

LifeDate

Fall
2020



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life



Being **For Life** – The Compassionate Choice

While being For Life in our culture can be difficult, it does offer compassion and concern for all involved.

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

Inside this edition of LifeDate ...

page 3

From the Executive Director of Mission and Ministry

Gospel-Motivated

by Pastor Michael Salemink

pages 4-10

Abortion/Post Abortion/Alternatives

Look After Orphans in Their Distress

by Beth Spitzer

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

by Lynette Auch

While You Were Sleeping by Jeff Duncan

page 11

Lutherans For Life/Bethesda

Lutheran Communities

Compassion and Disability

by Mona Fuerstenau

pages 12-15

Worldview and Culture

Ten Methods of Compassionate

Conversation by Pastor Michael

Salemink

Racial Theories are Bankrupt but

Killing Us by James M. Kushiner

pages 16-17

Lutherans For Life Resources

pages 18-19

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

page 20

World News

pages 21-30

Spotlight on Lutherans For Life

Share the Life Message All Through the

Year! / Word of Hope

Guiding Youth Toward Justice

by Michelle Bauman

Rejoice Always by Virginia Flo

Retreat and Installation

Remembering Our Roots

by Michelle Bauman

Chats 4Life / Frontline Conference Call -

October 2020

2021 March for Life/LAMBS - Lutherans

Assembling Mercy Blankets/Estate

Planning/Real Estate for Life/LFL on

Social Media

2020 LFL Regional Conferences



Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life

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Gospel-Motivated

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Lutherans For Life equips Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. **Gospel-motivated means compassion.** It means we don't shout in anger. It means we don't lash out in fear. It means we don't accuse, assume, or assert our superiority.

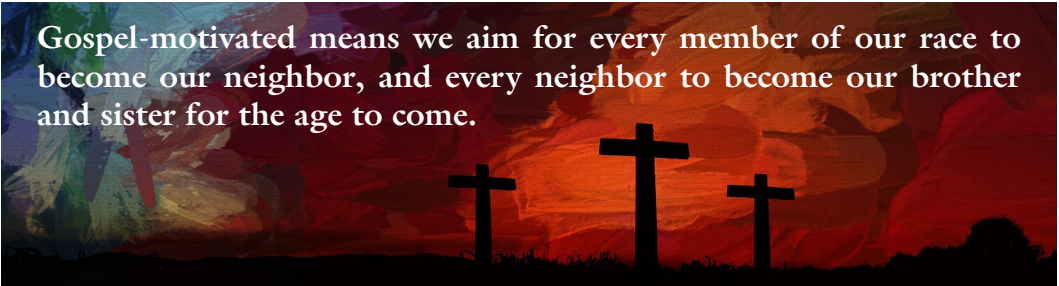
Gospel-motivated means we speak because our Heavenly Father has spoken to us. He has spoken grace and mercy, survival and salvation, promise and power. Gospel-motivated means we act because our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has acted on our behalf. He has enacted substitution and sacrifice, forgiveness and freedom, resurrection and relief, healing and hope. It means we speak and act in gladness and gratitude.

Gospel-motivated means we tell how Almighty God creates every human life as special, and that we treat them with that sanctity. It means we declare how He redeems every human life as precious, and that we demonstrate it to them. It means we proclaim how He calls every human life His own priceless treasure from fertilization to forever, and that we put it into practice.

Gospel-motivated means concern not only for cute little babies and dear old ladies, but also for those who permit, promote, and participate in abortion and assisted suicide. It means we receive every neighbor, no matter what age or appearance or ability, even the ones who look strange or smell funny or vote different or otherwise get under our skin, whether they hold our faith or hate it, we regard each one as a gift and privilege from heaven. It means we seek not only to spare them from immediate deceptions and earthly threats but also to secure and safeguard their eternal existence.

Gospel-motivated means we listen rather than just lecture. It means we lead to the truth instead of beat with the truth. It means we invite and embrace, courteous and considerate, rather than ignore. It means we assist, respectful and sensitive, instead of dismiss. It means we love and serve, humble and gentle, and not command and control. It means we give to meet material needs, generous and friendly, and not manipulate.

Gospel-motivated means we don't make it our mission to defund Planned Parenthood. We don't make it our mission to reverse *Roe v. Wade*. We don't aspire merely to win arguments or prevail in debates. We don't set sights simply on endorsing the right legislation or electing the best leaders. We don't even devote ourselves just to ending abortion and preventing euthanasia. Of course, we work toward these ends and rejoice when God grants them. But Gospel-motivated means bringing all the blessings of Jesus Christ to the broken one right in front of us.



Gospel-motivated means we aim for every member of our race to become our neighbor, and every neighbor to become our brother and sister for the age to come.

Look After Orphans in Their Distress

by Beth Spitzer, member of Bethesda Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, South Dakota and Vice President of Hot Springs Area Right to Life

“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world” (James 1:27).

I am “Auntie Beth” to a nine-year-old nephew adopted from Russia and an eight-year-old niece adopted from the Philippines. I love them dearly, and they bring great joy to my husband and me. Because of my experience watching my brother and sister-in-law navigate the adoption process, I have become aware of the plight of orphans and the needs of adoptive families. I hope this article will help to make the Church more aware of those needs.

The first thing I would like to address is the cost of adoption—with international adoption being the costliest. My nephew’s adoption cost around \$55,000, and my niece’s adoption was around half that. Expenses include the adoption agency application, home study, dossier preparation, child match, visas, background checks, psychological exams, shots, fingerprinting, passports, and travel. The only way these adoptions were made financially possible was through help from family and friends and a few adoption grants.

Knowing that my sister-in-law was able to get some help through adoption grants led me to create an adoption grant for our county through Hot Springs Area Right to Life: www.hsartl.org/adoption-grants.html. I encourage other For Life organizations to offer adoption grants. Go ahead and use our template—it would be an honor! (All funds are dispersed directly to the adoption agency.)

Through Hot Springs Area Right to Life, I also organized foster care and adoption seminars. We had an adoptive parent and a foster parent talk about their experiences, and a social worker talked about the process for becoming a foster parent or adoptive parent.

The least expensive way to adopt is through the foster care system. Some people who are adoption-minded become foster parents and then end up adopting a child or children whom they are fostering. If international adoption feels overwhelming, foster care may be another option. The need for foster families is great. In South Dakota, for example, there are over 1,500 children in need of foster care.

After the adoption and the child is home, the needs do not end. In the case of my nephew and niece, both have special needs. My nephew has fetal alcohol syndrome along with learning disabilities, and my niece has cerebral palsy, which makes walking without assistance nearly impossible. For these reasons they might be considered unique adoptees. What does not make them unique adoptive children is their history of trauma and attachment issues.

James, brother of Jesus, did not call the need for orphan care a possibility. He called the need for orphan care a fact—a given: **“orphans ... in their affliction.”** It doesn’t matter what kind of loving home the child may be in now. These orphans have a his-

ADOPTION

tory that can't be forgotten or ignored. This is true even of newborn babies. Trauma affects the brain physically, and that affects these children's behavior.

