

LifeDate

Summer
2022



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

LIFE TOGETHER

**“Togetherness”
is one of God’s
greatest gifts in life.**



Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!



Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors
to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

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NATIONAL Conference

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Life Together

by Pastor Michael Salemink

The Gospel of Jesus Christ draws us outside ourselves.

Jean-Paul Sartre had fifteen minutes of fame in the twentieth century. Many during the beatnik and boomer generations knew about this existentialist philosopher and author. Now only university students and their instructors recognize his name. He did once very relatably complain, “Hell is other people.” Relatable, but wrong.

Hell is self: self above others and self alone. Sin drives us inward. Dr. Martin Luther—echoing St. Augustine of more than a thousand years earlier—described sin as *cor incurvatus in se*. This Latin phrase means “the heart curved in on oneself.” Sinfulness disconnects us from our Almighty Maker and Heavenly Father. It divides us from one another. And it distorts our experiences, our emotions, our desires, and our identity.

God doesn’t do lonely. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit personifies community in Himself. Humankind has a love-God. He has designed us for receiving and giving and sharing. His favor, grace, and forgiveness incorporate us into enchanting orbit with Him and with each other. Family and marriage, sexuality and procreation, humility and servanthood, these life issues orient us toward somebody besides me. What a fantastic freedom the gifts of God and the needs of my neighbors affords! Even discomforts and diseases become occasions and impulses for reaching out.

The Gospel deals in abundance. Life is always plural. It consistently resists isolation and evermore implies relationship. Jesus has come not only to bring us to God but also to bring us together. Every human life meets us as gift and privilege, created and redeemed and called by our Lord as His own precious treasure from fertilization to forever. And our life-affirming witness and service is surrounded and celebrated by a magnificent multitude of like-minded saints gone before, yet to come, and the world over.

So, we speak God’s truth and show Christ’s love, because heaven is other people!



A Patient Is a Person No Matter How Small

by Lynette Auch

The Alpha Center, a pregnancy center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, that my husband and I support, held their annual fundraiser event in April with featured speaker Dr. William Lile of Pensacola, Florida.

Dr. Lile has delivered over 4,000 babies in his medical career as an obstetrician/gynecologist. He also is a medical advisor for the Florida Human Life Protection Amendment and a member of Focus on the Family's Physicians Research Council.

In 1999, Dr. Lile and a business partner bought out the practice of the largest abortion services provider in Pensacola. On day one, any and all abortion services and abortion referrals were stopped immediately. Today, that clinic's abortion equipment is now used to demonstrate the brutality of abortions performed in all three trimesters. The tools of modern obstetrics have become the tools of Dr. Lile's pro-life ministry! That's because Dr. Lile believes that the life and personhood of the pre-born can only be understood through love and empowered education. This decision was the beginning of Dr. Lile's venture into what has become a second career of providing education on abortion procedures for the pro-life and Christian communities through speaking appearances and articles and videos found at ProLifeDoc.org.

Being an obstetric nurse, I found Dr. Lile's real life stories absolutely fascinating as he spoke of and showed pictures of various fetal surgeries and occurrences. Laser vascular surgery can be done to cure twin to twin transfusion syndrome (when one baby is getting all the nutrients and blood flow from the placenta while the other one is literally starving). Another miraculous procedure is fetal open heart surgery to remove a teratoma tumor developing on an unborn baby's heart. Delayed interval delivery can occur when, during a twin pregnancy, a mother's bag of amniotic fluid ruptures prematurely, causing premature delivery of one baby. If the bag of amniotic fluid remains intact for the second baby, that baby has a good chance of delivery closer to term gestation. In one particular instance, the second twin baby was born six weeks later.

I do not share these modern medical procedure stories to show the greatness of mankind, but rather to reflect on the greatness of the Creator God who gave man the ability, understanding, reasoning, and wisdom to apply these potentially healing procedures. These types of surgeries and medical procedures uphold the moral belief that the unborn baby is a patient—and if it is a patient, it has rights protected under the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) defines informed consent in committee opinion number 439 as, "the principle of respect for patients as persons." Per ACOG, "Seeking informed consent expresses respect for the patient as a person; it particularly respects a patient's moral right to bodily integrity." The intentional taking of the life of the pre-born thus violates "the patient's moral right to bodily integrity" (ProLifeDoc.org).

According to Dr. Lile, "Pre-born babies are patients who deserve the rights and protections applicable to children and adults." His mantra is "A Patient Is a Person No Matter How Small" (ProLifeDoc.org).

This belief flies directly into the face of those who would legislate and legalize infanticide.

In April, “... despite overwhelming public opposition, California’s Assembly Judiciary Committee voted 7-2 along party lines to pass AB 2223 ... This deadly bill doesn’t merely codify the right to kill unborn children throughout all nine months of pregnancy. It would even decriminalize ‘perinatal death,’ opening the door to killing newborn children days or even weeks after birth. Inside the hearing room on April 5, pro-life citizens outnumbered abortion supporters by over 20-to-1. On the phones, the ratio of call-in comments was even more lopsided. But despite dozens of opponents still waiting on hold and hundreds more unable to call in due to overloaded lines, committee chairman Mark Stone cut off debate after 30 minutes of opposition testimony” (www.californiafamily.org/2022/04/assembly-judiciary-committee-approves-infanticide-bill-but-the-fight-is-just-beginning).

Despite the evil of this legislation, I am encouraged by how the pro-life community came together by over 20-1 in opposition to this deadly legislation. God’s family pulls together and is strengthened in times of persecution, and we are reminded of Christ’s promise in John 16:33: **“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”**

I recall Dr. Jean Garton, first president of Lutherans For Life, stating that once one has seen the atrocity of abortion, one cannot unsee it, and God holds us accountable to **“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute”** (Proverbs 31:8).

That is why Lutherans For Life presses onward, equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for opening our eyes to see the atrocities. Use us as Your instruments to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and to remind others that Christ has overcome the world. Amen.



2022 A.D. (after *Dobbs*)

by Pastor Michael Salemink

We aim higher than elections, legislations, and judgments. We aspire to much more than ending abortion. We advocate for respecting and protecting every human life, no matter what his size or her skills or their circumstances. We undertake to see each member of our race received as neighbor, as gift and privilege, and as sister and brother with whom we may share in the blessings of our Heavenly Father's everlasting inheritance. We intervene with community, purpose, joy, and hope wherever the devil's deceptions pressure people to use death as a solution for difficulty. We strive to bring about not merely changed regulations or even changed behavior but changed minds, hearts, histories, and eternities.

I'm writing twenty-four hours after the Supreme Court leak. It appears they're preparing to reverse *Roe v. Wade*.

Thanks be to God for this magnificent development. He is demonstrating His truth, love, and power in safeguarding the sanctity of every human life:

“The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed” (Psalm 103:6).

He is aligning our elected and appointed officials as His agents of order to serve scientific reality, sound reason, and the common good. And He is continuing to keep our endangered neighbors in the cultural consciousness so that we may have opportunities to witness firsthand and even participate in His ministry and miracles. We rejoice in His faithful grace.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to generations gone before. Their gentle and relentless Gospel-motivated voices For Life have ushered us and our entire country to this point. For fifty years they have carried on and pressed forward, one person and one interaction at a time. They have engaged and embraced neighbors, assembled networks, endured ridicule, and answered objections. With winsome words of courage and enthusiastic acts of compassion, they have sowed seeds, pulled weeds, watered sprouts, and mentored descendants into successors. Any celebration belongs at least as much to them.

