



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

## Who Am I? Defining Identity

*Do we find our identity in  
how God sees us, or do we  
find our worth in our external  
circumstances?*

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# Lutherans For Life

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

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## Who Am I?

by Pastor Michael Salemink

**Self never suffices to define identity.** “Lonely” rhymes with “nobody” for a reason. Every “I” implies—implores!—a “you.” And wherever any “I” intersects its “you,” we have an “us.” This distinguishes humankind from other substances and beings.

**“I” come from love, from relationship, family, and community.** Both Bible and biology bear witness to this truth. “I” embody creature and child. Some “You”—an entire “Us,” in fact—made me who I am and makes me so still. My worth consists in the “You” who constitutes my “I.”

**The impulse of life moves forward, drives outward.** We come from somebody besides “me.” We exist also for someone else. You are sacred only if I am. I have sanctity only inasmuch as you do. And we each derive and receive it from the “Us” who gives Himself as “You” to generate our “I.”

**So, my purpose consists in emulating and extending the same dynamic.** Contrary to popular opinion, my self is not for expressing. Identity doesn’t lie in reserving my territory and asserting my rights. The real expression of self is sharing with and serving another.

**Ending another’s life, or even only overlooking it, cannot improve but only impoverish my own.** The less of “you,” the less of “me.” But then every neighbor, every member of the same race and species, enhances my life and identity as well—whatever the ages, abilities, conditions, and costs.

**In the very image of God, every “I” brings an “us” with it.**

**The better we all are, the better “I” am also!**



## *Who Am I? Defining Identity*

**“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”**

**(Jeremiah 1:5)**

*Do we see our identity in how God sees us, or do we find our worth in our external circumstances?*

**“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”**

**(Ephesians 2:10)**





## June 24, 2022 – *Roe v. Wade* Overturned!

Lutherans For Life rejoices that an egregious injustice has been rectified. Thanks be to God for the Supreme Court's reversal of the erroneous *Roe v. Wade* decision! Our nation and culture owe a great debt of gratitude to fifty years of Gospel-motivated voices For Life. Their faithful witness of courage and compassion has influenced successive generations to acknowledge the reality that God creates, redeems, and calls every human life to be His own precious treasure from fertilization to forever. And we delight to receive each one as a gift and a privilege.

Nevertheless, we recognize that significant labor remains. Attention turns from one court and one congress to fifty of them. Neighbors will continue experiencing surprise pregnancies. The devil will keep deceiving the public into viewing death as a solution to suffering. Millions among us still need relief from the guilt and healing from the grief over their part in abortion. The *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* verdict does not mandate the sanctity of unborn life but merely makes the federal government neutral. Even if federal policy did protect the endangered ones, it still falls to us as citizens to ensure that our communities reflect it in actual practice. Laws and leaders can foster good and forbid evil, but only the truth of God's Word and the love of the Body of Christ can change hearts and save lives.

So, we rededicate ourselves all the more intently to speaking truth and showing love to the one right in front of us. Our nationwide network of life-minded servants remains committed to embodying and encouraging gentle relentlessness in an inevitably volatile environment. We pledge ourselves not to allow our fellowship to become apathetic following this positive development. And we are already undertaking to improve and expand our equipping of Gospel-motivated voices to declare and demonstrate

the grace of God in Jesus Christ to all members of our race, no matter what age, appearance, or ability. May He bless our land, our authorities, and our people to have life and share it abundantly!



## **A Standing “O” for Lutherans For Life**

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former executive director of Lutherans For Life

Serendipitous some would call it. Maybe others, a “God thing.” I stood in back of the Iowa District East convention assembly when President Saunders announced the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* on June 24 (also observed as the Nativity of leaping-for-joy-womb-resident John the Baptist, by the way!). Next to me stood Dr. Peter Scaer, Fort Wayne professor and convention essayist. He has been a great voice For Life, a friend of LFL, and my personal friend as well. We have spoken together on several occasions over the years. As the delegates stood and sang the doxology, we both wept. He then grabbed me and took a selfie!



Later, before he began his presentation, he addressed the historic ruling. He mentioned the serendipitous moment described above. Then, to my surprise, he called me his hero in the life movement and lauded my work as leader of LFL. He then asked the convention to acknowledge that work. That resulted in a standing ovation.

What I want the readers of this article to know is you are the real heroes, and you deserve that standing “O” much more than I did. I did my best to make that clear as people came up to me afterward with congratulations and acknowledgements. And I want to make it clear to you now. Oh, I know you do not see yourself as the hero type but as a servant of the Lord of Life. That makes you even more heroic in my book! But remember, it is okay once in a while to receive acknowledgement for your long-standing service promoting and protecting God’s gift of life ... But now back to work. For, as you know, the liberty we proclaim is not complete liberty from the killing of unborn children. However, we can now proclaim that those who champion and celebrate such killing have lost the high ground ... For we have, and always will have, the high ground. We find it just outside the walls of Jerusalem, the place of the skull, Golgotha. There we saw a life-giving death ... This high ground moves us to boldness in defending all life and showing compassion to all struggling with life.

The need for our voices will be greater now. Many who were once smugly silent have found voice. Some of them are in our pews. I was struck by the number of Facebook posts shared with me by pastors at recent conventions. Their reactions went something like, “Wow! I didn’t know he/she was in favor of abortion” ... We need to be all the more ready to share the other choices, choices for good, choices for life, choices for doing what is right. No travel needed! We are right here to love and help in any way and every way possible.

I have been humbled and proud to serve with so many For Life heroes over the years. It was an honor to receive a standing “O” on your behalf. It’s okay for all of us to receive some acknowledgement once in a while. You deserve it. So, listen to the standing “O,” LFL-ers. Take a little bow, enjoy it . . . . . Okay, long enough! Now back to serving the Lord of Life with Gospel-motivated voices and actions louder and more compassionate than ever. (Full article: [lutheransforlife.org/article/a-standing-o-for-lutherans-for-life](http://lutheransforlife.org/article/a-standing-o-for-lutherans-for-life))



## Now Is the Time

by Virginia J. Flo, Director of Volunteer Relations

**“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 6:10-11).**

When is the right time to act? Is it after you have studied for a time and prayed about it? Is it after you have been encouraged to move forward? Or does it just seem like the right time is now? Well, I have a suggestion for you to consider.

