

Lutherans For Life of Illinois

Affirming Life In Illinois

Prayers for People in Our Churches

PRAYERS FOR PEOPLE IN OUR CHURCHES, PAST AND PRESENT

For many months members of St. John Lutheran Church in Darien, IL where I served the Lord and countless others fervently prayed for a member, Carrie, to receive a double lung transplant. Just days before she would have died she received a double lung transplant that saved her life. All glory be to God!

Many of our prayers are not answered with a miraculous healing like Carrie's double lung transplant. God's will is not always our will. For decades I have prayed daily for God to open the heart of someone close to me and make him receptive to the gospel I have

shared with him faithfully. I have prayed for God to move him to respond to God's Word and my prayers with and for him by committing his life to Christ. "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). I have shared God's Word with him many times for more than a decade. I have put my trust in God to bloom and grow his faith in God and bring him back to follow God faithfully. He has not recommitted his life to Christ YET. But I haven't given up on him coming back to faith in God.

PRAY over these prayer verses for whomever as I do daily: "Trust in the Lord with ALL your heart, and do not lean on your own

understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). Keep praying daily by name for people you know to be receptive to the gospel and God's Word you and others share with them.

PRAY with and for them to come or come back to faith in Christ. PRAY for God to work through you and many others to plant the seeds of faith through God's Word and your witness to Christ you share with them. DON'T GIVE UP ON THEM! LET US PRAY:

Lord, move me to share Your gospel and Your love unconditionally with (names). In Jesus' Name.

By Rev. David Bottorff, President, LFL-IL

Lutherans For Life of Illinois Newsletter

Volume 6, Issue 1

Winter 2024

Save the date, Illinois

- * **January 18-20**, Y4Life Conference, Washington, DC
- * **January 21**, Life Sunday
- * **Feb. 14—Mar. 24**, 40 Days for Life
- * **Apr. 10-11**, LFL Adoption Conference, Houston, TX
- * **April 17, 2024**, March for Life Illinois at the State Capital
- * **April 17, 2024**, Pre-March service at Trinity Lutheran Church, Springfield

Praying in a New Year for Life

Traditional Watchnight services were held by the early church the night before a feast day with the idea of following Jesus' example of spending the night in prayer before spiritually significant events or decisions. This was one practice that set the early Christians apart from their Pagan neighbors. While the Pagans spent New Year's Eve in drunken revelry, the Christians spent it in prayer and fasting.

Among Lutherans, the Watchnight Service is traditionally bringing Light to the darkness on New Year's Eve, as described here on the website of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Laurel, MD:

"The Watch Night service is an end-of-year Praise, Worship, and Thanksgiving

service. A time when we pause to reflect and retrospect God's love, faithfulness, and protection as He brings us to the end of another year. We acknowledge His goodness and providence in transitioning us to a brand new year, and we make a commitment to dedicate our lives to His service as we live to proclaim the Gospel to our families, friends, and neighbors."

In African American churches, the Watch Night Service is especially associated with the New Year's Eve of 1862 and what was referred to as "Freedom's Eve." It was a night of prayer and anticipation for the Emancipation Proclamation that was to go into effect on New Year's Day of 1863. While that day brought a limited freedom, our Freedom in Christ is both eternal and complete for all

His redeemed children.

As we all pray in the New Year, we remember the late night prayer of our Savior in the garden of Gethsemane... "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,"²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one,²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." May we echo His prayer for Life and Love and unity among His people in 2024 that we might truly be light in the darkness! —LL

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Life Comes in Chapters

Peoria Area LFL Chapter has received essay submissions from our local Lutheran grade schools and will be judging them and awarding prizes when we meet again in early 2024. We will be conducting our annual Pennies for Life fundraiser in our local Lutheran congregations on Life Sunday in January. Those things will keep us busy until spring when we will again do a Mothers' Day diaper collection to help support local PRC's and other facilities. If you are in the Peoria area and are not already involved, you can contact them and find out how to take part in these activities. (see contact info below) —from Bob Wegner

The **Will County Chapter of LFL** has been celebrating Life with cookies and Christmas trees! They just held their annual Christmas bake sale to support the Joliet Living Alternatives pregnancy resource center. They have also had a Christmas tree up at St. Peter's in Joliet where people could place gifts for Living Alternatives that would meet some of the material needs of Living Alternatives' clients. During spring, they look forward to taking part in the Living Alternatives Walk for Life. If you are in the Will County area and would like to help out with this Life-affirming ministry, give them a call and lend a hand! (See contact info below) —from Kelley Riley

Southwestern Illinois Chapter of LFL announces that St. John's Lutheran Senior Youth Group in Red Bud has formed a LIFE Committee which will work in conjunction with the Southwestern Illinois Lutherans for Life Chapter. In December, they put together 21 baskets for the Coalition for Life Christmas Basket campaign. Coalition for Life is located in Fairview Heights next to the Planned Parenthood. They offer life affirming alternatives to moms facing an unplanned pregnancy.