Due to their special needs, my sister-in-law chose to stay home. Both children have needed medical specialists, therapists, and special educators to be involved, all which cost money. But even more than that is the support system that is needed. The journey of adoptive parents is hard. Unless you have walked that path, you will have a difficult time understanding the depth of despair that adoptive families can face.

My sister-in-law feels strongly that adoption is a special vocation. Even if it isn't everyone's, everyone can help and support. Christians in the Church can serve the cause in a variety of ways. Here are some suggestions for simple ways you can help: provide meals, ask how you can pray for them (and then really listen and take it seriously), and don't expect adoptive parents to do extra volunteer duties in the church. Another way to help is to get trained in ways to help foster and adoptive families. Two wonderful organizations that can help with this are Project 1.27 (www.project127.org) and the Christian Alliance for Orphans (cafo.org).

Attachment issues are among the biggest issues that often come along with adoption. A child's behavior is greatly connected to healthy attachments. Because that attachment has been disrupted in the life of an adopted child, a healthy adoptive parent will work on attachment with their child for the rest of their lives. When an adoptive child first comes into the home, that family is going to need to "cocoon" for a while to provide the necessary time to bond with that child. Congregational members should not assume they can hold that newly adopted baby, but should be respectful of parents who are trying to build a bond with their child.

In addition, for many children of trauma and/or with fetal alcohol syndrome, negative and positive reinforcement are not effective. Rewards do not work because they cause too much anxiety for the child. Like an adult with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), these children can operate in a hyper arousal state which affects their brain and hormones. Having some understanding of this will hopefully help people realize that they should not judge the parent by the child's behavior or blame the parent for the child's behavior.

While I know this article has laid out some heavy information, I pray it has also lit a fire and helped to reveal the need for adoptive families. My niece and nephew are precious. Their giggles are one of my favorite things in the world. As I was interviewing my sister-in-law, she kept telling me how God provides. He has done that over and over again in big and small ways. One December, a man—a stranger—pulled up to my sister-in-law as she was on a walk and handed her a Christmas card through his truck window. When she opened it, there was a \$50 bill inside. This was at a time when she needed reassurance that proceeding with the adoption was the right thing to do. She says it was like God was telling her, "Oh, daughter, you have no idea how I can provide. Trust in me. I have this handled."

For additional resources, my sister-in-law recommends authors Karyn Purvis, Heather Forbes, Sherrie Eldridge, Bryan Post, and Dan Siegel. For specific books, she recommends What Every Adoptive Parent Needs to Know: Healing Your Child's Wounded Heart by Kate Cremer-Vogel and Dan & Cassie Richard and Parenting Your Internationally Adopted Child by Patty Gogen. Also recommended was the Facebook page "Parenting with Connection."

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

by Lynette Auch, President of national Lutherans For Life

Any who have helped work a Lutherans For Life or other life-affirming display booth can feel the excitement—especially if your display includes the *Touch of Life* fetal models. It can be fun and quite rewarding to share with anyone who will listen about fetal development. Children are exceptionally fun! Their eyes become as big as saucers when they are shown a pencil point and told that they were once that small! They are amazed at what they looked like as they grew. Fetal development education can also benefit adults, as it did for one young couple.

The newly married couple was anticipating a long honeymoon period in their marriage. They were absolutely not ready for the news: “You’re pregnant.” The thought was shocking and terrifying! As the young bride tried to come to grips with reality, her mind raced. She knew all the pro-life terminology, and she knew it was a baby, but she also knew that a baby meant a lot of change and responsibility—change and responsibility that overwhelmed her. Being a newlywed wife was challenging enough. The more she thought about a baby, the more frightened she became. As fear gripped her heart, she lost sight of the truth of God’s Word that she knew so well and loved so dearly, and she toyed with the unthinkable thought of “abortion.”

As she unwillingly shared these fears and thoughts with her husband, he was horrified that his bride could even entertain such an idea. He quickly found the fetal development pamphlet and the “young one” 10-week fetal model obtained from a pro-life display booth they had visited earlier that year. The young husband pointed out where their baby most likely was in its development and reminded her that another part of her life’s dream, to be a wife and a mother, had become a reality with this pregnancy.

The couple gathered around one of the young bride’s favorite chapters of Scripture speaking to God’s sovereignty, Psalm 139:

“O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar...Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens you are there, if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast” (vs 1-2, 7-10).



(The concept of God’s sovereignty is beautifully set to music in the song “Sovereign” by Chris Tomlin. Here is my paraphrase of the lyrics: God is with us wherever we are—in life’s calm or storms, in our greatest joy or deepest cry, in the dark or in the dawn. He has all the pieces of our life from beginning to end in His everlasting arms. We can trust His unfailing love to work everything for good. We can trust God with all our hopes, needs, and dreams. All our life is held in His hands.)

As they continued to read, the young parents imagined God knitting their tiny baby together. They knew that baby, their baby, conceived in love, was “fearfully and wonderfully made” (vs 13-14) by God. They also knew their baby was **someone** for whom Jesus suffered, bled, died, and rose to life to give eternal life.

“When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid” (Psalm 56:3-4a).

Trusting in God’s sovereignty, and with the Sword of God’s Word tightly back in her hand, the once fear-filled bride trusted in her Lord Jesus to help her through this new adventure in her life’s journey. She and her husband now went forward with great anticipation and excitement about the new life growing inside of her!

This newly-wed couple had the tools that they needed to make a decision for life thanks to the tireless efforts of life-affirming friends like you. I hope this true story encourages and inspires you to continue hosting display booths at conferences and fairs everywhere, teaching about fetal development and supporting Lutherans For Life, that all may come to know that they are **someone** for whom Jesus gave His life. Thank you for being “Gospel-motivated voices For Life.”

This article was originally published in the Fall 2015 edition of LifeDate.



While You Were Sleeping

by Jeff Duncan

Note: This article and poem were originally published in the February 12, 1999, edition of Spectrum (Volume 31, Issue 5), "A Publication of the Students of Concordia Seminary St. Louis."

Coming to Seminary holds many new challenges as well as opportunities. For me, a quiet Saturday morning in June offered a good break from my first weeks of Hebrew class. Since I had been getting up early anyway, meeting at Luther Statue at 6:30 a.m. was not a big deal. Why not do this thing and expand your vision, I thought.

I waited at Luther Statue for the rest of our group to assemble. Some were students, some were student's wives, some were faculty and wives, and some were LCMS laity who gathered for prayer before setting out to our destination. The road was unfamiliar, as I had not grown up in St. Louis. Upon arriving, I was taken back by the obscurity of the building. Maybe I was expecting neon signs and arrows. Instead, I was greeted by regular brick and mortar, unassuming and nondescript.

My first impressions centered on a number of Catholics who had already taken position, lined up like a chorus section. They were oblivious to my arrival but were engrossed in "Hail Mary, Mother of Grace." Statues of the sainted Mother of God stood to their side, in quiet contrast to the litany they chanted. Other groups carrying signs began to take positions at corners and along the street next to the clinic parking lot. We followed suit, taking up our positions among their ranks.