For now, the jurisprudence still imposes abortion upon us. The current term of the Supreme Court doesn't conclude until the end of June. Their majority may yet reconfigure and retreat from this preliminary indication. Even should the speculated direction prevail, individual states may actually expand abortion access within their confines. We discovered five decades ago that, for better or for worse, a verdict settles nothing. Expect congressional efforts at keeping abortion decriminalized to continue and intensify, despite whatever lines the courts draw.

“For the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short” (Revelation 12:12).

Of course, our faith does not derive from governments.

“Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation” (Psalm 146:3).

Our comfort and motivation do not derive from laws. We neither live only according to the body nor labor for this world alone. No matter who holds office or how they decide and lead, the Lord our God reigns.

“Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth” (Revelation 1:5).

Only at His pleasure and permission do they proceed this way or that. Public policy does not amount to an end in itself. It simply contributes to a conducive environment—a free, fair, and safe public square—for proclaiming and practicing the Gospel. Jesus the incarnate, crucified, resurrected, and ascended Savior has already set the ultimate outcome in motion. Life and love, divine favor and salvation have long since overcome, and it only remains for them to completely encompass everything.

So, the concerns and the work go on. Undoing *Roe v. Wade* won’t erase the trauma, the losses, the grief, and the guilt. Our nation needs to acknowledge and lament the millions prematurely put to death. Our neighborhoods need to repent and rehabilitate lest we repeat the wrongdoing. Untold multitudes of survivors walk wounded right beside us, casualties of counterfeit “equality” and “autonomy.” They await and crave the conviction of God’s Law and the forgiveness in His Gospel that will relieve and heal their consciences.

Surprise pregnancies will still happen. Abuse, abandonment, immaturity, anxiety, pride, and poverty will make abortion appear attractive. Joint efforts and social struc-



tures must better address these complications. Some mothers will still terminate their little ones, and others will still encourage and assist them in it. Perhaps it will take place more secretly and more casually, in pharmacies and bathrooms rather than office complexes, with the internet facilitating instead of a doctor in a clinic. But abortion will go on, as it has since time immemorial.

And the evil will learn to disguise itself. Death will discover or invent new avenues, such as euthanasia or embryocidal experimentation. The “sexual revolution” will not rest until it has dissolved every institution, relationship, and identity into bare lust. The same lie—that pleasure or power, performance or property, popularity or appearance define a person’s worth—takes many shapes. As it has defiled countries, communities, families, marriages, adulthoods, and adolescences, it will defile children even where abortion fails to do so.

Whatever other type of protests transpire, prayer embodies the best sort.

“I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions” (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Pray for the justices (John, Clarence, Stephen, Samuel, Sonia, Elena, Neil, Brett, and Amy), that God give them wisdom, humility, integrity, and clarity. Pray for our public servants at local, state, and national levels, that they adhere to and uphold the laws of the land. Pray for our journalists, that they report fact, truth, and reality. Pray for our citizens and residents, that they live together in peace and respect. Pray for our doctors and nurses, that their care ensures survival for all patients. Pray for those facing surprise pregnancies, that they obtain any assistance and reassurance needed to bear and raise their children. Pray for those who have undergone abortions, that the Lord’s forgiveness turns them from their sin. And pray for the Body of Christ, that we speak God’s truth and show Christ’s love fearlessly, persuasively, and effectively.

Let us then take this occasion to speak. Converse about the verdict, the issue, and the sanctity of life. Share information and reflections with anybody interested to listen. Ask questions about their experiences and perspectives. Share in their concerns and dialogue sensitively about their reservations. Cultivate relationships and build trust that treats those with whom God connects you as people and not just opponents or opinions. Research and learn the Scriptures, the science, the language and logic, the legal provisions, and the ethical considerations of the matter. Instruct and educate others, especially children and congregations. Participate in the public discussion by reaching out to elected representatives, medical professionals, newspapers, and social media. Hold authorities, executives, and practitioners accountable to the ordinances. Network and organize with other life-minded folks to amplify these actions. Give financial support to adoption agencies and pregnancy resource centers. Serve the emotional and material needs of expectant mothers and fathers.

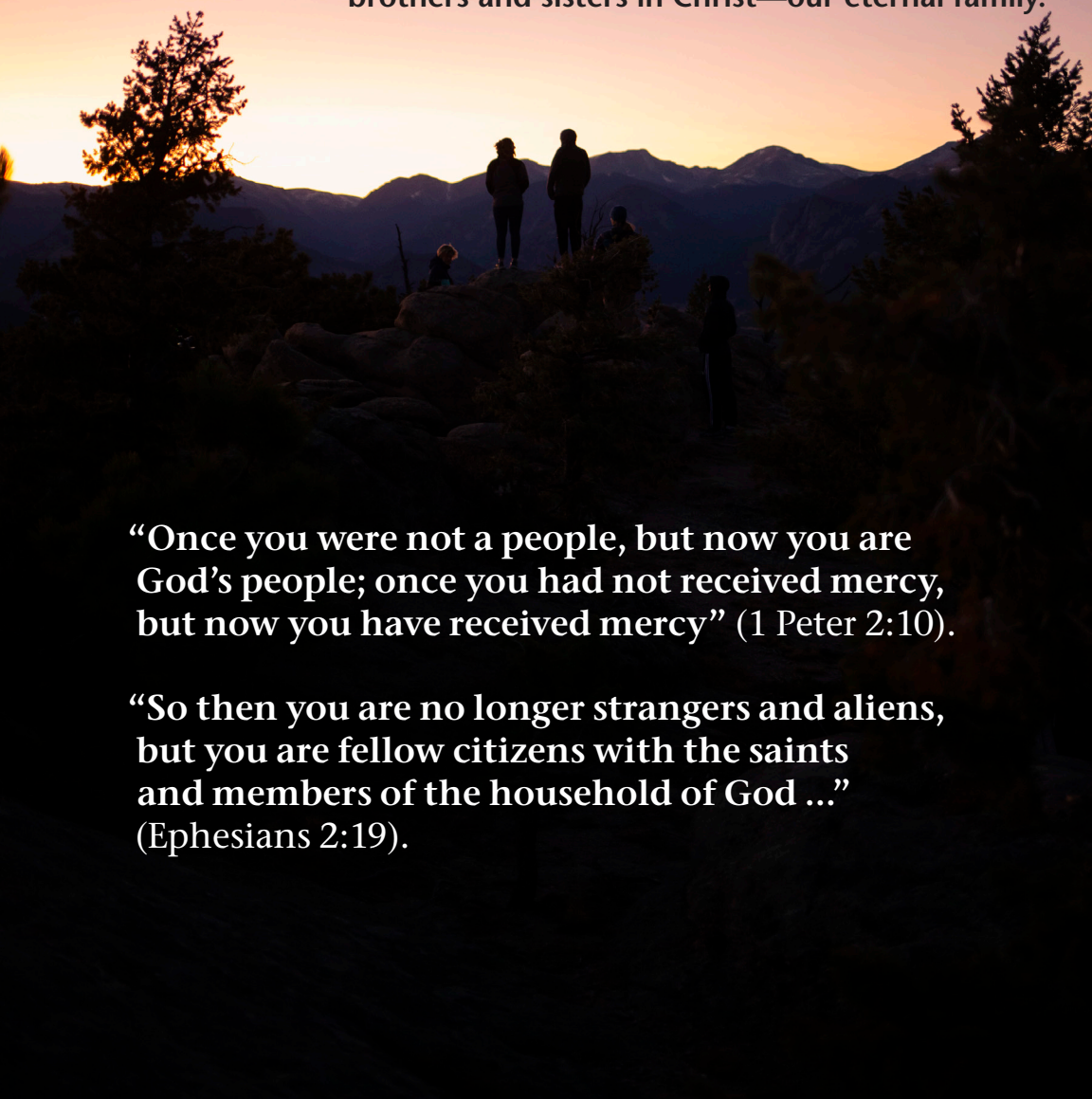
This Gospel cause proceeds one life at a time—the one right in front of you. And however this year proceeds after *Dobbs*, we go forth *anno Domini*—in the year of our Lord.

