His Word and His Spirit, uses even things that the world sees as limitations for His glory and for the good of our neighbor (Romans 8:28; I Corinthians 12:22); and
- WHEREAS, God may heal certain diseases or conditions through medicine and technology to ameliorate incapacity and suffering (Jeremiah 8:22; Ecclesiastes 3:3); and
- WHEREAS, God has provided His Word to reveal the Christ, to tell us how He gives faith, to give us hope, and to enable us to live lives pleasing to Him (John 5:39; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:1; I Thessalonians 4:1; I Peter 3:15); and
- WHEREAS, God has given those baptized into Christ His Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth and comfort them in life and in death (John 16:13; John 14:16); and
- WHEREAS, Transhumanism is a mindset and movement that attempts to achieve immortality through human efforts; and
- WHEREAS, Transhumanism endeavors to enhance human nature beyond the abilities and function given by God; and
- WHEREAS, Transhumanism embodies the Darwinist idea that humans, having evolved from lower forms of life, are therefore capable of evolving into a "master race" with the help of technology and psychology; and
- WHEREAS, Transhumanism is based on a subjective view of reality that teaches that humans can be whatever they visualize themselves as being (Genesis 3:5; Genesis 11:4); and
- WHEREAS, Transhumanism, as an ideology and a pursuit, represents a faith and doctrine that is incompatible with Christianity; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, That all in Christ should give thanks to God for all that He provides for our good as ones created, redeemed, and called to be His own; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life recognizes technology as a divine blessing to be used in faith toward Him and love toward the neighbor (examples include the Roman roads that were used to spread the Gospel and the printing press that was used to spread the Reformation); and be it further
- RESOLVED, That all in Christ should be wise in the use of all technology so as not give any opportunity to Satan to tempt those in Christ or further his efforts to deceive by imitation of works of God; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes Transhumanism as defined above, as contrary to God's will and encourages all to remain aware of its nature and evil effects, most notably the rejection of the glory and promises of God in Christ; and be it finally
- RESOLVED, That all in Christ should not attempt to transcend our God-given human nature and functions, but rather seek to fulfill our God-created purpose.



## Vaccines and Aborted Fetal Tissue

- WHEREAS, Many vaccines are produced using cell lines derived from the bodies of aborted children; and
- WHEREAS, Each of these cell lines requires refinement involving not just one but multiple abortions; and
- WHEREAS, Some of these abortions did not take place for any medical reason and some happened for the express objective of obtaining tissue for such experimentation; and
- WHEREAS, Researchers and manufacturers continue to procure the bodies of aborted children for developing additional cell lines and vaccine formulations; and
- WHEREAS, The purchase and use of such vaccines incentivizes the further production of vaccines using cell lines derived from the bodies of aborted children, and some believe it indirectly participates in the previous violence against unborn lives; and
- WHEREAS, Desirable ends, no matter how good in themselves, can never justify an evil means (Romans 3:8); and
- WHEREAS, Many jurisdictions have revoked religious and philosophical exemptions when mandating vaccines to certain populations, such as children or healthcare workers; and
- WHEREAS, Many medical professionals do not volunteer this information to their patients at the time of immunization; and
- WHEREAS, Almighty God our Heavenly Father has created every human life in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27) from the moment of fertilization (Psalm 139:13); and
- WHEREAS, Our Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed every human life by becoming incarnate as an embryo in His mother's womb (John 1:14; Luke 1:43-44; Hebrews 2:15) and by becoming incapacitated by crucifixion in humankind's place; and
- WHEREAS, His Holy Spirit calls every human life to His kingdom and family (1 Timothy 2:4) so that His fellowship may dwell in their bodies as holy temples (1 Corinthians 6:19); and
- WHEREAS, He has given the human community the responsibility and privilege to receive every human life as a special blessing and treat each one as a precious treasure no matter what age, appearance, or ability (Matthew 25:40); therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life affirms the immorality of all complicity with elective abortion; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes both the producing of vaccines from aborted fetal tissue and the procuring of aborted fetal tissue for any similar experimentation; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life encourages honest and accurate discussion of vaccine ingredients, especially among parents and medical professionals; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes compulsory vaccination without a religious or conscience exemption with vaccines developed using aborted fetal tissue and supports the parental right to decline vaccines for these reasons, and supports the development of ethical versions of vaccines that do not come from the bodies of aborted children; and be it finally
- RESOLVED, That Lutherans for Life reach out with Christ's forgiveness for the sin of abortion to create vaccines.

Approved 9 October 2021

## **Our Mission ...**

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors 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 witness, from a Biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post abortion healing, and family living.

## **Five Core Values of Our Ministry Together ...**

1. God's Word informs and God's Spirit empowers our work and witness. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 5:14)
2. Faithfulness to Biblical truth and integrity of witness are more valuable than political expediency. (1 Corinthians 4:1-5)
3. The mind of Christ determines our response to life issues; prayerfully with humility, compassion, selflessness, speaking the truth in love. (2 Corinthians 1:4; Philippians 2: 1-8; 2 Timothy 2: 24-26)
4. Education remains our focus, trusting the Holy Spirit to change hearts and minds. (2 Timothy 2:24-26)
5. We uphold the sanctity of human life because all people are created and redeemed by God whose intent for them is to bear His image for time and for eternity. (John 10:10) We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult decisions.