Jakob, Karson & Samuel, with Christmas Baskets for Life

Find a Chapter

Altamont Area Lutherans for Life
(A new Chapter being organized in Altamont, IL)

Coles County Chapter LFL

Meets 1st Tuesday of the month
At St. John's Mattoon
Contact: Velma Price,
217-246-2553

Dupage County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Beth Kraegel,
630-279-0041

Four -S Chapter LFL

Meets 2nd Tues of Month
At member homes
Contact: Dale Wetherell,
dwet@hofnetinc.com

Heartbeat Chapter LFL

Meets quarterly

At Trinity, Roanoke
Contact: Trinity, 309-923-5251
Illinois Valley Chapter LFL

Meets via email and as needed
At Salem Lutheran, Jacksonville
Contact: Libby Nobis,
217-491-3026

McHenry County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Genny Hertel,
815-568-8425

Metro East Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
Contact: Ruth Walther,
618-277-5744

New Hope Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At Faith or Calvary in Watseka
Contact: Lowell or MaryAnn Cluver,
815-383-2339

Northwest Suburban Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At St. Peter Lutheran, Roselle
Contact: Greg Frey,
630-215-3062

Peoria Area Chapter LFL

Meets 4th Monday of the month
At Bethel, Morton
Contact: Robert Wegner,
309-481-4886

Southwestern Illinois Chapter LFL

Meets via Facebook & email
Contact: Jennifer Roscow,
618-972-5366

Will County Chapter LFL

Meets as needed
At St. Peter's, Joliet
Contact: Kelley Riley,
815-723-9158



Noah's Prayer Exhibit at The Ark, photo by Marilyn Bottorff

LFL National Conference 2023

The 2023 National Conference was held in Erlanger, KY between October 11th and 13th. Practical sessions for congregations included one on Discipling Gen Z, led by vicar Cameron Schroeder and one on Raising Kids for Life led by Michelle Baumann. Schroeder helped participants see the passions of Gen Z folks that provide common ground to aid our efforts to communicate and disciple them in today's church. Baumann had practical advice for parents in developing the kind of open and trusting relationships that make discussing Life issues much easier.

Keynote speaker, Rebecca Kiesling, Pastor Mark Chavez, and Rev. Brian Barlow all addressed difficult life issues (the children conceived in rape, the beauty of suffering unto death as a child of God, and deliverance from homosexuality). These speakers each had a unique life experience that allowed them to share their own testimony in a way that broadened the understanding of listeners and brought glory to God.

Among Lutherans for Life Staff, speakers included Deaconess Chrissy Gillett, who drew on her experience as a counselor to present "Peace—Developing Mental Health Sanctuaries in an Anx-

ious World". Pastor Scott Licht presented on the Christian view of the "invisible people" who are actually indispensable while Virginia Flo presented an updated "playbook" for those of us serving on the frontlines with LFL. Pastor Saleminck inspired us with daily devotions and conference presentations.

Sheryl Dewitt of Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries shared the concept of the maternity home in Florida and coming soon to Illinois.

All of this was recorded and is available on the [LFL website!](#) The only thing you can't get there are visits to the Ark and Creation Museum!

Youth Essay Contest

Lutherans For Life
2024 ILLINOIS

Essay Contest

Sponsored by the Council of Federation Presidents

For Students in Grades 6-8 and 9-12

Any student in a Lutheran school or Lutheran congregation, e.g., confirmation class or youth group, when validated by a teacher or pastor, is eligible. Students may also enter through a Lutheran home school when validated by their Lutheran pastor.

Contest Guidelines

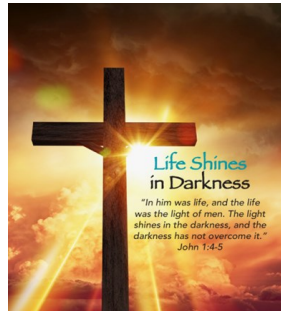
Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the theme: **Life Shines in Darkness** with the Bible verse: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:4-5

Not incorporating the **theme and verse** in the essay will disqualify the entry.

