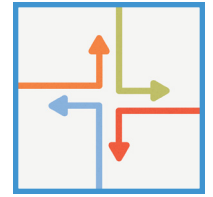


# Getting the MOST out of Life Week 2023

by Rev. Jeff Duncan



One thing so many of our Life Chapters and Life Teams tell the national office is “Help us with opportunities to equip the church in life issues and provide practical projects for our members to complete.” Well, that is exactly what Life Week is all about!

Life Sunday is celebrated annually on the Sunday closest to the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* abortion decision of January 22, 1973. Life Sunday 2023 coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this infamous decision.

For nearly 50 years abortion on demand has been the law of the land. On June 24, 2022, that came tumbling down when the Supreme Court of the United States returned the power to enact life-affirming laws to the people of each state by overturning *Roe v. Wade* ('73) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* ('92). Thus, a **post-Roe world greets this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Life Sunday remembrance.**

Many might think that For Life work is complete. That is the farthest from the truth. Your work over the last 40-50 years has been powerful, even as it has also been draining and thankless. However, now is not the time to rest on your laurels. It is not the time to pat yourselves on the back and relax. The work has transitioned into a new phase. Under-funded and under-supported pregnancies are still happening. The media and voices of death will not stop shouting down your work and urging these souls to choose what they call a quick and easy solution to their problems. And their rising voices proclaim new lies such as “You only care that the baby be born; you care nothing for the woman or her struggles.” The Lord who creates and sustains life knows the truth! He is faithful to see this truth shared and to give you the necessary strength and means to support all who need His grace, mercy, and peace!

Added to our hearts and our ministry are those with disabilities, the aging, the suffering, the hurting, our youth—our life ministry must support life from *fertilization to forever!*

**“O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as You are, O LORD, with your faithfulness all around you?” (Psalm 89:8)**

Lutherans For Life has developed new resources for **Life Week 2023** that may also be used with those provided in 2021 and 2022. Life issues are all around us. Your neighbors are in need. The Gospel of Life must be proclaimed. The Holy Spirit is ready, willing, and able to bring salvation and forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord! The following pages share ideas for life-affirming projects that individuals or groups can accomplish. Get the **MOST** out of all our **Life Week 2023** (and previous years’) materials. Begin planning now and use these materials throughout 2023 and beyond!

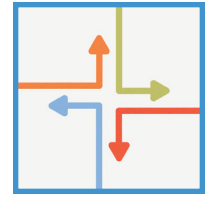


[lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2023](https://lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2023) | [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023](https://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023)



# Activity and Fact Sheets – Life Week 2023

by Rev. Jeff Duncan



**“Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit.” (Proverbs 12:17)**

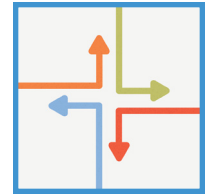
When we deal with life issues, there is already plenty of deceit being freely shared. The enemy loves to sow seeds of discord. He loves to lie. As disciples of Jesus, we must arm ourselves with the truth—the Word of God. Sharing God’s Word of life will allow others to recognize that we speak the words of truth. We care. We love. And we are there to support and encourage those struggling with life issues.

The **Fact and Activity Sheets** for each day of **Life Week 2023** are designed to aid and support Life Teams, Life Chapters, and life-affirming individuals for equipping in truth. They acknowledge that we recognize everyone is **Blessed for Life!** Here are ideas on how to get the **MOST** out of their use and distribution in Life Week 2023 and throughout the year.

- **Print and assemble packets of all the Life Week Fact and Activity Sheets.** Hand out to every member of your congregation. Encourage questions to be sent to a centralized email address for further research or comments. Sponsor discussion events where you offer commentary and question/answer opportunities for these activities.
- **Pick one Fact or Activity Sheet to review at each regular meeting or during a special study hour.** Ask your pastor or other church members to discuss what they know of this life issue to enrich the study. Commit to trying several activities in one month or one quarter and be sure to organize and publicize these events to encourage others to join in service to your neighbors. *Remember, additional Life Fact and Life Activity sheets are available from the Life Week 2022 and 2021 archives.*
- **Publish one Life Facts or Life Activity Sheet in your church/organization newsletters monthly.** Plan out a year of publications in advance. Offer



opportunities to discuss and/or develop responses to what members learn from these sheets.



- **Focus on one life issue highlighted with these Fact/Activity sheets.** *Become a local expert on this life issue.* Commit to developing even more sheets of facts on this life issue and brainstorm additional service activities that your organization/church can accomplish throughout the year. Equip your organization or church by sharing the new facts and activities with everyone!
- **Use a designated bulletin board to highlight the Fact and Activity sheets.** Post pictures of activities and ask for testimonials from participants. Publish events and information in your church newsletters. Offer sign-up sheets for future activities. Ask others for ideas for future activities and add those to your calendar.
- **Ask your pastor to provide theological commentary on the Fact/Activity sheets.** This affirms the value of your ministry and affirms that God's Word is central to your message. You are equipping others to be *Gospel-motivated* voices For Life. Ask your pastor to affirm the Gospel-motivated message that we are to extend to those struggling with life issues.
- **Plan prayer walks or prayer vigils that highlight each life issue.** Interview local support agencies and offer to pray for their needs. They may ask you to pray for specific people or situations. Express your desire to serve those specific needs and invite them to share in the prayer activities.
- **Use all three years of Life Week Fact/Activity sheets as the basis for a Mission Discovery Process in your church or organization.** What life issue is God wanting to bring to your attention? Consider all the life issues represented and seek input from your pastor(s), church staff, membership, community, and organization members to identify areas of possible service. Identify potential needs that you may serve in the future. Develop your own fact and activity sheets about your own unique service area based on your Mission Discovery findings.