If you haven't noticed, a spiritual war continues to rage around us after *Roe v. Wade* was overturned on June 24. The devil isn't willing to give up easily and remove abortion from our society. He is working hard in the political arena, in our circle of friends, and in our families on the issue of abortion. Disagreements were there before, but now people are openly speaking about them. That is a good thing, as we need voices For Life speaking up in support of God's creation and His gift of life. When we ignore the baby in the womb and focus instead on what is now being labeled as the rights of the mother and women's health care, we are turning our backs on God. Never has God authorized killing and called it a right. Never has God condoned promoting abortion and called it health care. His love for life is written throughout Scripture. What are we doing when we ignore His sacred Word?

The good news is that people who were silent are sharing their support for the sanctity of life. That open support is a true blessing. If ever there was a time to act on preserving life, now is the time! The stage is set, and you can make a difference! If you don't have an active Life Team or Life Chapter in your congregation, now is the time to start one. Maybe you have been thinking about it for a while but just haven't taken that next step. Or maybe it hasn't occurred to you, and this is something new. Either way, please pray about this and give me a call at Lutherans For Life so I can help answer questions and help make things happen!

It took 49 years for *Roe* to be overturned, yet it happened. Did we have doubts it would ever happen? Yes, for sure. We should have known better because God has proven repeatedly that, when we pray, He may grant more than we are able to ask for or understand. We need to learn that if we want to pray properly, we should accustom ourselves to pray with confidence and not be distracted by the greatness of our request. If God doesn't grant our prayers, the time may not be right, but He has granted our prayer to overturn this unjust ruling. Right now, there is work to do to share the For Life message in our congregations and communities. Both life in the womb and life at the end of life needs to be supported. We need to protect life from fertilization to natural death. Being For Life is right in line with God's plan of creation! YOU are the missing element that is needed! Don't be satisfied to sit back and wait because now is the time! Don't stop praying as you ponder your next step. Ask God for His guidance and be ready for more than you asked for, as we have a loving and merciful God who loves life. Please consider being a part of a life-affirming ministry in your congregation. Help protect lives and serve God in this special calling.



### Stand in the Gap

by Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

**H**eadlines and events several weeks after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*:

- Liberal Men Brag About Getting Vasectomies to Protest Overturning *Roe v. Wade*
- Biden Admin Will Transport Illegal Immigrants Out of State for Abortions at Taxpayer Expense
- Abortionist Proposes Floating Abortion Center in Gulf of Mexico to Bypass Abortion Bans (*LifeNews.com*, 7/12-13/22)

Women scream, “We love killing babies!” Did you ever dream we would be living in a time when so much disdain would be shown for human life in the womb?

We can—and should—rejoice, praising God that the abortion decision is back in the hands of the individual states and into the hands of “We the People” as it should be! However, there appears to be confusion over what that really means—if one listens to any mainstream media.

Some understand that the Supreme Court never had the authority to mandate any such ruling as *Roe vs. Wade*.

After the *Roe vs. Wade* decision made by the Supreme Court of the United States came down, it was interesting to see the ignorance displayed by the American people. **“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge ... And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children”** (Hosea 4:6). It was as if to suggest it was ever legal to murder one’s own baby in the first place. The government in this country has no business whatsoever giving permission to the people, under the guise of “choice,” to murder the fruit of their wombs. It is the government’s purpose to condemn such an act, not to advocate for it. **“He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the LORD”** (Proverbs 17:15). ([www.sonsoflibertyradio.com/bradlee-dean/the-dean/bloodguiltiness-it-isnt-over-yet-there-will-be-recompense-on-the-heads-of-the-guilty.html](http://www.sonsoflibertyradio.com/bradlee-dean/the-dean/bloodguiltiness-it-isnt-over-yet-there-will-be-recompense-on-the-heads-of-the-guilty.html) – Bible verse quotations added)

Society is unraveling at an exponential rate as is the revealing of evil (pedophilia, human/sex-trafficking, transgenderism, bestiality, etc.).

**“For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light”** (Luke 8:17). (Also see Luke 12:2 and Mark 4:22.)

Every public institution of the United States seems to be morally and spiritually bankrupt (government, financial, education, legal, medical). And the technology that goes with them has become an idol. These idols of society have become an abomination before the Lord. The words of Ezekiel come to mind.



**“You have become guilty by the blood that you have shed, and defiled by the idols that you have made ... Therefore, I have made you a reproach to the nations, and a mockery to all the countries” (Ezekiel 22:4).**

**“Thus says the Lord GOD: Repent and turn away from your idols and turn away your faces from all your abominations” (Ezekiel 14:6).**

**“And I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none” (Ezekiel 22:30).**

How sad that God found none to stand in the gap. Let us NOT repeat it. As Lutherans For Life, we must stand in the gap in repentance for the sins of the nation and for those “who know not what they do,” praying for forgiveness and the strength to turn away from societal idols.

**“You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13-16).**

“One way to be salty and let our light shine is by being good citizens on earth. Our vocation as citizens of both the secular kingdom and God’s kingdom gives us the responsibility to proclaim God’s Word and care for our neighbors. We are called to engage the ‘public square’ with our message of Christ’s mercy for all.” *Human Care & Public Square Issues – July 2022*



**“For we are [I am] God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us [me] to do” (Ephesians 2:10).**

**“And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14).**

**“And he called his ten servants ... and said unto them, ‘Occupy till I come’” (Luke 19:13 KJV). (*Occupy: a military term, to take or hold possession or control of. Merriam Webster*)**

**“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19).**

**“And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).**

Who am I? Who are we?