Within minutes, the first car since our arrival entered the scene. A quick flurry of commotion ensued as two women began to offer pamphlets to the car's occupants. Their voices pleaded that this was not the only option. There were people here who could help them. The clinic itself was not safe. The doctor carried no malpractice insurance, and just two months ago a young girl had lost her life at the hands of this very doctor. That was all true, since just two months earlier, a young lady had hemorrhaged to death during the aftermath of a "procedure" performed at that very clinic.

The car drove on through without hesitation. Upon parking at the first available slot, the occupants exited. From the driver side, a young white male approximately 20 years old emerged. The passenger exited next, white female, under 20, wearing loose fitting sweats and a tee shirt. We had been briefed to spot this typical dress for ladies about to undergo this "procedure." The clinic recommended this attire to patients, allowing for easy movement on the return trip. Unwittingly, it also served for those gathered in prayer as confirmation of why they had arrived.

As the couple approached the clinic front door, I could see lips moving in prayer all up and down the line of sign holders. The litany of "Hail Mary" grew louder and more directed from the Catholic contingent. The ladies who were trained at intervention continued to plead for reconsideration, both to the young girl and to the man who brought her to this place. Nevertheless, the clinic doors opened and closed. As they did, the voices of those offering help faded away, both inside and outside.

Before the significance of the scene could sink in, another car drove up. Those roles were repeated, over, and over, and over again. There were variations in principal players: different races, different ages, different marital status, different companions,

and different facial reactions to what was going on as they arrived and entered. There were also various degrees of contemplation taking place upon arrival. Some exited cars quickly and walked defiantly past onlookers, offering incensed gestures. Others took longer to get out and into the clinic. Two people made steps toward the intervention counselors, listening to their comments. One car arrived and left three times. However, on this day all exiting cars eventually found their way inside, thus sealing the fate of the little ones they carried. By 8:30 a.m. the traffic lulled, and the groups began the trip back home.

I'm not advocating that all of us should go to the clinic as silent witnesses in prayer. In fact, research suggests men holding signs in front of clinics may be more detrimental to the cause than helpful. Women are more comfortable with women for the intervention counseling, and men on the scene may only inflame feelings of anger, rejection, and disappointment. I am suggesting that as future pastors and missionaries, we need to be prepared to offer the whole counsel of God, rightly dividing the Law and the Gospel in Bible study and from the pulpit. The day is past when abortion does not touch families, many families within our Lutheran parishes.

What follows [on page 10] is my reaction to the events that morning, captured immediately upon arriving back to the comfort of my F-Dorm room. The sun was shining. The birds were chirping. The air was filled with early summer breeze, but my heart cried out to God for His guidance and His grace.



Author Postscript (August 2020): This is where my mind and reaction were some 23-plus years ago. Without the proclamation of the Law to condemn and bring sinners to repentance, as my article attempted to do, the Gospel of forgiveness in our Lord Jesus Christ doesn't mean much. The Law condemns and kills, as it should. It is the Gospel, though, that changes hearts and restores to life! Through the Gospel, one is accepted back into community, into family, into relationships once broken and floundering in death. This Gospel in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ becomes gift—an undeserved, unmerited gift! Please remember, those crushed by the weight of guilt and sorrow over their sins in life issues need the restorative Gospel of Jesus more than anything else!

While You Were Sleeping

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
A thief drove up in a red sedan,
And he stole more than 20 babies from your Father's nurseries.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
Choices were being made against the innocent;
Bitter suffering was forced upon the quiet ones.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
As birds chirped their merry morning songs,
As the trees were full of the sounds of new life,
Other life became silent ... lost.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
Boyfriends drove girlfriends, parents drove daughters, husbands drove wives,
But the children did not come home.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
Prayers of hope, requests for forgiveness, petitions were raised up to our Father in Heaven,
While inside, leftover parts were washed down city drains.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping; a curious thing happened:
A man with a pullover smock reading "Pro-choice Clinic Escort"
Would not direct participants of the plot over to receive information about choices.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
Cars drove around the block, looking for a way around.
Another way was offered, but none to follow could be found.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
Clinic workers came outside to smoke a cigarette and to have a cup of coffee
Before the next "procedure."

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
The faces of hope and peace met direct with the eyes of
The hopeless, the lost, the worried, the scared, and even the indignant.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
This city added just a small number to our nation's ever growing debt,
And yet each number added had a face, hands, feet ... and heart.

Early this morning, while you were sleeping,
The enemy broke into your house and stole the babies from your nursery ...
And he's coming back tomorrow ... And the next day...

Until you learn to lock the door!

Compassion and Disability

by Mona Fuerstenau, Director of Ministry Partnerships at Bethesda Lutheran Communities

The word “compassion” is often misunderstood. What sets it apart from even the words used in its definition is the action component. Compassion is more than feelings or sympathy or empathy or consciousness. It’s the draw to do something! The movement to action.

Families living with disability are often on the receiving end of many of the feelings associated with compassion. They experience pity, sympathy, concern, and assumption of sorrow and suffering from others. Yet most of the families I have worked with over the past 20 years say that’s not what they want. They want others to actively be a part of their lives. They struggle the most with words without action, the “let us know if you need anything” comments. They long for genuine relationships. They long for those who move beyond pity or empathy to intentional relationships and being and doing life together with a person with disability.

Chances are very high that you know someone living with disability. The US census says nearly 1:5 Americans fall into that category. Research of that population indicates the two biggest issues they face are loneliness and isolation. That’s an opportunity to exercise compassion! **Compassion includes being compelled to action. Here are a few actions steps you can take.**

- Pray
- Identify a family living with disability in your neighborhood, community, part of your church.
- Reach out to them. This season of sheltering safe at home is a perfect opportunity to mention your own sense of isolation and loneliness and ask if you can help each other through it.
- Find common interests and start the conversation! Do you both love movies? Gardening? Books? Classic cars? Art? Music? Sports? Most friendships bloom around shared interests.

Bethesda Lutheran Communities supports 2000+ individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in 13 states. You can encourage one or more of them and their staff with e-cards sent through our volunteer activity center. It only takes a few minutes and will brighten someone’s day tremendously. You will also find other ways to get involved with our ministry. Visit www.BethesdaLC.org/volunteer.



Ten Methods of Compassionate Conversation

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Mama said polite conversation shouldn't address politics, religion, or sex. Testifying to the sanctity of life takes up all three. That means three times the risk of the interaction becoming uncomfortable. And not every For Life voice is Gospel-motivated, so abortion advocates already think we're angry. In addition, our witness trips their defenses before we even say a word. We represent the God and the truth their convictions have violated. The remnant of His law written on their conscience at creation senses the sinfulness in intentionally ending a life.

Christians come from another culture than the world does. We speak a different language. How can we ever hope to genuinely engage and communicate effectively? Try these ten suggestions for compassionate conversation about life issues:

1. **Acknowledge our anxieties and confess our idols.** It's OK that these subjects make us uneasy and upset. This confirms what important and personal matters the sanctity of life deals with. We don't like disagreement and rejection. God Himself feels the same. And so do those we discuss them with, whether they share our beliefs or not. Are we putting unnecessary pressure on ourselves or others as well? Do we try to get them to like us, hope to save someone, or setting ourselves at ease, attempt to demonstrate superiority? Doesn't this treat the one we're talking to as an inconvenience? Our aims and efforts will fail because we suffer from sin ourselves. We must acknowledge it.