In a world laden with struggles, confusion, anger, war, and disease, we realize how important community is.

In fact, we can declare that “togetherness” is one of God’s greatest gifts in life. This togetherness is found in the first institution—family—and the blessings of family reach into the wider community, carrying with it gifts of life from God Himself.

As a Christian community, we also recognize that the church provides a foretaste of the life to come, uniting, strengthening, and preparing us for our heavenly home.

One day we will live in the home God has prepared with all of our brothers and sisters in Christ—our eternal family.

A photograph showing the silhouettes of several people standing on a rocky mountain peak. They are looking out over a vast landscape of rolling hills and mountains under a bright, hazy sky, likely at sunrise or sunset. The scene is peaceful and contemplative, with the warm light of the sun creating a strong backlight effect on the figures and the landscape.

“Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Peter 2:10).

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God ...” (Ephesians 2:19).

I Only Know Human Beings

by Pastor Paul Clark

One of the many heroic stories that came out of World War II was that of Pastor Andre Trocme and his wife, Magda. They encouraged the residents of their little town in Le Chambon, France, to defy the Gestapo's orders to turn in any Jews who could be found in the town or the surrounding area.

Instead, under the leadership of Pastor Trocme, the residents of those villages were responsible for saving up to 5,000 Jews from being taken to the death camps. They formed an underground network to help the Jews safely travel across the Swiss border and out of harm's way.

Pastor Trocme told the members of his congregation, "We shall resist whenever our adversaries demand of us obedience contrary to the word of the Gospel." When the Germans could not find any Jews in the town, they confronted Pastor Trocme, telling him to immediately cease his activities and turn in the names of the townspeople who had helped hide the Jews. Pastor Trocme answered, "I am their shepherd. A shepherd does not forsake his flock. I do not know what a Jew is. **I only know human beings.**"

The powers that back the death-dealing abortion culture try to find ways to make us keep silent. They try to censure us, cancel us, and ridicule us. They attack pro-life people verbally, and sadly, in some instances even physically. They paint us as far-right radical lunatics who care only about the so-called "fetus," and not about those who are already born.

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth.



The truth is that abortion hurts women, one way or another. *Every time*. And abortion kills a baby—a little girl, a little boy. *Every time*. And abortion continues to poison the culture in so many ways. *Every time*.

The science is conclusive: Human life starts at fertilization. The Bible is conclusive: Life is from God, it begins at fertilization, and God's commandment of **"You shall not murder"** (Exodus 20:13) certainly applies to the slaying of an innocent child in the womb. Because that little baby in the womb *IS* a human being.

Whether Jew or Gentile, boy or girl, black or white, healthy or infirm, they are human, with human rights, most especially the right to life. Like Pastor Trocme asserted, **we only know human beings!**

As Lutherans who treasure God's Word as holy and without error, we have so much to offer. God sent His own Son into the world to unravel the twisted fabric of death. When Jesus said, **"It is finished"** (John 19:30) on the cross, it was true. It *IS* finished. The stain and guilt of your sins, and mine, and the person struggling with the guilt of an abortion—all of this has been blotted out by the cleansing blood of Christ. **EVERY SIN. EVERY TIME.** Repent and believe the Gospel! Christ, who died for us, is also risen, and in Him we have new life, abundant life, and a glorious future.

Here—in Jesus and His Gospel—is healing for the hurting, peace for the troubled, reconciliation for the estranged, rescue for the fallen, and comfort for the grief-stricken. Here—in Jesus and His Gospel—is forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Life that overcomes death. Life that overcomes our brokenness. Life that pushes forward toward the Promised Land, where in God's presence **"there is fullness of joy,"** and at His right hand **"are pleasures forevermore"** (Psalm 16:11).

Rev. Paul Clark is president of Lutherans For Life of Michigan.



I Wish I Could Say They Don't Write Songs about Abortion

by Pastor Michael Salemink

I wish I could say they don't write songs about abortion. At least they don't write songs celebrating abortion. But they do write abortion songs, and they sing them. They write and sing a lot about abortion. The internet's information repository, Wikipedia, lists hundreds released over the last fifty years.

They tend to occupy three categories. Some of them plead with the listener not to undertake an abortion (several from the perspective of the unborn child). Some of them express grief or regret at past involvement in an abortion (several addressed to the unborn child). And some of them (my favorites!) rejoice over the little one for whom they considered abortion but never completed it.

Some noteworthy examples, for your reflection:

"(You're) Having My Baby" – Paul Anka, 1974. The Canadian singer of "Put Your Head on My Shoulder" (and writer of "She's a Lady" for Tom Jones as well as "My Way" for Frank Sinatra) hit number one with this the year after *Roe v. Wade*. "Didn't have to keep it ... you could have swept it from your life but you wouldn't do it ... What a lovely way of sayin' how much you love me."

"Unborn Child" – Seals and Crofts, 1974. Better known for their 1972 hit, "Summer Breeze," the soft rock duo not only put this one out against their label's advice, but they gave the whole album the same title. "Oh little baby, you'll never cry, nor will you hear a sweet lullaby ... Mama stop, turn around, go back, think it over."

"Papa Don't Preach" – Madonna, 1986. Maybe the most recognizable ditty about surprise pregnancy, the fourth number-one from the decade's radio queen (who by no means embodied any traditional values). "Maybe we'll be all right, it's a sacrifice, but my friends keep telling me to give it up ... I've made up my mind, I'm keeping my baby."



“Silent ScreaM” – Slayer, 1988. The heavy metal legends named this number after the renowned anti-abortion film narrated by former abortionist Dr. Bernard Nathanson. “Bury the unwanted child, beaten and torn, sacrifice the unborn ... life’s little fragments destroyed ... innocence withdrawn in fear, fires burning you can hear.”

“Miracle” – Whitney Houston, 1990. The girl with the golden pipes (think “The Greatest Love of All” and “I Will Always Love You”) reached number nine with this third single from her multi-platinum third album. “I made a choice and today I pay ... when love grows inside of you ... there’s a miracle in store.”