*Thank You, Heavenly Father, that we are here for such a time as this. We are Your handiwork, created in Your Son to do good works, prepared in advance for us to do. Help us to stand in the gap, repenting for the sins of the nations, asking Your forgiveness, to be salt and light to a bitter, dark land, to occupy the land in which You have placed us, expanding Your Kingdom wielding the Sword of the Spirit, Your Holy Word. In Jesus. Amen.*

### Windows to Heaven

by Pastor Michael Salemink

On the one hand, Frank Klein's just like the rest of us. He's a sixty-something Texas rancher with a pickup truck who cares for his mama. He's a responsible citizen and an honest Christian. On the other hand, Frank's exceptional. He belongs to our nationwide four-decade fellowship of Gospel-motivated voices For Life. And he takes award-winning photographs.

Some time ago he started visiting cemeteries across the state. Frank focused his lenses especially on the angel monuments that accompanied the headstones, and he noticed that many of them resembled children—often standing sentry over the tombs of little ones who died too young. The silent graveyards and concrete sculptures seemed to reveal an overlooked reality: These bodies, however short, had worth and purpose. These lives, however slight, were special and precious. These neighbors, whether once unseen within the womb or invisible now beneath the ground, meant joy and brought hope. And the angelic attendants proclaimed them laid into the arms above and commended into the care of the Father who created them with His own hands, redeemed them by His Son's incarnation, and embraced them as His Holy Spirit's temple, kingdom, and family.

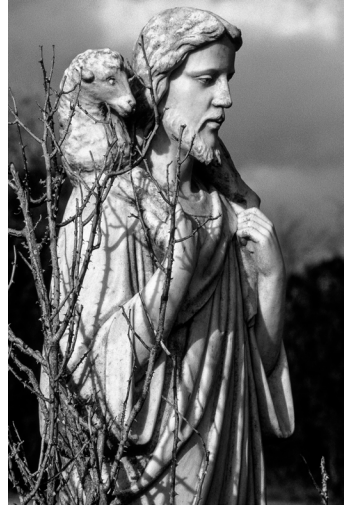
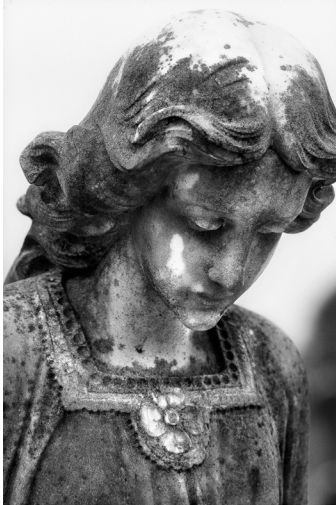
**“See that you do not despise one of these little ones,”** says Jesus the Lord and Savior. **“For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father”** (Matthew 18:10). He's not suggesting that their death transforms them into a different kind of creature, but instead that He has assigned a supernatural guardian to each one even from the beginning. And their heavenly attendants discharge the duty with such pride and delight that they can look Almighty God in the eye, whereas the ones who must account for us grown-ups might prefer to avert their gaze and keep their distance.

So in their minute days, even the memorials of these modest and anonymous messengers declare the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the sanctity of life that we struggle to make known in our many decades.

**“Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me”** (Matthew 18:3).







### For Life in Uganda

by Rev. Peter Maganda

*An Outreach to Triangle Secondary School in Iganga District on June 15, 2022*

Lutherans For Life is a great tool for reaching out to many youths because it is a Gospel-motivated voice For Life that leaves every hearer transformed and desiring also to transform many beside him or her. I have experienced it in the first school at Triangle where we met over 800 students both at ordinary and high levels of learning in the same institution. The school has over six hundred Muslim students because it is in one of the districts that has the highest concentration of Muslims in the country. The school is both a day and boarding school, having students from almost every district in the country. It is not a Lutheran School, but the director and headteacher is a Lutheran, and therefore he offered Trinity Lutheran Church a room (class) that they use for worship. The event started with a word of prayer.

We thank greatly Lutherans For Life for the resources they provided in addressing different topics, especially those used in addressing abortion—for which we had four facilitators.

**The first topic was “Will it Hurt?”** This was a great topic that was assigned to one teacher for biology in the school. The teacher, first of all, appreciated the content because he said it first transformed him since he was the first student of the topic. So, when he went to present, he poured out the content with conviction that what he was presenting was of great value to the students and also to the teachers themselves. While discussing the “Six Facts about Pain Perception in the Developing Human,” the students paid attention because some had had no knowledge of whether a developing human can feel pain and therefore hurt.





The second topic was “Is Abortion Allowed in Cases of Rape or Incest?” This was a very interesting topic because some students in the school had experienced it in their homes, some in their communities. At the beginning of this topic, many had the answer to the question as being yes. It was so until they read a statement by Dr. Jean Garton that reads:

*“Place two newborn babies side by side on a table. Call together medical specialists, scientific professionals, social engineers, and leading theologians. Have technicians measure the size of the babies, examine their bodies, observe their behavior, draw blood, and perform reaction tests of all sorts. Then let the experts tell us which baby is the product of rape. They can’t!”*

This made them believe that a child of rape or incest is the same as the child born of marriage, and that before God, they are both children gifted with life. This led to a number of discussions because cases of rape and incest are many and increasing in the societies and homes where the students come from.

The third topic was “The Secret Pain of Abortion.” This was a touchy one. I could see the students making reflections in their minds and hearts as they listened. Many realized they would celebrate Mother’s and Father’s Day, but without much knowledge about what they celebrate and how those who might have aborted really feel on such days which are intended for happiness. While teaching this topic they were asked a question: **Where are those who abort found and who are they?** Amazingly, they said some are students and teachers at school, some are parents at home, and some are Christians and Muslims.





The topic sank into them as they realized that by making a decision to abort, they are making a decision of not wanting to be mothers, fathers, and grandparents; they are denying their parents the privilege to be called grandparents; they are not having a relationship that descends from them; and they are above all not knowing that God is the giver of life.

During this topic the students opened up and told us of the reasons for carrying out an abortion, and these included:

They do it in fear of their parents. They said once parents hear that their daughter is pregnant, they become wild because they want their daughters to continue with their education.

They also said that some abortions are forced by their parents. Parents take a decision against the will of the daughter who has become pregnant because they think once their daughter aborts, she can continue with her education.