2. **Trust and pray.** Almighty God has atoned for our evils and forgiven our failures. Crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ proves He loves us no matter what. We don't have to achieve success or exhibit expertise. He enlisted and positioned us as His instruments before we knew anything about it. He retains responsibility for the results of His Word, even out of our mouths, whether there is reception or rejection. It will take root and bear fruit. Take comfort. Stay calm. Have confidence and good cheer. Ask that His will, not mine, be done. Say, "Amen!" and believe it and behave it. And if that will involves meeting disagreement or getting ridiculed, so be it. His promises sustain infinite patience.
3. **Foster relationship.** The Gospel of Jesus Christ seeks not to make pro-lifers but children and disciples. We receive neighbors as privileges rather than projects. We want eternity with them as brothers and sisters. They can't care about anyone else unless they know how God cares for them. So, we connect with the person instead of just their positions. Feel free to talk about topics other than just life issues. Share about yourself and your life. Open up and follow up. Widen the conversation to more than merely one matter and lengthen it to more than only one occasion.
4. **Ask and listen.** Why assume when we can inquire? We answer best after we understand, and not just what but also whom. What questions or problems do they hope abortion or assisted suicide will resolve? How have they come to believe as they do? What personal experiences do they have with surprise pregnancies or terminal diagnoses? What considerations or circumstances are complicating these situations for them? What hurts or threats have panicked them into viewing death as a solution? Explore and investigate together. Even God gets to know our story before He gives it the happy ending.
5. **Appreciate and affirm.** Thank them for sharing such personal and impassioned sacred space. Identify and applaud the common grounds. We also oppose poverty, pain, abuse, and abandonment. We also support equality, liberty, and community. We recognize surprise pregnancies and terminal diagnoses come with difficulties and sufferings. Indeed, God grieves them too. We each have our own struggles, and they can make us sensitive to theirs. Beating someone with their crosses does the devil's work for him, but bearing someone's crosses with them creates space for Christ.
6. **Expect, endure, and overlook offenses.** Their outrage, aggression, and grief have God's name on it, not ours. Count it an honor that they so closely associate us with Him. And we despise injustice and sin just as much as they do. When they wound, we have the opportunity and invitation to wow them with the power of grace. Our Heavenly Father will make it up to us more than double for all the damages we take.

7. **Apologize.** Some Christians have ignored or stayed silent about the sanctity of life. Some have used the truth to attack people. Some have permitted, promoted, or participated in violence against the vulnerable in abortions and assisted suicides. Cultural voices and forces have used those suffering surprise pregnancies and terminal diagnoses as excuses for sinfulness or pawns to overpower others. We belong to the Church, and we belong to the culture, so we can express our sorrow for these wrongs.
8. **Apply Gospel.** We get to proclaim that God loves the one right in front of us just as much as cute little babies and dear old ladies. He knows their fears. He feels their hurts. He died for their sins, even violations of the sanctity of life. He redeems their mistakes. He meets their needs. He has made Himself their Father. He has a family, a household, a kingdom, an everlasting life, and abundant blessings for them.



9. **Avoid sarcasm and scare tactics.** Shoving graphic images of dismembered fetuses in strangers' faces won't change hearts. Calling clinics "abortuaries" and "death camps," referring to "planned unparenthood" or "planned barrenhood," and labeling opponents "pro-aborts" or "feminazis" may seem clever but seldom ends up helpful or even effective. Certainly it doesn't follow God's command to "**explain everything in the kindest way.**" Focus instead on how our Lord creates, redeems, and calls every human life as His own precious treasure from fertilization to forever. Rhetorical force may outlaw abortion, but only love, hope, and joy change minds and save lives.
10. **Celebrate blessings.** Highlight how marriage, sexuality, procreation, and children bring delight. Compliment sons and daughters. Praise fathers and mothers. Commend husbands and wives. Observe birthdays and anniversaries. Admire single parents, stay-at-home moms, large families, and persons with disabilities.

Happy compassioning!

Racial Theories Are Bankrupt but Killing Us

by James M. Kushiner, The Fellowship of St. James

I am not one, generally, to respond quickly to situations and challenges. But as events unfold, what patterns are emerging? ...

There are two things about St. James that also may be timely. First, he was known and respected for his pious life that featured constant prayer and fervent intercession for the people—he was on his knees so much they became “hard as a camel’s” as one translation puts it. Our society needs such prayers of the Church. Christians should consider a rule of prayer and fasting for the remainder of 2020.

Secondly, James lived on the cusp of dramatic change, uncertainty, and violence. His murder in AD 62, say some ancient commentators, marked the beginning of troubles in Jerusalem leading to the cataclysmic Jewish Revolt and the end of Judaism as the Jews knew it in AD 70 with the destruction of the Temple. The Christians of Jerusalem were strong enough under James’s leadership to survive—they resisted the pressures to join the ill-fated revolt and removed themselves across the Jordan while Jerusalem was engulfed in civil strife and military assault. James’s example of fidelity and insistence on real Christian obedience and not mere talk is more timely now than ever. Are we prepared for the worst? We should be. We’ve been warned to be ready to meet the Master on His return. There will be no excuses we can make.

Also, in a time of “racial” tensions and economically-inspired calls for the revolution of structures and systems, James’s razor-sharp denunciation of pandering to wealth and of making distinctions between believers is timely. My fellow editors have reminded me that “race” isn’t in the Bible, so what is “racism”?

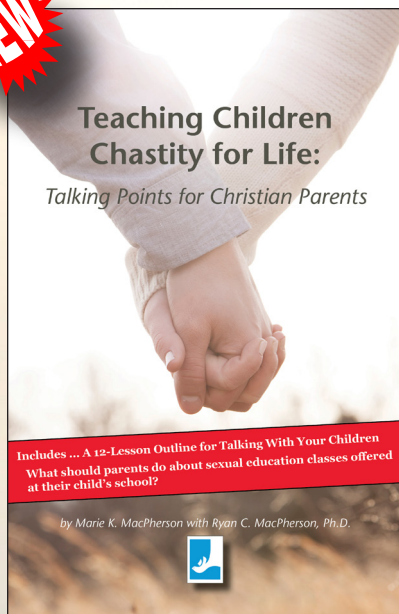
Christians are to show no partiality whatsoever. My brother in Christ who happens to have more melanin than I have in the paper-thin upper level of our skin—while all the skin below the paper is the same—is not of a different race than I. So-called “race” is not even skin deep! That’s mere upper-skin coloring, not race. Varying levels of mere melanin indicate that we’re all coffee beans—some are blonde roast, some are medium or dark or espresso roast, but we’re all coffee, we’re all colored people.

Racial labels and theories, including supremacy, are the inventions of outdated “scientific” thinking. We’d do well to be rid of them all. Doing that will take time, but we should stop talking about race in this way.