All essays must include a title. Using the theme as the title is acceptable, although it does not count as using the theme within the essay, which is required.

Examples of topics the essay could deal with are, **but are not limited to**, abortion, living with disabilities, adoption or foster care, infanticide, cloning, stem cell research, physician assisted suicide, euthanasia, etc.

Essays should include student's name, grade, school or church, email address, and phone number. All entries



submitted by a teacher or pastor should include their name and email address. This information must be submitted on the rubric page used in grading the essay.

Please consult the rubric to submit qualified entries.

All sources for references, statistics and quotes should be incorporated within the essay and then included in a bibliography at the end.

Grades 6 - 8 should submit essays up to 400 words (body copy only).

Grades 9 - 12 should submit essays up to 750 words (body copy only).

Entries should be submitted digitally using **Microsoft WORD** or **Google Docs** to cathy.benning.os@gmail.com by April 1, 2024. **Any pdf or other format submissions will not be accepted.**

There will be a \$100 first place award and \$50 second place award for each of the two categories. The two first place category winners will advance to the national contest. Email cathy.benning.os@gmail.com with any questions.

Grand prize for the national winning entries in each category if: \$250 for first place plus free conference registration to the 2024 Lutherans For Life conference and one night stay at the conference hotel. \$125 for the second-place winner.

All entries, including exclusive copyright, become the property of Lutherans For Life.

For questions or resources on the sanctity of life, see lutheransforlife.org

Life Week 2024

You are invited to join Lutherans for Life in Life Week 2024! The theme for the week is "Just as I Am" Presentations will be as follows:

Daily Themes

- Sunday - Just as ... I AM From Fertilization to Forever (A Gospel-Motivated Foundation)
- Monday - Just as ... I AM In Terminal Diagnosis
- Tuesday - Just as ... I AM Surviving and Thriving
- Wednesday - Just as ... I AM In Surprise Pregnancy
- Thursday - Just as ... I AM with Courage and Compassion
- Friday - Just as ... I AM as Male or Female
- Saturday - Just as ... I AM for Blessing and Service



Each themed day of Life Week 2024 explores a distinct aspect of life ministry through local activities, online educational events, and interviews. Now is the time to get your

congregation energized and anticipating the opportunities that Life Week 2024 provides. Build excitement For Life in your home, church, school, and community!

Each day of Life Week 2024 will have zoom presentations, Activity sheets and Fact Sheets available for you and members of your congregation and community so that you can find inspiration and encouragement in your ministry for Life.

You can also find bulletin inserts, flyers, and other materials to assist you in preparing for Life Sunday. All of these materials are available from Lutherans for Life on their website. May your congregation and community be blessed for Life through Life Week 2024! (info from Lutherans for Life website) —LL

Go Team!



A Life Team within a congregation is a Gospel-motivated group of members of the family of God that communicates and shares the amazing and lavishly abundant love of Christ in life issues within the church and outward into the community. Members are equipped through specialized training to be a relational

conduit of expertise and practical resources pertaining to the multifaceted aspects of life ministry.

A Life Team exists to help the pastor with what otherwise might be an overwhelming task.

A Life Team is a group not afraid to bring light to tough issues but doing so in a loving and non-judgmental way—reflecting the same grace that

Jesus has shared in rescuing us from certain death and peril.

(Above from the Lutherans For Life, Life Team Brochure)

If this sounds like something that would be helpful to your congregation, talk it over with leadership and contact LFL (phone: 515.382.2077, email: info@lutheransforlife.org) They have tools to get you started.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

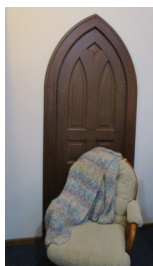
What is a prayer shawl ministry? I asked Joan Keller, a member of the Prayer Shawl ministry at Cross Lutheran Church in Yorkville, IL to describe it for us. "It is creating a personal gift of comfort to wrap up in," Joan explained. Members of the prayer shawl ministry team knit or crochet both at home and during their meeting time at church, while praying for the recipients of the shawls they are creating. "Being part of the prayer shawl ministry has made me feel like I'm helping someone else at a time when they need help," Joan explained. In listening to her tell about the comfort a prayer shawl could give, it occurred to me that this could be something you might enjoy doing for either your local

senior center, hospital, hospice, or pregnancy resource center. It seems

to me that there are few who feel more alone in the world than the clients at our pregnancy help centers. Wouldn't it be a comfort if the advocate at the center could give her a warm, soft shawl to wrap up in along with the news that she had been prayed for as it was made?