“Sally’s Pigeons” – Cyndi Lauper, 1993. The ’80s pop princess who told us “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun” also cut this sad track about a childhood friend who died from an abortion. It’s no pro-life anthem, but it does acknowledge the grave repercussions of the act. “She left one night with just a nod, was lost from some back alley job.”

“Brick” – Ben Folds Five, 1997, and **“The Freshmen”** – The Verve Pipe, 1997. Both songs charted top 20 in the same year (“The Freshmen” in January and “Brick” in November), and both laid bare the melancholy that follows a girlfriend’s aborting. Brick: “She is balled up on the couch ... I’m feeling more alone than I ever have before.” The Freshmen: “Stomping baby’s breath and a shoe full of rice ... we’re guilt-stricken sobbing with our heads on the floor.”

“To Zion” – Lauryn Hill, 1998. Acclaimed as perhaps the best album of the ’90s, the R&B classic debuted at number one and won five Grammys. She left the industry to raise six children (with the son of reggae superstar Bob Marley). About her son, Zion, she sings, “Unto me a man child would be born ... I knew his life deserved a chance but everybody told me to be smart ... instead I chose to use my heart ... I thank you for choosing me ... a beautiful reflection of His grace.”

“Cool” – John Michael Montgomery, 2004. Country musicians feel it, too. This ballad didn’t have the popularity of his earlier offerings (“I Swear,” “Sold,” and “I Can Love You Like That”), but it recounts how a father overhears his boy telling the pregnant girlfriend, “There’s a doctor I’ve heard of who fixes mistakes,” and counsels him, “One night a young girl told me the same thing, and you wouldn’t be here if she hadn’t said no.”

“River” – Eminem, 2017. The most famous rapper of this generation and owner of fifteen Grammy awards and an Oscar, his lyrics are profane, profuse, and brutally honest. “I made you terminate my baby ... bet I really woulda loved your smile, didn’t really wanna abort it, but ... what’s one more lie to tell our unborn child.”

Thank God poets and prophets tell the truth that popular opinion attempts to ignore. And the greatest of these are the verses of Psalm 139:

“You knit me together in my mother’s womb ... I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Find this article with videos at lutheransforlife.org. To hear uplifting and encouraging For Life music live, by Wendysue Fluegge, join us October 21-22 at the 2022 Lutherans For Life National Conference in Rock Island, Illinois. Find out more at lutheransforlife.org/conference and at wendysue.com.

Emergence From the Hedge of Isolation

by Deaconess Pamela Buhler and Deaconess Chrissie Gillet

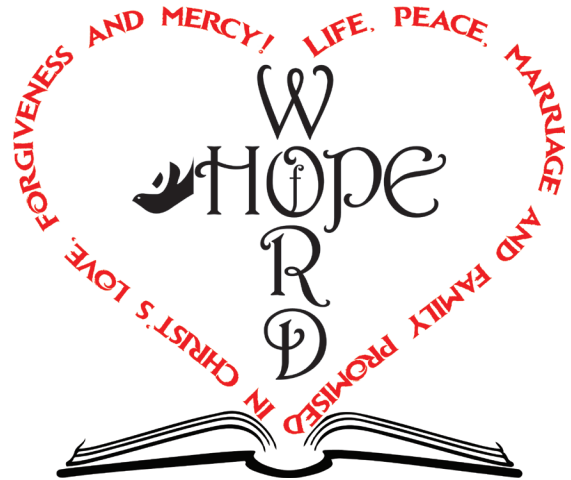
Sometimes we view hedges as helpful. They define and reinforce boundaries. This crude fortification of protection also provides a place to hide from the potential risk of pain and suffering. However, it is a false sense of security and only isolates us from others. Hedges tend to become too thick or grow out of control and obscure the importance of fellowship with family and the Christian community.

Word of Hope (word-of-hope.org; 888.217.8679) recognizes that when one person is in distress, it affects the whole family. Your family could consist of immediate family members, a congregational network, a group of close friends, or your relationship with the Lord. When you suffer, these relationships suffer right along with you, even when you try to hide from problems or avoid the pain of suffering.

At **Word of Hope**, we help people who are suffering, perhaps people like you, to grow stronger in the hope of Christ's comfort while suffering and to reconcile relationships (2 Corinthians 1:5). We walk alongside you in the journey of exploring your perception of suffering as something to hide from or something to embrace. Learning how Christ bore our suffering and gaining a better understanding about the purpose of suffering are important parts of the expedition. Along the way, we share the truth about suffering as a tool God uses to reveal His great love for us (John 3:16), expose our sin (1 Corinthians 11:30-32), strengthen faith (James 1:2-12), increase our dependence on the Lord (2 Corinthians 12:7-10), make us more Christ-like (Hebrews 12:11), and even provide an opportunity to share with others our reason for hope (1 Peter 3: 15). Your perception of suffering, especially the belief that suffering is purposeful or purposeless, can dramatically impact your ability to persevere despite suffering.

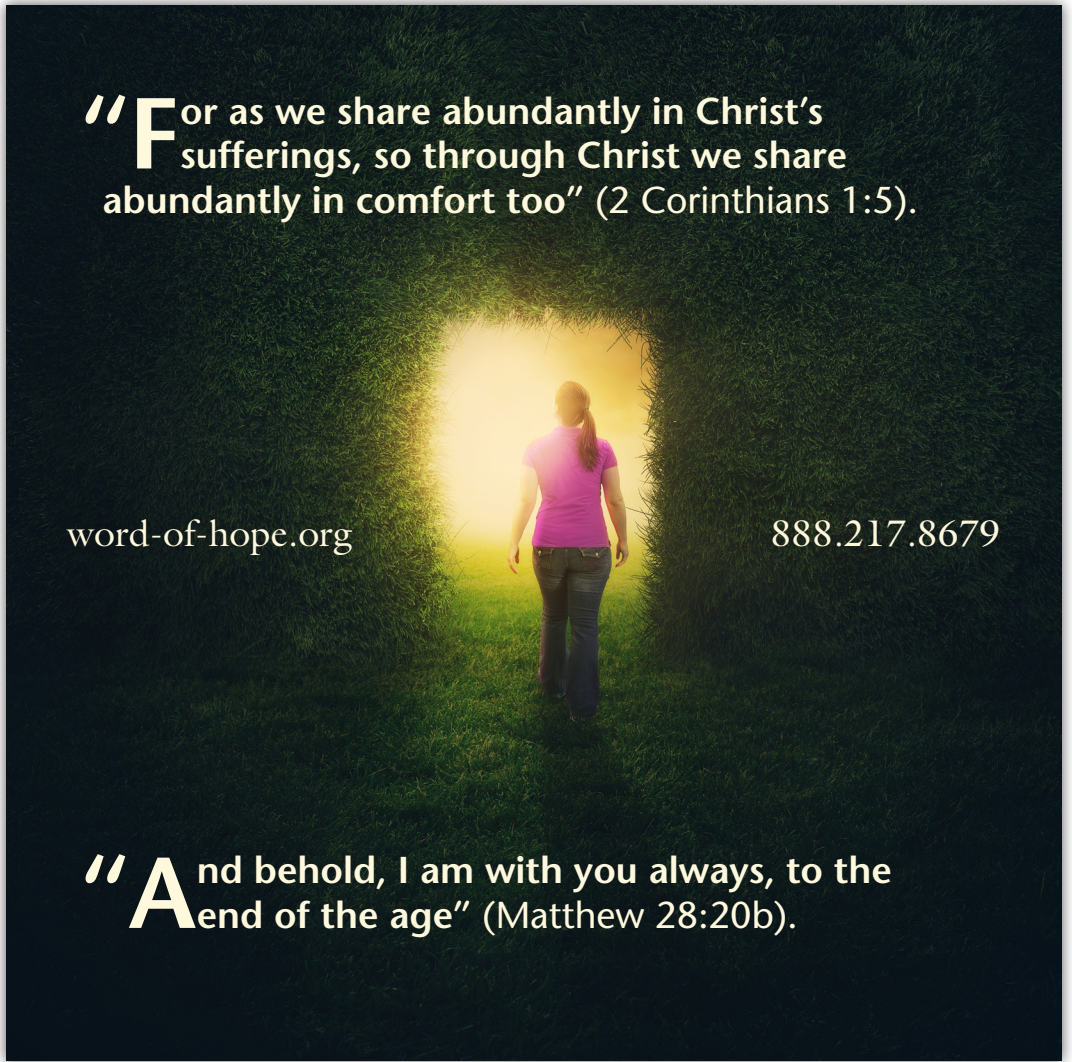
The two disciples, Judas and Peter, illustrate different approaches to suffering with the conviction of sinning against Jesus. Although Judas returned the silver, he still avoided the responsibility for his sinful behavior (Matthew 27:3). He hid from Jesus and the other disciples, thereby forgoing the opportunity for forgiveness and reconciliation. In his isolation, he was tempted to believe that he was all alone and unforgivable. In Satan's final attack, Judas was convinced his pain was more than he could bear. Ultimately, he succumbed to despair and the conviction that ending his life was the only way to avoid suffering (Matthew 27:5).