We pray in our services for “the race of man” not the races of man. There is only one race. All else are ethnic, national, cultural, or other differences. We’ve past histories to trouble us to be sure—like the Irish and the English, the Jew and the Christian, the Greek and the Ottoman Turk, and the slave and the slave owner—but there is no place from which a genuine reconciliation can emerge today, except in Christ. The goal is fellowship, brotherhood in Christ.

Society should address every act of injustice and partiality based on ethnicity, and not allow politicians to use envy or “race” for election ploys. “Wisdom from above” is needed, says James, lest there be “wars among you.” Resist the calls to revolution and repair to the One who is able to bring all men together, at the Cross.

From Friday Reflections, www.fsj.org, 7/31/20.



Teaching Children Chastity for Life: Talking Points for Christian Parents

What's better than sex ed? Mentoring your children for chastity! In this booklet, parents speak frankly to fellow parents on the basis of God's Word, offering practical suggestions for dads and moms to provide their children with the guidance they need to navigate through puberty and into sanctified adulthood. *Item LFL731B. \$3.00 ea.*



The Real "Comprehensive" Behind Comprehensive Sex Ed

Biblical sexual integrity comes from being taught biblical integrity. Biblical integrity comes from knowing and receiving Jesus over and over and over. And what's more, when they fail, when we fail, it's not all over for us! God's grace, all we receive in Jesus, is sufficient for every hard lesson we go through in this life. *Item LFL732B. \$2.00 ea.*



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



From **Real Love Real Life**, a 30" x 6" fold-out brochure: "Love. We think about it. We want it. We wonder when we'll find it. We wonder IF we'll find it ... God desires to give His people love, and one of the ways He provides the blessing of love is through marriage. But how do we know when we've found real love? ... Interested in learning more about REAL LOVE? Read on, young lover!"

Item LFL615-T. **\$0.50 ea.**



Is Abortion an Election Issue?

by Pastor Michael Salemink

VOTE

Is Abortion an Election Issue? (2020 Edition)

So, Chris tells Jamie, "I just couldn't cast a vote for someone who supports abortion." And Jamie says, "You know, Chris, abortion's not the only voting issue. Other things matter to elections and politics too. Seems kind of narrow-minded for you to fixate on just that one." Have you ever heard a conversation like this? Have you ever had a conversation like this? Have you ever met someone like Chris or Jamie? Have you ever felt like Chris? Like Jamie? Is abortion an election issue? No and yes. No, abortion is never just an election issue. But yes, abortion is always at least an election issue. "Is Abortion an Election Issue?" outlines ten reasons why.

Item LFL118T. **\$0.50 ea.**

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

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

You can find Life Thoughts based on the historic One-Year Lectionary at: lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts.

October 4 – Pentecost XVIII (Proper 22A) – Jesus’ parable about vineyard tenants (Matthew 21:38-41) warns against abortion and assisted suicide. These acts always kill a son or daughter, without ever delivering the liberty they advertise. They ink us into contracts payable only with guilt and grief. But entrusting ourselves to Christ, who creates bodies and sustains souls even amid costs and losses (Philippians 3:7-8) like surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis, this gives life not only to “me” but to “us” (Psalm 80:18).

October 11 – Pentecost XIX (Proper 23A) – Jesus Christ has already swallowed up death forever. It belongs to Him and Him alone. He reserves the right to provide life to us on His terms and decide in His time when we die. His death and resurrection have freed us from needing to seek it for ourselves or for anybody else. His peace and presence, promises and power pass us not only into death’s shadow but through it—without ever setting up residence.

October 18 – St. Luke, Evangelist – Abortion and assisted suicide insist on a salvation by works. They believe only pretty, popular, powerful, productive persons deserve to survive. Almighty God doesn’t delight in this kind of physical strength (Psalm 147:11). His grace and love give every life value, and so St. Luke’s Gospel proclaims the Lord’s joy and ours over blind, deaf, lame, mute (Isaiah 35:5-6), unborn (Luke 1:44), elderly (Luke 2:36-38), and even me and you!

October 25 – Pentecost XXI (Proper 25A) – Scripture highly praises motherhood (1 Thessalonians 2:7-8) and fatherhood (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12). The Holy Spirit inspires the Apostle Paul to use them as words for the love of one Christian for another. We protect each other like fathers and take care of each other like mothers. If this clearly excludes the killing of even a neighbor (Leviticus 19:16), how much more shall we cherish the lives of children, however young, and parents, however old!

November 1 – Pentecost XXII (Proper 26A) – Abortion often offers cover for sexual immorality, like pre-marital intercourse, infidelity, and abuse. Forgiveness and everlasting life in Jesus Christ release us from enslavement to such lusts (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7). We get to engage our bodies in lives of holy worship to God and righteous service to one another. And since we share one Father (Matthew 23:9), we pursue purity not only for our own bodies but for each other’s, as brothers’ and sisters’ keepers.

November 8 – Pentecost XXIII (Proper 27A) – Surprise pregnancies bring real burdens. Terminal diagnoses come with genuine hurts. But we need not grieve them like those who have no hope (2 Thessalonians 4:13b). Whenever anyone’s oil runs out, there Jesus our Lord arrives and intervenes (Matthew 25:6). Until then we encourage each other with compassion and courageously carry crosses together rather than seeking cheap escapes.



November 15 – Pentecost XXIV (Proper 28A) – Isn't abortion at least a little like wrapping precious treasure in a napkin and throwing it in a hole? Isn't assisted suicide literally burying unappreciated talents in the ground (Matthew 25:18)? Jesus warns it's a one-way ticket to weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:28-30). But what joy awaits us when we receive both our lives and everyone else's as a gift and expect that each will improve the other (Matthew 25:20-21)!

November 22 – Last Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 29A) – “As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). Jesus has consecrated your life in His incarnation and crucifixion. And in the same way He has sanctified every human life, no matter what age, appearance, or ability. When we behold our unborn neighbors, when we care for incapacitated ones, when we advocate for embryos or elderly, we encounter God.

November 29 – Advent I – Restore us, O God (Psalm 80:7)! Restore us by Your humble coming among us. Restore our courage to speak for those vulnerable to using death as a solution. Restore our compassion to serve their survival and salvation as You have ours. Restore our congregations to welcome, receive, and embrace every human life. Restore our communities to accompany instead of abandoning. And restore our country to protect and provide for unborn and elderly.

December 6 – Advent II – No greater comfort speaks to hearts broken by abortion than the Gospel of God's forgiveness (Isaiah 40:1-2). He holds the lives of those who permit, promote, or participate in abortion just as precious as the little lives lost to it (1 Peter 3:9). And whatever relief abortion proposes for surprise pregnancy cannot compare with the Savior who will “gently lead those that are with young” (Isaiah 40:11).

December 13 – Advent III – Few situations force us to acknowledge One greater than ourselves (John 1:27) like surprise pregnancies and terminal diagnoses do. But when we see how He comes as gentle gestating baby and humble suffering servant, and not only binds up the brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1) but keeps body and soul (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24), even these burdens give way to greater blessings.