Those were the major reasons they emphasized, and they said the cases increased so much during and after COVID-19 because most of the time, the students were not at school but at home getting exposed to dangers of becoming pregnant.

**The last topic was the Word of Hope, which was faithfully presented, and students heard the voice of Jesus and the way He does respond to us sinners.**

Mr. Okello Richard, the headteacher (principal) of the school who also serves as the head of laity for Trinity Lutheran Church, said that the program came at a time when it was most needed. He reported that over thirty girls within the first term had carried out an abortion. And, the worst part is that their parents are the ones that enforce abortion because they do not want their children to miss school. He also said, "Once a girl is identified [as pregnant] by the school administration, [she] is sent back home to be taken care of by the parents, [and] to the surprise of everyone, after two weeks the student reports back to school with no pregnancies."

I am so thankful for the administration at Triangle Secondary School, especially the headteacher, for granting us permission to be at the school. I also thank our eastern deanery coordinator, Rev. Benard Mwesigwa, and Timothy Waigolo, the chairperson of Youth's League in the deanery, for helping to teach the students at the school.

As dean for the eastern deanery of the Lutheran Church of Uganda, I thank Pastor Michael Salemink for enabling us to make a connection with Michelle Bauman. I pray that the Lord opens many doors through which our deanery can partner with LFL/Y4Life, especially by reaching many with the Word of God restating the sanctity of life.



## What Is a Life Issue?

by Pastor Michael Salemink

**A**bortion poses a grave and obvious threat to the sanctity of every human life. However, it does not represent the only one.

Technologies that destroy embryos—such as stem cell harvesting, nuclear transfer cloning, vaccine manufacturing, and in vitro fertilization—also endanger vulnerable neighbors. Practices like physician-assisted suicide, domestic violence, and human trafficking do, too. But certain personal attitudes—racism or inhumane disregard for the needs of refugees and migrants, for example—can also contradict a person's worth. Some societal conditions—lack of adequate nutrition, medicine, hygiene, or housing, to name a few—may amount to life issues as well. And several matters that appear otherwise tangential—homosexuality, promiscuity, Christian citizenship, civil discourse—become crucial because they connect closely to some of the previous ones.

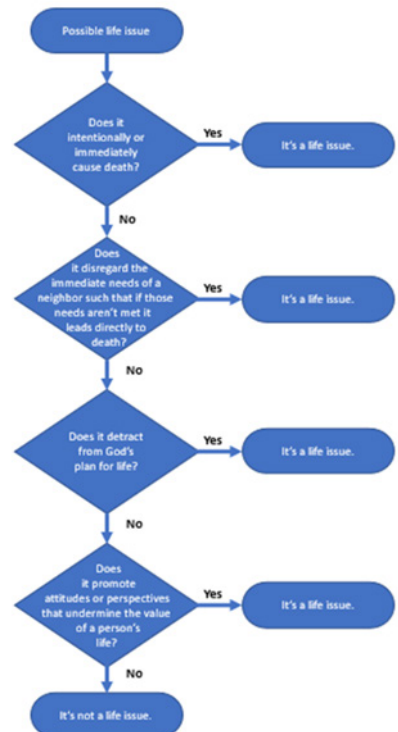
Gospel-motivated voices For Life cannot address every injustice at once. Our ministry at LFL has limited resources, so we maximize our efficiency by prioritizing.

### What makes something a “life issue” that we devote attention and energy to engaging?

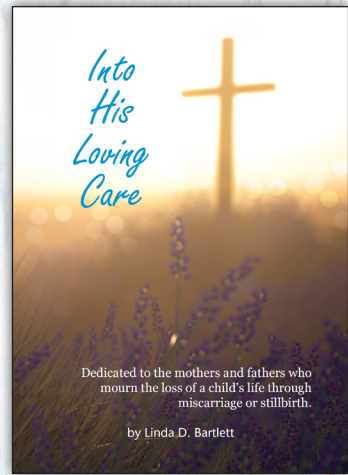
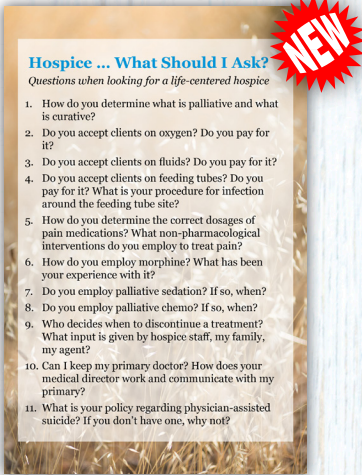
We've developed a working definition (and a visual depiction) to help clarify what we believe our God-given vocation and mission is (and is not):

Narrowly, life issues are (1) those visible circumstances which cause immediate or intentional death for our human neighbors. Yet LFL recognizes that these very visible life issues are often the consequence of a confluence of other spiritual, physical, social, and emotional issues that have created a crisis in the lives of God's children. Therefore, life issues also include (2) any failure to meet the needs of a neighbor such that if those needs are left unmet, death will result; (3) actions or policies that detract from God's design for life; and (4) any attitude or perspective that undermines the value of a person's life. While we generally apply our time, energy, travel, conversations, personnel, and publications according to the order above, we also acknowledge that cultural relevance, audience size, and immediacy may affect the importance of a life issue.

In this way, we can focus the life issues as lenses in which to notice and interact with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the needs of the neighbor right in front of us. We hope and pray it aids you to do the same!