Alternatively, when Peter realized he was responsible for denying Jesus three times, he wept bitterly (Matthew 26:75). Instead of hiding from the disciples, Peter likely



confessed the fulfillment of Jesus's prediction to his brothers while they were commiserating together over Jesus' crucifixion. Upon Jesus' return, Peter was forgiven three times and reconciled to Christ (John 21:15-17). As a result, Peter became a leader among the disciples and the first to preach about Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2).

Like these two disciples, we all fear suffering and struggle with the conviction of sin. You are not alone; Christ is always with you (Matthew 28:20). Yet, there may be times you are tempted to hide and barricade yourself behind hedges of false protection or isolate yourself from the possibility of forgiveness and reconciled relationships. In these moments, remember that Word of Hope is here for you. We are here to listen without judgment and journey with you through the guilt, shame, and fear associated with past sins towards the freedom found only in Christ's forgiveness. Together we will rejoice. **"Rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed"** (1 Peter 4:13).



"For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too" (2 Corinthians 1:5).

word-of-hope.org

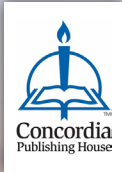
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"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20b).

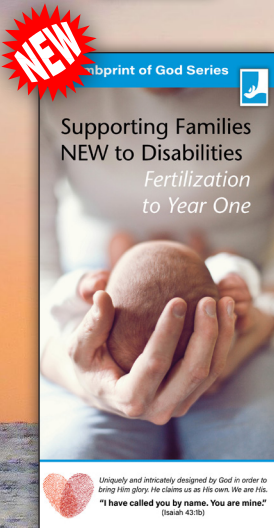


Today I'm Feeling ...
Prayers for anyone who is involved in a child's life –
 Please know that no matter how you are feeling today, you are never alone. *Item LFL306B.*
\$2.00 ea.

Prayers While I Wait ...
to get pregnant or adopt, and finally hold my child
 – Regardless of how you deal with waiting, Lutherans For Life realizes that sometimes it's an exciting time, and at other times it's really hard ... Please know that no matter how you are feeling today, you are never alone. *Item LFL307B.* **\$2.00 ea.**

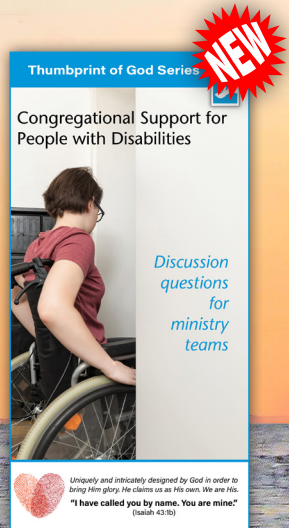


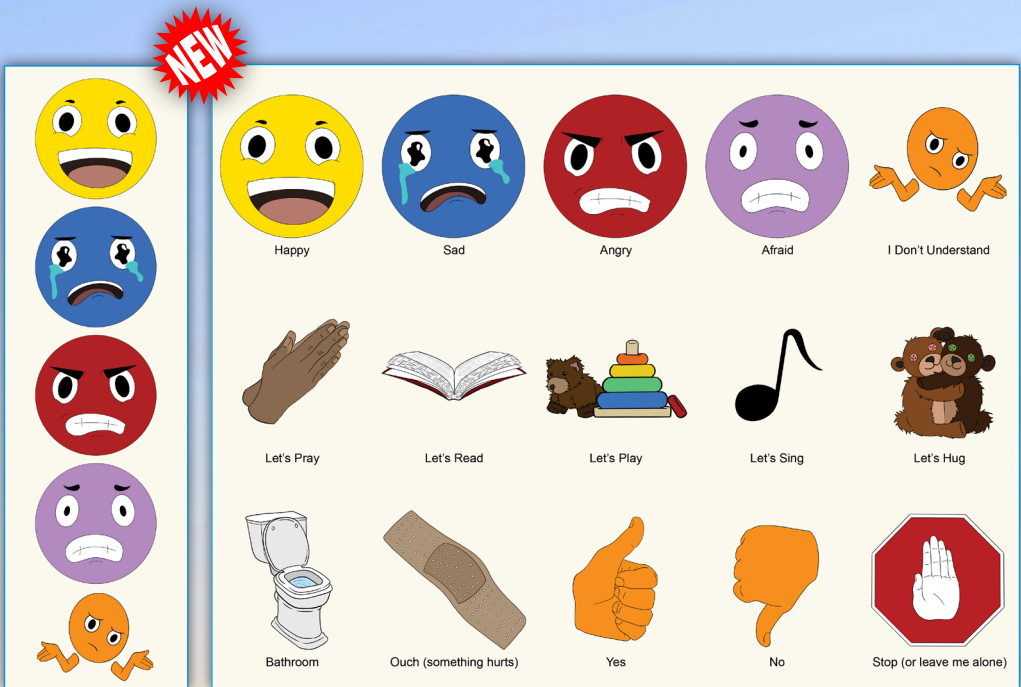
Order LFL Resources at www.cph.org or 800.325.3040. Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.