December 20 – Advent IV – Anyone who experiences surprise pregnancy understands Mary's “greatly troubled” (Luke 1:29). But since every conception comes about only by God's good and gra-

cious will, we can rest assured that especially in such circumstances, “The Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28) and “You have found favor with God” (Luke 1:30). Who needs “my body, my choice” when we can declare, “Let it be to my according to Your Word” (Luke 1:38)?

December 27 – St. John, Apostle and Evangelist – St. John testifies of a Savior whose atoning sacrifice saves from all our sins and shortcomings (1 John 2:2). His shed blood (Revelation 1:5) has rendered that of abortion and physician assisted suicide as unnecessary as it is ineffective and immoral. These measures have no power to deliver, and even their power to condemn fails—if we confess our sins, even sins against the sanctity of life, Jesus faithfully forgives and cleanses (1 John 1:9).



Mexico's Supreme Court rejects decriminalizing abortion in state of Veracruz

Pro-lifers in Mexico had steeled themselves for the worst. There seemed to be enough votes on Mexico's Supreme Court to change the penal code to decriminalize abortion in the state of Veracruz. The fear was if the Court agreed, it could lead to widespread abortion "liberalization" in Mexico. However, according to El Financiero, four of the five justices "voted against the bill" to change the penal code of Veracruz, a state bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Vatican News explained that abortion is prohibited in Veracruz except in cases of rape or danger of death of the mother. "Abortion is currently legal up to the 12th week of gestation only in Mexico City and in the state of Oaxaca." Live Action News explained that a procedure called "amparo" in Mexico "allows both individuals and government institutions to challenge laws in federal court." Prior to the vote, the Mexican Bishops' Conference expressed their strong opposition. (*Dave Andrusko, nationalrighttolifenews.org, 7/20/20*)



The acquittal of two "right-to-die" activists who aided in the suicide of a person suffering from multiple sclerosis may force the Italian government to legalize assisted suicide in the country. A court in the Tuscan province of Massa-Carrara ruled July 27 to acquit Mina Welby and Marco Cappato for helping Davide Trentini commit suicide in April 2017 at Dignitas, a physician-assisted suicide clinic in Switzerland. The court judged that no crime was committed by Welby and Cappato because they did not "instigate" Trentini's suicide ... In December, the Italian Constitutional Court delayed a decision that would determine the constitutionality of Article 580 (which states assisting or convincing someone to commit suicide "is punishable with a sentence between five and 12 years if the suicide occurs, or between one to five years if it does not occur but results in serious or very serious personal injury"). Euthanasia advocates believe that the recent acquittal will help push the court to legalize physician-assisted suicide in the country. (*CNS News, 7/29/20; CLR LifeWire, 7/30/20*)

A proposal in the Netherlands to allow assisted suicide for healthy individuals over the age of 75 has drawn criticism for offering death rather than social support to people who are lonely and depressed. Dr. Gordon Macdonald, head of the UK-based alliance Care Not Killing, called the proposal "deeply troubling." "The slippery slope is real and the Dutch euthanasia law has already been massively extended," he said in a statement. Assisted suicide became legal in the Netherlands in 2002 for terminally ill adults who are mentally competent. Since then, the law has been expanded to encompass individuals with non-terminal chronic illnesses and disabilities, as well as mental health problems. Children as young as 12 and seriously ill infants may also be euthanized. (*CNA, 7/28/20; CLR LifeWire, 7/30/20*)

**Abortions Worldwide in 2020: www.worldometers.info/abortions
lutheransforlife.org/life-issues/abortion**

Share the Life Message All Through the Year!

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

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

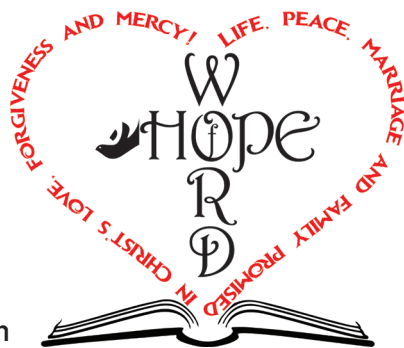
Check out “Life on the Web” on our Life Blog



lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-blog

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

We all have grieved the loss of someone at some point in our lives ... But those who have lost a child because they had an abortion, or were part of an abortion decision, often



do not allow themselves to grieve or don't know how to grieve.

888-217-8679 or info@word-of-hope.org • word-of-hope.org

Since 1973: 61,628,584 abortions in America

Source: www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/2020/07/abortion-statistics-united-states-data-and-trends-4

Guiding Youth Toward Justice

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

I've been thinking a lot about justice lately. I'm guessing we all have. It's a topic that resonates with people of all ages and races, all nationalities and cultures. In fact, the need for justice has been an underlying and uniting issue behind much of the world's news cycle in 2020 thus far. It can be seen in arguments for and against healthcare rationing, and it influences conversations about shutdowns, sheltering in place, and basic COVID-19 prevention. A desire for justice is foundational to the conflict between China and Hong Kong, and it shapes opinion on foreign exchange student mandates. Justice, in many ways, has even beget outrage over possible Tik Tok bans in the U.S. Say it isn't so!

Most obviously, though, the topic of justice has been a lodestone for racial tensions in America, drawing its citizens into discussion, reflection, activism and, in some cases, change.

Unsurprisingly, justice is a topic that also resonates powerfully with today's youth.

And you know what? That gives me great hope.

Despite social distancing, mask wearing, and good hand-washing, I have had the pleasure of spending lots of time with youth the last few months. From the two youth who live in our own home to the leaders of various **Y4Life Teams**, the 60 (approximately) youth who have been active in **Chats 4 Life** and to those I've had a chance to converse with on the phone, through email, or at graduation parties and weddings, my life has been filled with conversations about justice and injustice.

And those conversations have provided fertile ground for discussions about life.

What's made me hopeful is that the youth I've been talking to clearly recognize the connection between justice and preservation of life. More specifically, they ardently believe that being for life is not only the compassionate choice, but it is also the right choice.

Is there still work to do? Yes, there most certainly is. There's even work to be done among those who already understand that life is important.

For example, many 4Life youth know that taking an innocent life through abortion is a flagrant injustice to the unborn child. With a little guidance, though, they begin to see that abortion is a gross injustice to the mother and father and family as well—an injustice that often has long-term ripple effects.

Likewise, 4Life teens easily see how euthanasia is an act of injustice. But with guidance, they might also recognize that physician-assisted suicide and other forms of "mercy killing" are injustices too, injustices done not only to the individual dying, but also to the family, the nurses, and the very body of Christ whose call it is to care for another beautiful child of God.

And when 4Life youth recognize that justice was not served to a man named George



Floyd, we adults readily admit that our world is full of despicable sins. We confirm that his life was valuable too, and we mourn his loss truly and deeply as God's beloved creation.

And when those same 4Life youth note that racism has played a horrendous role in American history, we agree that treating others inequitably because of the color of their skin is always wrong. We affirm again and again that God handmade all people and Jesus died for all people. And that means ALL lives are valuable and equally loved.