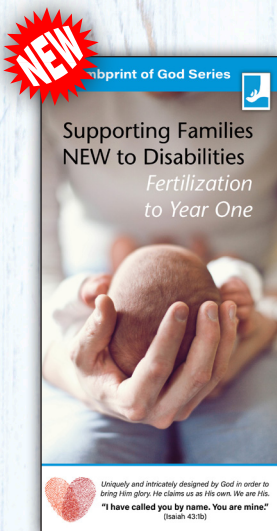






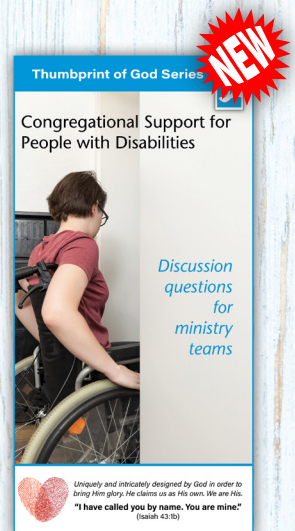
**Hospice ... What Should I Ask?** is a bulletin insert/handout that offers helpful questions to ask when looking for a life-centered hospice. *Item 803BI. \$0.25 ea.*

**Into His Loving Care**—updated July 2022—is a unique 32-page devotional booklet by Linda D. Bartlett, dedicated to all the mothers and fathers who mourn the loss of a child's life through miscarriage or stillbirth. "It may seem as if God is far away at such times of sorrow, but He knows every sparrow that falls. How much more He must care for you and me ... and our little ones." *Into His Loving Care* features suggested Scripture readings, prayers, and beautiful photographs. This unique booklet has been very well received and makes an excellent and thoughtful gift for those who are hurting. *Item LFL902B. \$2.00 ea.*

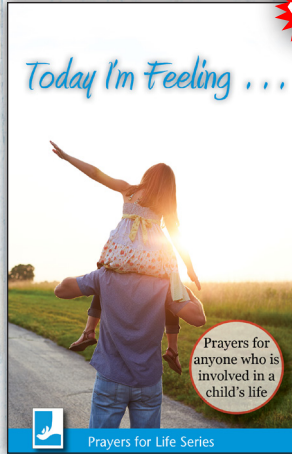


**Supporting Families NEW to Disabilities** – A resource of ideas and considerations to encourage you. *Item LFL148T. \$0.50 ea.*

**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.*





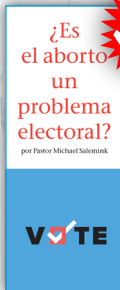


**Today I'm Feeling ...**  
**Prayers for anyone who is involved in a child's life –**  
 Please know that no matter how you are feeling today, you are never alone. *Item LFL306B.*  
**\$2.00 ea.**

**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](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040.** Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.



**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**

[lutheransforlife.org/resources/store](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/store) • [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)

### 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](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts).

**October 2 – Pentecost XVII (Proper 22)** – Abortion, assisted suicide, and other deals with death bless with their mouths – as Psalm 62 warns us – by promising freedom and control. But inwardly these measures curse by delivering guilt and grief. Power over life and death belongs to God alone (Psalm 62:11), and His steadfast love provides salvation even amid surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis. The Gospel of Jesus Christ always brings life and immortality to light (2 Timothy 1:10).

**October 9 – Pentecost XVIII (Proper 23)** – Naomi insisted Ruth abandon her because of her age and infirmity (Ruth 1:11-12). But Ruth instead trusted in the God who shares in suffering (2 Timothy 2:3). Likewise, the ten lepers were left for dead, but Jesus reaches even into our severest afflictions with presence and compassion. And He invites and encourages us also to accompany and assist rather than settling for physician-assisted suicide.

**October 16 – Pentecost XIX (Proper 24)** – Jacob wrestled blessing out of his competitor (Genesis 1:26). Timothy exhorted itching ears in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2-3). And the Savior's persistent widow wouldn't stop pleading to the authorities for justice (Luke 18:3). Our Lord will not let our advocating prevail any less when we speak the truth in love about the sanctity of every human life to leaders and neighbors.

**October 23 – Pentecost XX (Proper 25)/St. James of Jerusalem, Brother of Jesus and Martyr** – The earliest Christian congregation in Jerusalem recognized the lives of despised Gentiles as precious as their own (Acts 15:17-18). Along with James, they each understood the dignity Jesus bestowed by making human beings God's own brothers and sisters, even though the public took offense at it (Matthew 13:55-57). Let us not let this Gospel they gave us with their lives fall silent!

**October 30 – Pentecost XXI (Proper 26)** – Many who have participated in the abortion of their own children believe they have committed an unforgivable sin. When we fail even to speak its name and extend God's atoning grace to it directly, we become as guilty as them. What relief is theirs—and ours—in acknowledging our Lord's forgiveness: No sin stains so deeply that Jesus cannot cleanse us (Isaiah 1:18).

**November 6 – Pentecost XXII (Proper 27)** – God intends and imparts life (Luke 20:38). He wills life for every human being. He wills life even where the world witnesses only darkness, despair, and dying (Luke 20:29-32). He works life no matter how young or how old a person may be (Psalm 148:12). He works life that neither we nor anyone and anything else may end. Why would we not want to uncover, approach, and announce such a holy ground (Exodus 3:5) to everybody?

**November 13 – Pentecost XXIII (Proper 28)** – Parents delivering children to death, as in abortion, indicates the end of the age is near (Luke 21:16). We rejoice that God has given





limits to evil, and this will not linger forever. Our neighbors cannot afford for our tongues or talents to grow idle (2 Thessalonians 3:6). The Lord moves in surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis, turning hearts of parents and children to one another (Malachi 4:6). Let us also be about this the Father's business!

**November 20 – Last Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 29)** – Using death as a solution offers us dominion to spare ourselves from pain. But real kings and queens exercise majesty by saving their people instead (Luke 23:37-39). God's forgiveness and salvation have made us royalty so that we may do the same (Colossians 1:13). Lest our silence miscommunicate arrogance as blessedness, let us give voice to the sacred remembrance that He holds every human life as His own treasured possession (Malachi 3:15-17).

**November 27 – Advent I** – Beware the sword of abortion, euthanasia, and embryocidal technologies. Those who live by the sword will die by it sooner or later. The words and ways of the Lord our God, however, beat swords into plowshares and pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4)—a far more beautiful existence. May our words and deeds invite our neighbors to cast off the works of darkness, like sexual immorality, and take hold of the salvation that has drawn near (Romans 13:11-12)!