Supporting Families NEW to Disabilities – A resource of ideas and considerations to encourage you. *Item LFL148T.*
\$0.50 ea.

Congregational Support for People with Disabilities – Discussion questions for ministry teams – Disability awareness and disability ministry should not begin once there is an immediate need. It should begin today! *Item LFL145T.* **\$0.50 ea.**





Communicating with Young Children Bookmark – This bookmark provides a simple key for expressing emotions when communication is confusing or frustrating. *Item LFL149BM. \$0.25 ea.*

Communicating with Young Children Placemat – When children are very young, communication issues can be a source of confusion and frustration. This project provides simple stepping stones for communicating and praying with young children. *Item LFL150T. \$0.50 ea.*



New Spanish Resources | **¿Es el aborto un problema electoral?** *Item LFL118T-S. \$0.50 ea.* | **Vida verdadera Amor verdadero** *Item LFL615T-S. \$2.00 ea.* | **Palabra de Esperanza – Word of Hope** *Item LFL404T-S. FREE*

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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.

July 3 – Pentecost IV (Proper 9) – Sometimes testifying to the sanctity of life means confronting uncomfortable truths. Jesus speaks with just such courage to three whole cities in this week’s Gospel lesson (Luke 10:13-15). And in our Epistle (Galatians 6:1), the Apostle Paul explains the ultimate purpose of warning against sin: to restore and redeem a treasured neighbor with faith and forgiveness even for abortion or assisted suicide.

July 10 – Pentecost V (Proper 10) – Leviticus 19:15 expresses our Lord’s compassion for every human life: “You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great.” He has delivered us each from domains of darkness with a grace that receives and preserves no matter what ages, appearances, or abilities. We get to extend the same joy and hope to anyone the culture labels “half-dead” (Luke 10:30)—from the embryo to the elderly!

July 17 – Pentecost VI (Proper 11) – Abortion means abandonment. Parents desert their little ones to death because they themselves feel forsaken. Today’s appointed Psalm describes how God wants all those whom others disregard: “Though father and mother have forsaken me, the Lord will take me in” (Psalm 27:10). In the Body of Christ, no one goes unwanted, even during surprise pregnancy. We share Father Abraham’s delight (Genesis 18:10) in abundance!

July 24 – Pentecost VII (Proper 12) – Even surprise pregnancies involve a father. More than 60% of women who undergo abortion report pressure to do so from a man in their life. Jesus extends instead the joy of God Himself in a fatherhood that finds beautiful and blessed fulfillment by protecting and providing for the child (Luke 11:11-13). The sanctity of life isn’t a women’s issue—it’s a Gospel gift!

July 31 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 13) – Why settle for “my body, my choice?” Death used as a solution like in abortion or assisted suicide offers pride, pleasure, property, and popularity, but all these only end up in vanity (Ecclesiastes 1:2). The real wealth that eyes don’t always see and money cannot ever buy comes from believing our bodies, hearts, and lives belong to the Father and Savior who made each one for His own (Psalm 100:3). Let God give life!

August 7 – Pentecost IX (Proper 14) – Surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis can inflict real anxiety about material necessities. But abortion and assisted suicide will only leave its victims lacking even more. Our Heavenly Father, on the other hand, gets giddy to furnish sufferers with not just what we need but all the assets, land, and families He has (Luke 12:31-32). Death, even when we wield it, leaves us empty, but faith never fails to fill hands and hearts.

August 14 – Pentecost X (Proper 15) – Abortion, assisted suicide, and embryocidal experimentation deal in false prophecies and fraudulent promises. They advertise peace and escape but only deliver grief and guilt (Jeremiah 23:16-17). The Gospel of God’s love and salvation



for every human life cuts through (Luke 12:51) the tangles and tethers of the culture's lies (Hebrews 12:1). Faith in Jesus as Lord brings real liberty in His grace and true luxury in His favor.

August 21 – Pentecost XI (Proper 16) – Abortion doesn't mean choosing whether or not to have a family. Assisted suicide doesn't amount to deciding whether or not to be a burden. Surprise pregnancy, terminal diagnosis, or otherwise, every human being will have burdens and belong to family. The only question is what kind. Affirming the sanctity of life binds us to a strong Father (Hebrews 12:6-7) and a household of celebration (Luke 13:29; Hebrews 12:22-24).

August 28 – Pentecost XII (Proper 17) – “It is the glory of God to conceal things” (Proverbs 25:2), like the sanctity of life hidden behind surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis. “The glory of kings is to search things out,” like the sanctity of life beheld in embryos and elderly ones. Our own souls embody little children (Psalm 131:2), and angels inhabit the needs of strangers (Hebrews 13:2). If rescuing pets brings relief (Luke 14:5), what rejoicing will be ours in defending our endangered neighbors?



September 4 – Pentecost XIII (Proper 18) – Conventional wisdom once equated slaves with property instead of people. The Gospel Paul proclaimed in Philemon, about God Incarnate as humankind's slave and becoming our brother, eventually ended the injustice. And will we not delight to declare it and demonstrate the same sanctity of every human life until abortion and assisted suicide also become obsolete?

September 11 – Pentecost XIV (Proper 19) – Our culture discriminates based on size, skills, and circumstances in order to make abortion and assisted suicide possible. But our Lord and God has a soft spot, a definite preference for the feeble (Ezekiel 34:16), the insignificant (Luke 15:8-10), and the failures (1 Timothy 1:15). If it gladdens Him to save such as us, won't it also enrapture us to advocate the sanctity of every life?

September 18 – Pentecost XV (Proper 20) – Financial concerns often serve as justifications for abortion and assisted suicide. The Word of the Lord elevates the value of a person far above that of any money or comfort (Luke 16:9; 1 Timothy 2:4). Does it even count as sacrifice if we must give up prosperity or property to gain and sustain a person in surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis? Aren't we always getting the better end of the exchange? The Gospel guarantees it!

September 25 – Pentecost XVI (Proper 21) – Do we ignore the ruin around us (Amos 6:6) because abortion seems “too political” and assisted suicide feels “too personal”? Only woes await those who do (Amos 6:1, 4). But our Heavenly Father obsesses over the victims (Psalm 146:9), and heaven finds inexhaustible joy embracing the vulnerable (Luke 16:22). In speaking and showing the sanctity of all humankind, we also can “take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19)!

lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts

For Life Live! – The first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. These 90-minute events allow speakers to go in-depth with plenty of opportunity for Q & A.

Chats 4 Life – Offering high school and college youth an opportunity to learn about contemporary life topics from expert guest speakers. Held every first and third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET.

What about ... Mondays? – On the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. CT/7:00 p.m. ET, students gather to talk about life issues they'd like to address and to find hope-filled, Gospel-motivated answers.

Frontline Call – For all LFL Frontline volunteers! Monday, July 11, 2022 – 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, guest speakers, and Q & A.



JOIN US
ONLINE

For topics, speakers, and Zoom links, go to the LFL homepage calendar or our Facebook page.