However, because we are people of life, we can do much more than mourn and bemoan our fallen state; we can provide hope. Once again, we can and should offer guidance, pointing to the only true source of justice in the world, God Himself.

Psalm 103:6 says, **"The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed."** That justice is never found in harming our neighbor or purposely causing division. It is never promoted by anger or hatred or vengeance. True justice can only be found in the gross injustice that was done to Christ on the cross. His innocence now covers our guilt; His blood paid the price for our sins.

Romans 8:1 reminds us that **"there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."** That means we have been set free from the sin that has imprisoned us, even if those sins are full of anger and vengeance or apathy and indifference. We now wear the righteousness of Christ, and through Him we are empowered to love, serve, and protect the lives God has placed in our paths.

And you know what? Sometimes those lives are the lives of our youth.

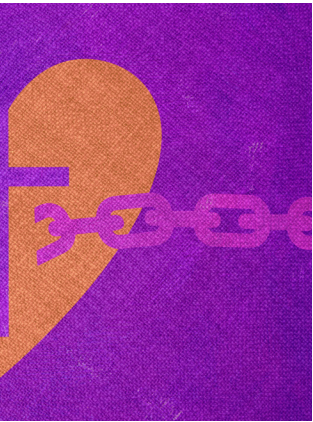
As Christian adults, we are privileged to guide, mentor, and care for youth—even (and perhaps especially) during times of uncertainty, turmoil, and unrest in our world and nation. We are privileged to look for ways to validate their concerns and lead them in the paths of righteousness. We are privileged to meet youth where they are and walk with them as fellow

travelers on the road to eternity.

I know. Sometimes that walk can be difficult. Sometimes we don't know what to say. Sometimes the only way to serve is simply to love.

But you should know that you're not alone. **Y4Life** and **Lutherans For Life** have many resources available to you. From Zoom calls and programming to pamphlets and retreats, I'm available to help you meet the For Life needs of your students. Feel free to contact me at mbauman@lutheransforlife.org for ideas, resources, or a word of encouragement. I look forward to helping in any way I can.

In the meantime, I'll keep praying that God gives you both joy and blessing as you uphold and support the lives of youth in your community. And I'll keep rejoicing that through Christ, you are making an eternal difference 4 Life!



Y4Life • Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life
mbauman@lutheransforlife.org • 812.350.2732 • Y4Life.org

Rejoice Always

by Virginia Flo, Regional Director of Minnesota & National Conference Director

Do you remember these verses from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: “**Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you**”? Are we rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, and giving thanks in all circumstances? It can be difficult, especially now. Yet, in spite of all of the unrest and the concern for staying safe and healthy, we know that God, through Jesus Christ our Savior, has our back.

Although it might feel like our lives have been turned upside down, we still have our loving God watching over us and protecting us. Thus, we have so much for which to be joyful because He is the same as He has always been. Remember what being Lutheran is about.

GRACE ALONE: God gives us physical blessings, especially the gift of his Son, Jesus. God’s grace gives us life and salvation enabling us to do His will.

FAITH ALONE: By grace, God gives us faith that enables us to place our trust in Jesus. Through faith, with God’s strength and wisdom, we, as ordinary people, can do extraordinary things. Stewards guided by faith become Jesus’ hands, feet, and mouth.

SCRIPTURE ALONE: Through Scripture we know the truth and the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ our Savior. We know Scripture to be without error—we can trust it!

CHRIST ALONE: The one and only true Savior is Jesus Christ. He came to set us free from sin and gave us the gift of eternal life. That is reason to rejoice, pray, and give thanks.



It seems difficult to be the good stewards we would like to be as we find ourselves somewhat handicapped as Christians with the Coronavirus making worship and other Christian activities difficult. Yet, they are not impossible. Nothing has or will ever shut us down spiritually. We are worshiping, although with a few physical restrictions. We have found new ways to reach people through the use of video and other online technologies. We are still communicating either in person, by mail, by email, or via Zoom and other online tools. We are even evangelizing through these new tools.

Do we want to be back together through corporate worship with a full sanctuary and congregational singing, as well as other fellowship activities? Absolutely! That day will come, hopefully soon. In the meantime, exercise your stewardship life through worship as you can, partake in the Lord’s Supper, be part of a Bible study group, have an active prayer life, read Scripture regularly, and do what you can to watch after and care for your family, friends, and neighbors.

And, as we give thanks, we want to be sure to include our gratitude for the generosity you have shown toward Lutherans For Life during these difficult times. May we all continue to support our ministry in the many ways we are able going forward.



Retreat and Installation

The Lutherans For Life national staff enjoyed getting together in person in late July at The Association Retreat Center (www.arc-aflc.org) near Osceola, Wisconsin, for our annual staff retreat. Joining us for insightful and uplifting staff and organizational development were reps from Partner2Learn (partner2learn.com). Also at the retreat, Rev. Jeff Duncan was officially installed as the Mission & Ministry Director of Lutherans For Life. To find out about starting a Life Chapter or Life Team, contact Pastor Duncan at jduncan@lutheransforlife.org or 316.708.0791.



lutheransforlife.org/grassroots

Remembering Our Roots

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

I've been reflecting on roots lately ... obsessing over them, if I'm honest. It all began last spring when I filled my herb tower with starter plants. Worried that the roots might not have enough room to grow, I added a few herbs to my flower beds to prevent overcrowding. It was definitely the right decision; by mid-summer, I was blessed with a bountiful harvest of garlic chives, rosemary, and oregano.

While sunshine certainly gets a lot of credit for growth, basic botany reminds us that there's just as much going on underneath the soil as there is above it. And when problems arise in a plant's life, it's almost always better for those problems to be happening topside. It's easy for a gardener to address a broken limb or an infestation of mites. There's a simple solution for a plant that's visibly thirsty.

But diagnosing a root problem is difficult to do. Root rot is almost impossible to detect until it's too late; it often requires trimming and transplanting into new, healthy soil. But because it's hidden beneath the earth, there's little hope for a plant under the care of a novice gardener.

Like plants, words have roots, too, roots that delve deep into linguistic history. And they carry with them layers of meaning and nuance, layers that often lie hidden beneath the soil of modern usage. When we forget these roots, sometimes rot sets in.

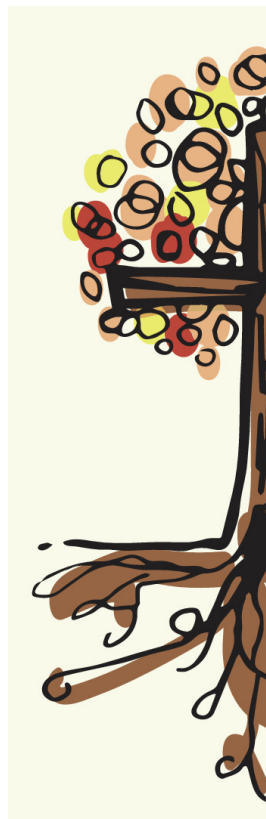
Let's take, for example, the word "justice."