**December 4 – Advent II** – Our sinfulness once left us lifeless as stones, but God has taken us for His own beloved children (Matthew 3:9) by becoming a little one among us Himself (Isaiah 11:6). Now we get to welcome others as Christ has welcomed us. We proclaim the sanctity of every human life to defend the cause of the poor, and we put it into practice to give deliverance to the children of the needy (Psalm 72:4).

**December 11 – Advent III** – Abortion and assisted suicide attempt to acquire one's salvation by violence (Matthew 11:12). But God's kingdom comes as He mercifully preserves at our weakest (Matthew 11:5-6). We need not seize happiness at the expense of others. Rather, we advocate endurance in sufferings such as surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis (James 5:11), and with our support for them we strengthen instead of extinguish (Isaiah 35:3).

**December 18 – Advent IV** – Surprise pregnancy once redeemed the whole world. Joseph would have aborted the undertaking, but the Lord explicitly forbid it (Matthew 1:19-21). Even human limitations could not prevent the Heavenly Father from keeping His promises (Romans 1:2-3). So, every surprise pregnancy we encounter—along with our lives and everyone else's (Psalm 24:1)—belongs to Almighty God, and we may rejoice to say so.

**December 25 – Nativity of Our Lord** – The Lord bared His holy arm (Isaiah 52:10) not just by appearing in the form of a full-grown man. The Word became flesh (John 1:14) first as an embryo and a fetus. The clearest revelation of God's glory (Hebrews 1:2-3) also designates every human life precious, no matter what age, appearance, or ability. We can no more keep quiet about the sanctity of life than we can leave out Christmas or Jesus from the Gospel!

[lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts)



**For Life Live!** – These 90-minute events allow speakers to go in-depth with plenty of opportunity for Q & A. Find past episodes at [lutheransforlife.org/for-life-live-archive](http://lutheransforlife.org/for-life-live-archive).

**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, October 10, 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](http://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](http://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](http://lutheransforlife.org/article/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets)



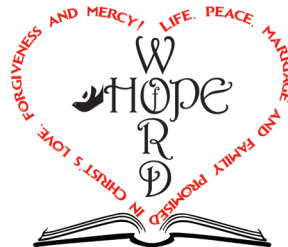
**Buying or selling a home or commercial property?** You can support Lutherans For Life at no cost to you by taking advantage of the Real Estate for Life program. Call 877.543.3871 or email [proliferalestate@yahoo.com](mailto:proliferalestate@yahoo.com) for more information.

[www.realestateforlife.org](http://www.realestateforlife.org)

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### For those who have had an abortion, a Word of Hope ...

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Find Lutherans For **Life** on ...



## **A Look in the Mirror**

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

**I** dentity. It should be an easy topic to write about, especially for the Christian, shouldn't it? After all, God's Word repeatedly declares and defines my identity: I am a created child of God. I am handmade by Him, loved by Him, redeemed by Him, and sustained by Him. The gifts I possess are gifts He's given me; all that is good comes from Him.

Yet, as I sit here crafting this article, I'll admit, it's not an easy one to write. In fact, it makes me a little uncomfortable. It's not as if I haven't written or spoken about the issue of identity lately; I talk about it frequently with youth. It appears in every presentation I give.

And it needs to.

Some of the most powerful attacks Satan makes against youth are direct attacks against their identity. Working to convince youth that they are accidents in a meaningless cosmos, mere blobs of tissue without value or worth, Satan corrupts truth. His perversions proclaim gender is fluid, that sexual intercourse is an act of pleasure apart from service to spouse and the marital union, and that the visual temptations present in pornography are preferable to the work of relationships. In an attempt to reshape identity, Satan laces woke culture with inflammatory messages that redefine human beings, recategorizing them based on single attributes and, in so doing, divides us along lines of race, gender, marriage, and religion. Yes, Satan is certainly at work to destroy the natural order God has created and replace it with the chaos he prefers. And the best place to start? Identity.

After all, that's where he started in the garden, wasn't it? Secure in the ordered home the Creator provided for His loved and created beings, Adam and Eve knew who they were, and they were not shamed by it. Yet, Satan craftily climbed in the backdoor and tempted them with a new and woke order for the world. They too could be like God, if only .... In an attempt to redefine themselves, Adam and Eve cut off their connection to the Giver of LIFE and embraced a corrupted identity made in their own image, an identity that could only lead to death.

And that reality brings me right back to the point of uncomfortability. I'm guessing it might lead you there as well because an honest discussion about identity pokes at my conscience, too. Like Adam and Eve, I too have reached for the things of death; I too have allowed others to define me. God's truths confront my own temptation to give in to the persuasive and attractive definitions the world has to offer for self—definitions that are measured by intellect or abilities, titles or accomplishments, attractiveness, social status, wealth, or likeability.

But worldly definitions of self can't last. All are vain. All are ash. All are sin. This way can only lead to death.

It's easy to point out the failings of others—to shout cautionary warnings toward our youth, to vigorously enumerate the ways Satan is at work in the world to destroy God-given identity. It's much harder to turn the mirror around and take a long look. It pricks a bit.

And that's exactly why identity needs to be talked about, again and again. With



Satan, the world, and our own sinful flesh at work to redefine us, we need the reminder of who we were made to be:

**“A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9).**

Yes, we need the prick of the law so that repentance might abound, so that we might be the lights we were called to be.

Our true identity turns us back toward our Creator, the one who not only made us but also defines us in His Word. So, permit me to remind you of that truth once more: You are a created child of God. You are handmade by Him, loved by Him, redeemed by Him, and sustained by Him. The gifts you possess are gifts He’s given you; all that is good comes from Him.

Your identity and your value are, always were, and always will be, found in Him.



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



## VBS ... the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

by Michaela Seeliger, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Wichita Falls, Texas

**“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well” (Psalm 139:14).**

I firmly believe that while the Christmas season is certainly wonderful, VBS is the *most* wonderful time of the year! Kids sing praises; memorize God’s Word; learn Scripture through games, crafts, and snacks; meet new friends; and share the Gospel with their community. As we began plans for this summer’s VBS, my volunteer team and I pondered, “What could make VBS even better?” When we were presented with the opportunity to incorporate a sanctity of life theme, we knew we’d found our answer.