I also spoke with Pati Bradstreet who organized the Cross Prayer Shawl Ministry. I asked Pati what steps she took to get this ministry up and running. She gave me five that are simple enough for anyone to duplicate:

1. Ask people from your church that you know knit or crochet if they



might like to do something like this.

2. Use a very simple pattern.
3. Pray for recipients as you knit or crochet. Sometimes you will know who is to receive it and can pray specifically for them and the situation they face. Sometimes you won't know, but can still pray generally that God would use this gift to bring them comfort and remind them of the warmth of His love.
4. Make it known that the shawls are available and who should be contacted to receive one.

Beyond the needs of shut-ins and other sufferers in your own congregation, consider contacting local life-affirming agencies to see if they could use a regular supply of prayer shawls. —LL

Celebrate Answered Prayer for Life!

We have all been praying for our Pregnancy Resource Centers and sidewalk counselors, in the face of legislation here in Illinois that was intended to silence their witness for Life and force them to redirect their clients to abortion providers. God has heard our cry! The following was an informational release from TC Public Relations on behalf of the Thomas More Society:

(December 11, 2023 - Chicago) Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul has agreed to an order permanently prohibiting the State of Illinois from enforcing a law that declared pro-life speech to be a "deceptive business practice" and defined as "consumer fraud" the sharing of certain information about the risks of abortion. Thomas More Society attorneys today filed, together with the Attorney General, a Joint Motion to Enter an Agreed Order, imposing a Permanent Injunction on the Attorney General. The Joint Motion was filed in the United

States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, for the signature of U.S. District Judge Iain D. Johnston.

Peter Breen, Thomas More Society Executive Vice President & Head of Litigation, who served as lead counsel for NIFLA and the other plaintiffs, hailed the victory as a significant win for pro-life ministries and free speech in Illinois—which will also serve as a warning to other states across the country that attempt to target pro-life ministries with discriminatory laws. . .

Thomas Glessner, Founder and President of NIFLA, stated: "We are elated that a permanent injunction has been issued against Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul and SB 1909, which ensures this unconstitutional law will never go into effect. This is a huge win not only for NIFLA and our wonderful attorneys at the Thomas More Society but especially for pregnancy centers in the state, who serve the

thousands of women in Illinois who are facing unplanned pregnancies—all at no cost. SB 1909 was an absolute weaponization of government that unfairly and unconstitutionally targeted pregnancy centers simply because they refused to refer for or perform abortions. Let this be a stern example of what awaits those who attempting to pass and enforce similar laws—look to Illinois and save taxpayer dollars for actually helping their communities instead of going after organizations that help women and their families."

...
Read the Joint Motion to Enter an Agreed Order filed December 11, 2023, with the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, in National Institute of Family and Life Advocates et al. v. Raoul, [here](#); Agreed Order (as proposed): [here](#).

You can check out The Thomas More Society at:

thomasmoresociety.org.

40 Days for Life Lenten Prayer Vigils

Aurora, Bartlett, Decatur, Downers Grove, Flossmoor, Granite City, Quincy, Rockford, Waukegan... What do all these Illinois locations have in common? Each of them already has a site selected for a 40 Days for Life prayer campaign and allows you to sign up for a time when you can commit to being a peaceful, prayerful presence at an abortion facility. I'm sure others will soon be available, too, but if any of these are near you, why not sign up now. Get a friend to join you and sign up together. Organize a day for your congregation when prayer warriors from your own church would be willing to take one-hour slots and pray for the entire day! Or organize a

prayer service with your pastor and invite the entire congregation to come and take part for that one hour. If you have never attended a 40 Days for Life Prayer vigil, you might wonder how you can pray about abortion for a full hour. I find I usually still have things to pray about when my time is up! Here are a few of the things you might lift to the Lord of Life during that hour: Intervention by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those making life and death decisions for their babies...easily repeated with each car that pulls up, Ask the Father to send the Spirit where we cannot go: inside the facility, into the hearts of those who work there, and into the hearts of those waiting to receive