By secular definition, justice definitely has connotations and shades of morality attached to it. Connected to legal proceedings, justice means administering both rewards and punishments that are deserved; it means adhering to a moral principle established by a higher order, and it includes good conduct and the act of treating others equitably.

By definition then, justice is something we should desire. In this kingdom of the left that God has established for our good, we see order and fairness and equality playing out when the government does what it is called to do. Because the world is full of sin, we need the kingdom of the left, and when the government promotes and establishes justice, we confess that the government is good.

But when the kingdom of the left doesn't serve justly, we have a vocational obligation as citizens and as Christians to seek reform. We are called to protect and defend those unjustly accused, those unjustly harmed, and even more tragically, those unjustly killed. In fact, this desire to protect life because it is created by God and redeemed by Christ, because it is unique and unrepeatable, is foundational to the Christian 4-Life movement across the nation. It is foundational to you who seek to support LIFE.

Justice is, by nature then, both important and good. Perhaps even more interesting, though, is that the definition of justice doesn't end there. When we dig even further



into its roots, we find that the very definition of justice includes not only moral righteousness, but the quality of righteousness itself.

The quality of righteousness itself.

If that doesn't make us sit back and ponder for a while, it definitely should. We all know that by corrupted nature, our roots are rotten with sin. We are decaying; the ravages of sin cause our bodies, our words, and our relationships with others to fall apart. Like rotting plants, we need a gardener to save us. We need someone to trim our rotten roots and transplant us into healthy soil.

And that's exactly what God sent His Son to do—to pull us out of the deathly soil we were trapped in, to clip away our nasty, worldly, decaying roots and stymie our sure and certain death. God knew that our destruction was so deep, that after cutting it off, only blood could clot the wound. Only blood could restore life. Only the blood of His Son, Christ.

And Christ did it. He died so that we might live. Romans 8:1-2 reminds us, **“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death,”** and Psalm 103:12 assures us that **“as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.”** Christ received the punishment we deserve and gave us eternal life instead.

It was, in all measures of the word, the most unjust death the world has ever seen.

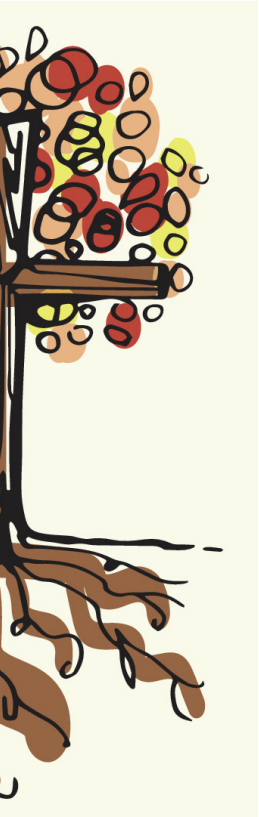
But thanks be to God that through this great injustice, Christ brought justice to the world. Now, like a gentle gardener, Christ daily uproots us and washes us clean in the waters of our Baptism. He transplants us into His rich soil of forgiveness and salvation, and He causes us to bear fruit, fruit that blesses the world.

We know that true and perfect justice will never be found in imperfect beings. It cannot grow from rotted roots. But we also know WHERE IT IS FOUND. Psalm 103:6 reminds us, **“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.”** True righteousness and justice are only found in Christ.

Because our roots are planted in Him, because His blood now nourishes us, we are able to work for the good of others in the world. We can and do confess that all life is precious in His sight,

all life is valuable, and all life has been redeemed. And we encourage our government to value lives, too, asking it to establish and continue to uphold justice, to provide equitable opportunities for all people, and to treat all people with dignity.

The last few months have given us ample time to reflect on our roots, ample time to reflect on the disease that seeks to destroy us. But it has also given us plenty of opportunities to remember where our roots belong. Paul reminds us in Colossians 2:6-7 that we've been replanted. We are now rooted and built up in Christ. We now walk in Him. Christ has become our justice and our hope.



Chats 4Life

Are you interested in discussing contemporary life issues with other high school and college-aged youth? Would you like to learn how to address those issues from a Gospel-motivated perspective? If so, **Chats 4 Life** is for you! **Chats 4 Life** offers young adults opportunities to connect via Zoom with other 4Life youth from across the nation. During these sessions, youth are invited to network, ask questions, and engage in discussion about contemporary life issues. So far we've covered abortion, euthanasia, vaccines, healthcare rationing, birth control, homelessness, human trafficking, serving those with disabilities, and much more! Watch our Instagram page for the next **Chats 4 Life** opportunity, and contact [mbaumam@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:mbauman@lutheransforlife.org) for the latest meeting code and password!



FRONTLINE CALL

For all Lutherans For Life
Frontline Volunteers!



Join in on the Frontline call to get LFL updates and new project ideas.

When: Monday, October 12, 2020 – 5:00 p.m. PDT, 6:00 p.m. MDT, 7:00 p.m. CDT, 8:00 p.m. EDT

What: There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, and Q & A.

CONNECT: Dial: 646-876-9923, Meeting ID: 816 8698 9871, Passcode: 953488

Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81686989871>.

lutheransforlife.org/grassroots



The next March for Life ...

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021

MARCH *for* **LIFE** *Lutherans For Life will be there!*

marchforlife.org

LAMBS – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets

Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? Wouldn't it be nice to gift them with a homemade blanket in celebration of this new life? Simply by filling out the form at the link below, the Miami Valley Life Chapter will ensure that a blanket made with love will be sent directly to this expectant mother anywhere within the continental United States. There are no strings attached. As the Body of Christ, we want to use this as an opportunity to share the mercy that our Savior Jesus Christ first showed us on the cross.



lutheransforlife.org/article/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets



For advice on **ESTATE PLANNING** that can help you and Lutherans For Life, contact Jim Schroeder, Christian Estate Planning Counselor. Jim can provide you with personal assistance in working with your attorney and your other financial advisors in planning your estate. Contact Jim at 515.490.7371 or jim@iowadistrictwest.org.



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

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Also see:

- www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife
- vimeo.com/user4132928





2020 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Our 2020 theme is ...

From Invisible to Indispensable!

“On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable ...” (1 Corinthians 12:22 ESV)

Join us as we unpack this theme and what it means for the For Life movement, both nationally and in your community.

The regional conferences for Lutherans For Life allow our team to come directly to you with the For Life Gospel message. These gatherings are wonderful times spent together where we can provide valuable information and encouragement to you, your community, and the life-affirming work you are engaged in.

Please check the schedule below to see which of our 2020 conference locations is near you. We're excited to see you there!

Remaining Conferences ...

**Ruthfred Free Lutheran Church
Bethel Park (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania – September 26**

**Life in Christ Lutheran Church
Peoria (Phoenix), Arizona – October 24**

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Orlando, Florida – November 14**

lutheransforlife.org/conference

Lutherans For Life ...

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

Lutherans For Life ...

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

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

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

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

Lutherans For Life ...

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

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

Is not subsidized by any church body.

Is supported entirely by individual donations and grants.



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

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran, both individually and in community, upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same

Our Philosophy ... Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give a Gospel-motivated witness to the Church and society on these and other related issues, such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living. We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult situations.

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