Throughout the week of June 5-9, 2022, 105 students flooded our campus to study the biblical account of creation and to study Jesus’ birth, death, resurrection, and ascension. Not only did they learn the details of each story in fun and memorable ways, but they also saw in these stories how God values life. They learned that God created each of them in His image and gave them the gift of life. They studied how the Word became flesh (even in Mary’s belly!) to be our Savior. They were blessed to hear that because Jesus gave up His own life on the cross for us and rose again, we receive the gift of *eternal* life! They were challenged to think about the ways they can serve God with their life and the other gifts God has graciously given each of them.

We value the opportunity to teach our children to serve others. Since our VBS had a sanctity of life theme woven throughout all the activities, we wanted to collect offerings each day to support a ministry that affirms, upholds, and defends the God-given value of life. Partnering with Lutherans For Life was a natural fit. Each day our students brought dollars and coins to support an upcoming service project which will be handled by Lutherans For Life.

College students will make and deliver blankets to children in hospitals, people in nursing homes, and people without homes, and they will share the life-giving message of God’s love and salvation with those who might think their life doesn’t matter. Over the course of the week, our students raised over \$820, which was enough to fund over 80 blankets! Lutherans For Life kindly sent each student a bracelet with the message **“Trust God and Choose Life”** written on it as a thank-you gift. What an excellent way to help kids remember the blessing of life!

It’s never too early to share with children the God-given value of life. I pray that you’ll consider ways you can implement sanctity of life themes within your children’s ministry. May all God’s creation know that we are fearfully and wonderfully made by Him!



## New to Our Y4Life/LFL Family

Y4Life was so excited about welcoming two new members to our LFL family this summer, and we thought you might like to get to know them, too! Check out their answers to our interview questions.

*Can you tell us a little about your family and where you grew up?*

Nadia: I am the oldest child of five, and we are all three years apart, so it has been such a joy to grow up with younger siblings who are still little! Since we were all homeschooled, we got to spend more time together than most siblings do. My parents always had a dream of living in the country, so when I was eleven, my family finally bought a fixer-upper house in the country outside Champaign, Illinois, and we have lived there ever since!

Cori: I got married to my husband Alex in 2019, and we had our son Dean in 2021. We recently moved to Columbus, Nebraska, from Kansas City to be closer to family, and it's been a huge blessing! I grew up in York, Nebraska, with my parents and one younger sister. My parents are still in York, where my mom works as a pharmacist for the local family-owned pharmacy, and my dad works at the hospital as the lab director.

*What degree have you earned or are you working toward in college?*

Nadia: I am a sophomore at Concordia University Chicago in their Lutheran Teacher Education program studying secondary education. I have a major in history with a middle grades endorsement and a theology minor.

Cori: I graduated in December 2018 from the University of Nebraska Lincoln with a degree in management and marketing, with a focus on entrepreneurial management.

*What led you to want to work for Y4Life?*

Nadia: When I heard about the internship position at the March for Life in Washington, D.C., this year, I was very excited to apply! My goal when I graduated high school was to start a pro-life club on campus wherever I ended up going to school, but when I got to Concordia and found they already had a Y4Life team, I joined and became the co-leader during spring semester. Throughout the year, my passion for the unique Gospel-motivated perspective of Y4Life helped me realize I did not want to give up working in the pro-life ministry throughout the summer. Since I wanted to get a summer job that would have more professional experience; since I love researching, organizing, and being creative; and since I was hoping to stay close to home, the internship was a perfect fit for me.

Cori: I first learned about Y4Life at the LCMS National Youth Gathering in 2016 where I got to help with the Y4Life booth as a young adult volunteer (YAV). I loved getting to interact with the youth and youth leaders and getting to learn more about what Lutherans For Life and Y4Life did. I've been following along with Y4Life since then, and I felt the Lord's call to apply for the Y4Life assistant position when it was posted earlier this year.

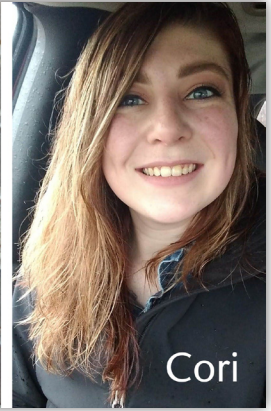


*What areas of life ministry are you most passionate about?*

Nadia: The areas of life ministry I am most passionate about usually have to do with families and children, and that has grown as I am studying to become a teacher! From protecting the unborn and young babies from infanticide or fighting against eugenics to advocating for the blessings of adoption and helping human trafficking victims, I care deeply that every child has a home where they are loved and can learn about Christ's love. I



Nadia



Cori

want to fight the cultural trend of abandoning God's plan for marriage and in doing so help young adults my age realize that they are still valuable simply because God made them, regardless of what they look like or how many times they have messed up. God's forgiveness is endless, and His love extends to all children, planned and unplanned.

Cori: I'm most passionate about the issues of abortion and IVF. Abortion is the first life issue I learned about in middle school, and over the past two years, I've really gone deeper into researching what abortion is and why women may feel compelled to have abortions. I've had the privilege to volunteer with Let Them Live, which is a pro-life organization that works with pregnant moms who may be struggling to choose life for their babies. It's really helped me see the other side of the argument and opened my eyes to what others experience. IVF is an issue I've recently gained more interest in, as I have friends my age who have struggled with fertility issues. I'm hoping that I can learn more about IVF during my time at Y4Life and how best to pray for and interact with my friends who struggle with fertility issues.

*Have you always had a passion for upholding life, or was there a specific instance that led you to be a Gospel-motivated voice For Life?*

Nadia: Passionate has been a word used to describe me for as long as I can remember, and that extended to life issues at a very young age for me. However, in high school, as I got older and learned more about the world today through interactions with friends and family members who were hurting, I began to truly realize the urgency and scale of problems like abortion, sex trafficking, and birth control that ravage our communities. My view shifted from an angry awareness to Gospel-motivated action, and I have been advocating for life with a lens of love ever since!