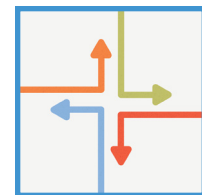
**Use these links to find the complete offerings for Life Week 2023, 2022, and 2021:**

- Life Week 2023 – [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023](https://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023)
- Life Week 2022 – [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2022](https://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2022)
- Life Week 2021 – [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2021](https://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2021)



# Life Week 2023 – Zoom Presentations

by Rev. Jeff Duncan



Equipping is a learning activity. To equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life (our LFL mission statement) requires opportunities to learn. Teaching is a godly activity. The Holy Spirit teaches us about Jesus and His salvation obtained for us through suffering and death upon the cross. Hearing of His work on our behalf, learning that we cannot do anything to save ourselves, and receiving the teaching of Scripture that we are all lost and condemned creatures in need of salvation all work together to bring us into the truth. We are saved by grace, through faith, and this is not of our own work.

No fewer than 11 times does Psalm 119 contain the phrase “teach me” in the English Standard Version:

- Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes! (Psalm 119:12)
- Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law! (Psalm 119:29)
- Teach me good judgement and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments. (Psalm 119:66)
- Make your face shine upon your servant and teach me your statutes. (Psalm 119:135)

From Sunday through Wednesday (January 15-18, 2023) in evening Zoom sessions, staff and friends of LFL want you to assemble in a posture of learning and say, “Teach me!”

## Here are the details:

Log in to Zoom each evening (7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET) for a Gospel-motivated presentation from the following speakers. (Find topic info and video pre-views at [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023](http://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023).)



- January 15 – Rev. Michael Salemink – **Blessed as a Gift** (Gospel-Motivation/Sanctity of Life)
- January 16 – Rev. Steven and Stephanie Cholak – **Blessed in Longing** (Infertility)
- January 17 – Delores Desemone – **Blessed Together** (Adoption/Foster Care)
- January 18 – Deaconess Chrissie Gillet – **Blessed with Healing** (Forgiveness/Recovery)

**Zoom Meeting ID: 845 7061 0394/Passcode: 501680**

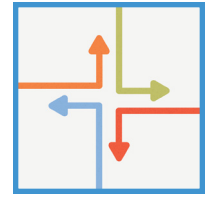
- January 20 | Special Presentation – Rev. Dr. Greg Schulz, Professor of Philosophy at Concordia University Wisconsin, 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET.

**Zoom Meeting ID: 848 3529 5744 | Passcode: 864870**

Getting the **MOST** out of these Zoom events includes planning and organizing to maximize their effectiveness. The following are some ideas that can be employed in this effort:



**Gather together as church, chapter, team, or circuit and watch the Zoom presentation all together.** (Note – if four consecutive nights won't work, choose to watch a recording of these sessions at future events that fit your schedules.)



Have snacks, broadcast on a big screen, get comfortable! Ask your pastor to be available for comments and commentary following the nightly event. Share this opportunity with multiple staff or chapter/circuit pastors.

- Choose a different church or location for each night's gathering and share opportunity for serving. Using the same facility is certainly also acceptable.
- Hand out the devotion for each session or have someone lead the devotion.
- Prepare activity and fact sheet packets for each session. Review facts you didn't know; suggest others. Challenge the group to complete one activity. Set a completion date!
- Each session provides ample opportunity to discuss how this life issue presents locally. Discuss available options to address your needs. Experts might be invited (with pastoral approval) to share their life issue work.
- Pick one of these four life issues topics and adopt it for your group throughout the rest of 2023. Investigate how your local community provides support for those experiencing this life issue. Interview agencies. Discover how they operate, what they need to be effective, and where your group may be able to support their efforts in the community. Especially important are questions on how they inject the Gospel into client discussions. Investigate their criteria for providing ongoing support interaction, specifically regarding client's Christian confession and church involvement. Remember, inviting groups to speak at church/chapter/team/circuit events requires pre-investigation, including interviews to determine your connections and theological agreement in practices. Hold "ingathering" events to support agency material needs. Write articles that teach others about opportunities to serve. Pray for agency staff. Provide "support/goodie boxes" at holiday or special times of the year when agency staff may be most harassed and/or pressured.

**Join the Zoom session individually at home and take notes to share with each other at your next gathering or meeting.** Compare those notes, discuss what you learned, and challenge each other to learn more on this topic throughout the year.

- Write newsletter articles of your reaction to the Zoom session and share with your church/chapter/team/circuit. Consider exploring the full depth of this life issue.
- Adopt one topic individually. Learn as much as you can throughout the year. Identify community support groups working in this life issue. Interview directors and staff. Volunteer and serve. Share how others can support this work. As above, gain pastoral permission and interview speakers prior to invitations to these groups to speak at events of your church/chapter/team/circuit.
- After discussion with your pastor, consider together actions that would teach as well as support this life issue in your community. Organize equipping events or activities.

**Life Chapters and Life Teams can reuse these Zoom events throughout the year!** If you meet quarterly, choose one session each meeting to watch together and comment on what you learn. If you meet monthly, use these four in any combination or add previous Zoom events from Life Week 2022 and 2021. You can also agree to watch a smaller segment each month of one event and go into greater detail in discussion. Use all the above suggestions to serve!

**[lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2023](https://lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2023) | [lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023](https://lutheransforlife.org/life-week-2023)**