Lutherans For Life

Available in App Stores



lutheransforlife.org/lfl-app



With **SPOTLIGHT ON LIFE**, your event will be equipping many others to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. It's simple! You conduct the event and LFL will provide staff speakers, based on availability. Whether your event is one hour, a half day, an evening, or something else, LFL will be pleased to assist you in planning.

lutheransforlife.org/spotlight-on-life



LAMBS – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets

Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? 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. lutheransforlife.org/article/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets



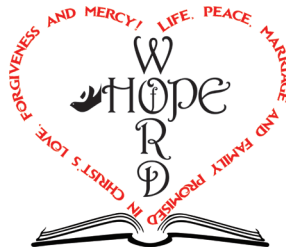
Buying or selling a home or commercial property? You can support Lutherans For Life at no cost to you by taking advantage of the Real Estate for Life program. Call 877.543.3871 or email proliferalestate@yahoo.com for more information.

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The Gift of Community

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

It's bright and sunny as I write this article; the spring rains have eased, and the warm winds whisper that summer is on its way.

I'm looking forward to summer. I always do. Long walks and late evenings, cook-outs and campfires, lightning bugs and laughter are woven into most of my favorite memories. While the weather is certainly one commendable aspect of the season, I'm especially fond of summer for the community it brings. The spontaneous conversations with neighbors out mowing, the picnic lunches on the back patio, and the conversations around the firepit make summer my favorite time of year. It's the togetherness I long for more than anything—the opportunity to relish in the gift of others.

It's no secret that I'm an extrovert; longing to be with others comes naturally for me. But we don't have to be extroverts to recognize that people are meant to be blessings in our lives. Whether we prefer to spend time with lots of those blessings or a select few, it doesn't change the fact that community is a gift, and because it was a gift given pre-fall, we can be certain it's a good one.

Genesis 2:18 reminds us that we were made for community. After God makes Adam and places him in the garden, He declares, **"It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."** And then God does; He creates Eve. Together Adam and Eve make community possible. In fact, one of God's first commands is to make community: **"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth,"** God says (Genesis 1:28). Today we call this gift, this first community, family.

But the gift doesn't end with our nearest relatives. Through Christ, our family expands exponentially to include our brothers and sisters at church, locally and throughout the world. Ephesians 2:19 reminds us, **"You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God ..."**



The community God provides is a good gift for His people. Even more, it's a necessary one. We need each other for life.

God's gift of Christian fellowship is a blessing meant to affirm and uphold life. Philippians reminds us of this. Paul begins his letter by thanking God for the faithful in Philippi, those partners in the Gospel who have been upholding his life in prison by praying and caring for him from afar. They have also been carrying on the work of the Gospel in his absence. They've been fulfilling their vocations, confessing Christ in name and through the fruits of service they've provided to those God has placed in their lives. Though Paul can't be with them, he is uplifted by them. Their partnership, even from afar, brings him great joy.

God's mighty work in Paul's life has provided a confession for Christ that has spanned countless generations. Yet, Paul was still human. He needed to be supported by others. He needed the gift of Christian fellowship.

The same is true of each of us; we too need to be supported in body and soul. We need campfires and cookouts and picnic lunches filled with laughter. Yet, as members of the household of God, we also need conversation and consolation and prayer. We need to gather, in person, at the Communion rail. Surrounded by our eternal family, we need to hear God's promises and rejoice in His forgiveness.

Whether you know it or not, you are manifestations of the blessing of community in my life. Your prayers and notes of encouragement from afar remind me that I am not alone. Your enthusiasm and interaction with Y4Life on social media platforms proclaim your support of our Y4Life initiatives. And your financial donations inspire and enable me to reach more schools and churches with the message of LIFE. It is good to be a partner in the Gospel with you. Good because God has made us for each other.

May your summer be filled with time for family and friends, time to catch up, and time to simply be together. May you rejoice in God's good gift of community now and always!



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



The Power of the Gospel at Wildwood Hills Ranch

by Michelle Herman

Lutherans For Life national staff enjoyed getting together from around the country March 1-4, 2022, for a planning retreat and in-person fellowship at beautiful Wildwood Hills Ranch near St. Charles, Iowa. See photo on page 25.

What a joy and honor it is to get to share with you what God is doing here at Wildwood Hills Ranch! Without fail, God is continuously working here and revealing Himself more clearly to us through the youth we serve and the lives He is changing. Wildwood is a youth development organization located in central Iowa that serves vulnerable youth that come from places of abuse, neglect, and impoverishment. Many of these students have never heard the Gospel or even know who Jesus is, so when we get to share the hope and healing that only Jesus can provide, the impact is immense and truly **“immeasurably more than we could ask or imagine ...”** (Ephesians 3:20).

I'd like to share with you Rachel's story ...

“At age 10, I was physically, emotionally, and sexually abused by a non-biological caregiver. I avoided going home when my mother wasn't there. I spent a lot of my time at friends' houses or at the library just to get away from all of the darkness that awaited me at home. In 2013, my father suddenly died from a drug overdose. This was the moment my world truly came crashing down around me. I couldn't understand why God's plan had something so devastating in it. How could someone who loves me hurt me so badly? I became angry and isolated myself from friends and family. As I entered high school, I began hanging out with kids I had always stayed away from, kids who drank alcohol and did drugs. My grades were hurting, but I didn't care about them anymore. Nothing seemed to matter anymore.

“It was around this time of not caring that I joined the Drill Team at Wildwood Hills Ranch. Lynn Winkelmann was (and still is) the instructor and instantly became a light in my life. I admired his work ethic, his teaching abilities, and the way he lived his life. I was met with a decision: to stay where I was and continue down darker paths or make a change. My behaviors were not aligned with the contract I signed to be on the team. So, I ended those toxic friendships and formed healthy ones. I started to complete my school work and became more involved in band and



theatre. My faith grew as I listened to Lynn talk about God. Wildwood helped me realize that I was living for a purpose and that God has a plan. I am who I am today because of The Ranch.

“Today I’m currently attending Grand View University and working toward my psychology degree. I’ve got a lot of years left in school before I’m a psychiatrist, but I’m up for the challenge! I spend several nights a week at the barn either riding or helping Mr. Lynn with barn duties. As mentioned earlier, this summer I will be one of the directors at the barn for the 2022 summer session, and I am beyond excited! The Ranch has given me a lot of opportunities, so I try to give back as much as I can. I am very thankful for this place and everyone in it who continue to transform the lives of the students we see each summer.”

We are so inspired by students like Rachel and hope that you are, too! Would you consider partnering with us to change lives in Iowa through committing to pray for our youth and staff? Follow along at www.wildwoodhillsranch.org/blognews.



Y4Life Update

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life



Y4Life had a BUSY, life-affirming spring! We started with the Y4Life Summit in late February. The retreat brought together more than 40 college and high school youth who traveled from Washington, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Nebraska, and Texas. Our very first Y4Life Summit included five educational sessions, a service project, and closing worship—it was a fantastic weekend!

After the Summit was over, our team jumped into the **Y4Life High School Leadership Retreat** in Canton, Michigan. Students from Ohio received training in how to start and maintain a Y4Life Team and participated in team building and memory-making. Though cold and rainy outside in early March, the warmth and camaraderie inside was inspirational.