Cori: I was raised in a pro-life household, but it wasn't until after I graduated from college and moved out of my "bubble" that I realized how many life issues there actually were. There were a lot of things that jump started my deep dive into the theology and doctrine behind life issues, but the two most prominent were moving to Kansas City and getting pregnant with my son. Genesis 1:26-27, Psalm 139:13-14, and Psalm 127:3-5 have really helped me to re-focus my "why" for being pro-life.

*Not everyone agrees that human life is sacred. How do you handle opposition to this truth when you encounter it, especially among your peers?*

Nadia: This year I have actually been struggling with the idea of defending truth only when directly confronted versus being an aggressive advocate for life, and I have come to the conclusion that the answer, like most things, requires a delicate balance depending on the immediate circumstances, my current vocation, and the relationship I have with the person. If it is someone I am close to and thus have a responsibility as their friend or family member to give Godly advice, then I would gently but consistently urge them to reconsider their actions or views without severing our relationship. Wherever possible, I find values that we can agree on to establish common ground and decrease feelings of hostility that are so quick to spring up around such sensitive topics. With strangers I meet in the world, however, I try mostly to witness to the sanctity of life through my actions as a Christian unless they are actively trying to confront me about my views. In this case, I try to speak to them in a loving way as another valuable human, often by asking questions so I can better understand where they are coming from, explain confidently what I believe and why, and pray for their hearts to be changed.

Cori: The biggest thing for me is to stay calm and remember that the person I'm talking with is also a human made in the image of God. I find it's best for me to have discussions when I'm not trying to be defensive or come from a place of attack. It also helps the person I'm speaking with to feel at ease because they're not being belittled or bullied, and I find that they're more open to having a constructive dialogue.

**Okay, now it's time for some favorites. What is your favorite ...**

*Bible verse?*

Nadia: Romans 14:8

Cori: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

*Hobby?*

Nadia: Cooking, painting, reading, and playing volleyball! I like to mix it up a lot!

Cori: Reading, knitting/crocheting/sewing, baking, or hanging out with my family.

*Food?*

Nadia: Steak and potatoes. This girl loves a great combination of fine dining and red meat!

Cori: Cheese Runza with a side of ranch, a very Nebraska combination.

*Podcast?*

Nadia: I have not listened to many podcasts before as I prefer to read or watch movies, but if I do, *Issues Etc.* is my go to.

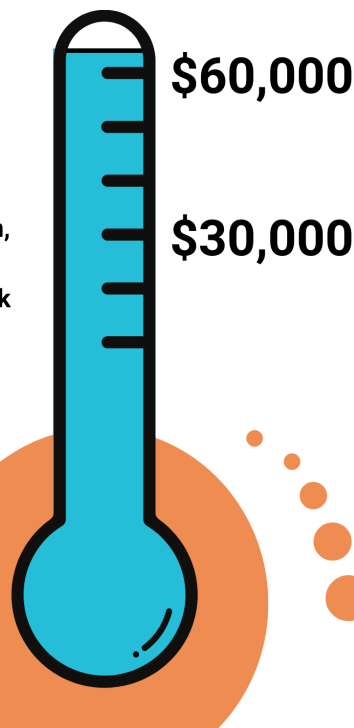
Cori: I've done a lot of driving over the past few years, and I've listened to quite a few podcasts. My absolute favorites are *The Lutheran Ladies Lounge*, *Friends for Life*, *The Being Lutheran Podcast*, and *Relatable with Allie Beth Stuckey*.

# Step Up 4 Life

## Campaign Update:

**WE DID IT!** Thanks to everyone in the Lutherans For Life Community for "STEPPING UP" and abundantly blessing our 2022 Step Up 4 Life Campaign.

Your impactful contributions through participation, prayer, and stewardship offerings helped us REACH and EXCEED our Step Up 4 Life goal! Thank you for partnering with us and our Gospel-motivated mission for life!



**NEW!** Our **Word of Hope** T-shirts get the word out to everyone about the help available through Word of Hope, the post-abortion healing ministry of Lutherans for Life. [lutheransforlife.org/resources/store](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/store)





**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**  
**Lutherans For Life NATIONAL Conference**  
**October 21-22, 2022**  
**Rock Island, Illinois (Quad Cities)**  
[lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://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**

Rev. B. Keith Haney | Father Frank Pavone | Rev. Fred Hinz  
Col. John Eidsmoe | Rev. Dr. Wade Mobley | Deaconess Pam Nielsen  
Dr. Roni Grad | Dr. Kim Marxhausen | Deaconess Tiffany Manor  
Rev. Michael Saleminck | Rev. Scott Licht | Michelle Bauman  
Virginia Flo | Deaconess Chrissie Gillett | Rev. Dr. Gregory P. Seltz

### **Special Friday Night Banquet Music**

Wendysue Fluegge

### **Conference Registration**

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

[lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://lutheransforlife.org/conference)



## **You Are a LIFE CHAMPION!**

by David A. Probst, Director of Development

A champion is described in the dictionary as someone who supports or defends a cause.

This means **YOU** are a **LIFE CHAMPION!**

Thank you for being a **LIFE CHAMPION** and partnering with us in proclaiming the message that all human life is created by God, redeemed by Jesus Christ, and called by the Holy Spirit.

Your offerings of encouragement, prayers, support, service, and stewardship gifts are providing an impact on our life affirming ministry, and we thank God for you!

Please feel free to contact me any time! I would love to spend time getting to know you better, learn about your family's life celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.), and discuss ways Lutherans For Life can use its resources and professional staff to serve and support you and your church. You can reach me by email at [dprobst@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:dprobst@lutheransforlife.org) or cell phone at 812.603.7970.

God bless you for all you do in His name, and may He be with you and your family in the years to come.



**You are a  
LIFE CHAMPION!**

**Lutherans For Life**

**[lutheransforlife.org/donate](http://lutheransforlife.org/donate)**

## 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](http://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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Lutherans For Life NATIONAL Conference

October 21-22, 2022

Rock Island, Illinois (Quad Cities)

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**63,459,781 babies have been killed in  
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