In mid-March, Y4Life headed south to exhibit at LEA in Orlando. The gathering of Lutheran administrators offered opportunities to share Y4Life resources and connect with principals who are interested in starting a team at their school. The following weekend, in Plano, Texas, Faith Lutheran Church and School welcomed Y4Life for an Owen's Mission presentation and a **From Fertilization to Forever Conference** for youth and adults. The weekend was filled with opportunities to learn how to uphold life.

In early April, the **Y4Life College Leadership Retreat** took place in Nashville, Tennessee. Concordias 4 Life made plans for the coming year, and each individual Concordia in attendance mapped out their goals and life-affirming opportunities for the 2022-2023 school year. We worked hard so we could play hard. It was a weekend full of life-affirming fellowship.

After Easter, a second **Y4Life High School Leadership Retreat** took place—this time in Branson, Missouri. The Leaders 4 Life from Oklahoma are already engaging in life-affirming opportunities in their community. It's clear they are going to do great things!

God blessed Y4Life with so many amazing opportunities this spring, and He's sure to continue blessing as we attend conferences and youth gatherings this summer. Thanks for your continued support of Y4Life. Today's youth are being prepared to make a Gospel-motivated difference in the lives of many! (y4life.org)



24,000 Diapers!

by Anastasia Brown, Lutheran North Senior

In March, in Macomb, Michigan, Lutheran North High School celebrated Lutheran Schools Week. A tradition at the school is to spend one day doing service projects for local charities. This year, one of the



charities helped was Compassion Pregnancy Center. The challenge: repackage as many diapers as possible! Compassion hands out packages of 30 diapers of the same size to their clients, so repackaging donations is a constant task. Students at North welcomed the opportunity to help! In the end, 24,000 diapers were repackaged by teachers and students—ready to be given out to those in need! For this blessing, to God be the glory!

CUC4LIFE Adoption Event!

In April, CUC4LIFE gathered together to learn about the adoption process in the USA, work on a service project for a local adoption agency—Hopeful Beginnings—and view the adoption-themed movie, *Bella*. For their service project, they sewed and stuffed red felt hearts and placed them in small canvas bags with a short poem. These will serve as a small gift of remembrance the adoption agency can give to birth mothers to encourage and remind them of the difficult and beautiful thing they have done! Approximately 15 people attended each meeting, completing gifts for 55 mothers!





lutheransforlife.org/step-up-4-life-2022

Summer is often a time of togetherness—picnics, watching fireworks, chasing lightning bugs, vacations at the beach or in the mountains or just in the backyard with dear family and friends—and all these things are meant to be enjoyed with loved ones! *Life Together* was God’s intent from the very beginning.

“So God created man in his own image ... male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth ...’” (Genesis 1: 27-28).

Paul reminds us that, in Jesus, our family expands, and we become brothers and sisters in Christ.

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and *members of the household of God* ...” (Ephesians 2:19).

That is a *lot* of togetherness and a *lot* of family!

Lutherans For Life would love to see you experience life together with all these brothers and sisters in our second annual **Step Up 4 Life** fundraising campaign. By now, you have probably seen all kinds of announcements encouraging you to join in the fun. Here is another reminder that you can *still* be a part of this fun. We encourage you to become a sponsor, a donor, a walker, a runner, or participant in any activity that earns steps and raises money For Life! Our goal of \$60,000 will allow Lutherans For Life to continue our unparalleled commitment to helping others become *Gospel-motivated voices For Life*. Our ministry provides education and support to those people—both brothers and sisters and those *not yet* our brothers and sisters—who may be facing many different life issues that occur anytime from fertilization to natural death.

Just visit the link to learn all about our campaign, sign up yourself and others, and then get out there and spend some fun time *together* as you and your family and friends **Step Up 4 Life!!**



SAVE THE DATE!

Lutherans For **Life** NATIONAL Conference
October 21-22, 2022
Rock Island, Illinois (Quad Cities)
lutheransforlife.org/conference

The LFL National Conference is back! Lutherans For Life national conferences 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!

Friday, October 21 – 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. | Saturday, October 22 – 8:30 a.m. to noon

Speakers

Melissa Ohden | Jeanne Mancini | Steve Deace

Workshop Leaders

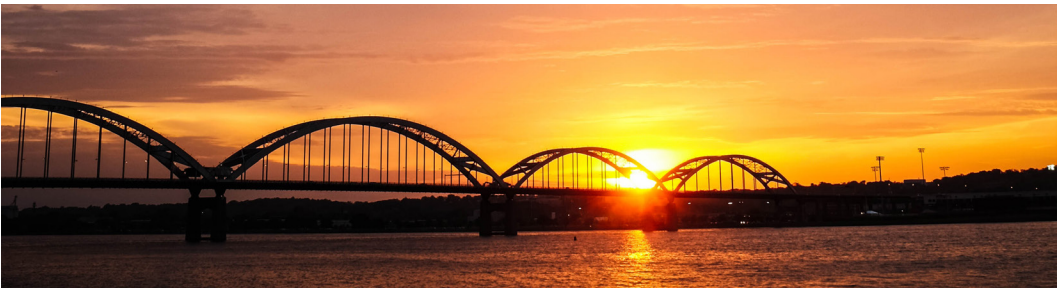
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Col. John Eidsmoe | Rev. Dr. Wade Mobley | Deaconess Pam Nielsen
Dr. Roni Grad | Dr. Kim Marxhausen | Deaconess Tiffany Manor
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Virginia Flo | Deaconess Chrissie Gillett

Special Friday Night Banquet Music

Wendysue Fluegge

Conference Registration

LFL Members: \$125 | Non-Members: \$150
Students: \$25 | Children 12 and under: FREE



You Are a Blessing! We Appreciate You!

THANK YOU for graciously supporting the mission and ministry of Lutherans For Life. Your thoughts, prayers, and financial contributions are a tremendous blessing to us—and we thank God for YOU! Here’s how we are sharing our Gospel-motivated voice For Life with others:

- **Life Week 2022**—seven days of education, activities, and resources connecting advocates and frontline volunteers nationwide leading up to Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (1/23/22). Life Week included the national March for Life in Washington, DC.
- **LFL App**—The launch of a *free* smartphone app for Apple and Android devices.
- Translated and produced new and updated Spanish resources (creating more in 2022).
- Created resources for families/friends of people with disabilities (creating more in 2022).
- Brought regional conferences to Las Vegas, Nevada; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Hickory, North Carolina.
- Our **Word of Hope** ministry receives more than 250 contacts a month on issues of depression, marital conflict, divorce, homelessness, postpartum depression, anxiety/fear, substance abuse, sex addiction, pornography, and abortion.
- Exhibited at numerous conferences of the AFLC, CLBA, LCMC, LCMS, and NALC.
- Presented to thousands of people in churches, schools, public settings, and online.
- Through **Y4Life** we trained thousands of students in classrooms, weekend retreats, Y4Life in Washington, DC, and online.

“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:3-6).



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, video, and through 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 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 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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SAVE THE DATE!

Lutherans For Life NATIONAL Conference

October 21-22, 2022

Rock Island, Illinois (Quad Cities)

lutheransforlife.org/conference



**63,459,781 babies have been killed in
abortions since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973**

www.lifenews.com/2022/01/07/63459781-babies-have-been-killed-in-abortions-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973/