"services", Ask that He come with conviction leading to repentance and freedom in the Savior, Ask that He come with guidance that leads to Life. Lift up those you know and those you don't who have passed through those doors in the past and who have suffered the loss of a child! May God grant forgiveness, healing, and lifting through Jesus of the crippling guilt that besieges them! Pray for grandparents who have lost grandchildren. Pray for fathers who need to step up and take responsibility for fatherhood. Pray for fathers who have been robbed of their children and grieve their loss. Pray for our churches that we would be the hands and feet of Jesus for Life! Like I said, there's always more to pray! —LL

One Nation under God: Healing Racial Divides in America, a Review

"I pray Christians never give up or get discouraged with the relationships between blacks and whites, because I believe in the power of the almighty God. . . . Now you have that living water to offer to hurting people. Jesus Christ can work through us to change this racially divided culture, rewrite the hateful speech and dialogue and heal the racial division one person at a time. Once again, Jesus Christ can use His Christian brothers and sisters to change the world." These words come from the conclusion of "One

Nation under God...", a Bible study by Rev. B Keith Hainey. Rev. Hainey is an LCMS pastor and serves on the Board of Lutherans for Life. The study is available from [CPH](#).

This falls under the category of Life issues because we are "Created, Called, and Redeemed." I once caught the end of a Nova program about the human genome in which the narrator explained that science could now demonstrate that the entire human gene pool was originally contained in two human beings, and then pro-

claimed, "Isn't evolution wonderful!" Yikes! Not only did the Creator give us this truth in his Word long ago, but He even gave us the names of those two people! We share the same Creator, we are saved by the same blood of Jesus and we face a common enemy who would destroy our babies, our aged, and others in a "Life is cheap" culture. We need to be able to speak with one another with understanding. In this study, Pastor Hainey has done a good job of helping all of us to understand what others hear when we speak, so understanding can happen. —LL

Prayer and Marriage

In most of our churches, it is customary to pray for the newly married just as we pray together for the ill and grieving. Marriage in our day is in trouble and our prayers are more needed than ever. I've run across some quotes from Luther that have given me a few ideas for expanding on our prayers.

In our day we have developed a fairy tale image of marriage that doesn't line up very well with reality. It hasn't always been this way. Luther put it like this: "Union of flesh does nothing. There must also be a union of the manners and mind." As he was arranging marriages for nuns that had been freed from the convent, none of the couples "fell" in love. Nobody expected to magically "live happily ever after" with no effort or compromise on their part. Luther, who married one of those former nuns himself, also said,

"Let the wife make the husband glad to come home, and let him make her sorry to see him leave." This implies (Like 1 Corinthians 13) that love is an action, not a magic spell causing a warm fuzzy feeling! **Let's pray for our young couples that even before the marriage, they look at marriage with open eyes and understand the true meaning of love.**

Luther did acknowledge the exhilaration of young love, however and we also want that for our young couples. As he put it, "The first love is drunken. When the intoxication wears off then comes the real marriage love." I think sometimes our education by fairytale leaves us surprised and disappointed when the intoxication of early love wears off and we think the love has "died", so we give up. How many of our divorces are just because we didn't understand that love grows,

changes, and deepens with time and that real love involves action?

Let's pray that as couples marry and experience this intoxicating first love, they won't be surprised that it "wears off", but will recognize that their love is maturing and deepening into something that is even more precious. We pray that they can then experience and echo Luther's words, "There is no more lovely friendly and charming relationship, communion or company than a good marriage." Let us place all marriages safely in God's hands! As Luther said, "I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess." **We pray that all marriages will find true communion, grace, forgiveness and active love in fellowship with the Father above!, through Jesus, the Savior!**

Prayers with our Pregnancy Resource Centers

We have all heard how sonograms are used by God to change hearts and help parents choose Life. The sonographer at **Waterleaf Women's Center** in Aurora recently caught an incredible image of the preborn baby with head bowed and tiny hands folded as in prayer.. Naturally, the parents chose Life. God be praised! Because of the limited permission to print, I can't show you in our newsletter, but here is a link to their website, where you can see this beautiful image and read the whole story: onechoiceonlife.org Select the "Footprints Newsletter" to see the "Little Hands of Prayer" article and be blessed.

From **Spoon River Pregnancy Center** comes the following prayer request

and answer to prayer: ...Our Director of Development left when she and her husband got approved to be foster parents and had their first two children arrive in their home. Our nurse is retiring. Both of them have been a tremendous blessing to us and we are sad to see them go, but filling two of our staff positions is hard - especially all at once. **We are praying for the right people to come to us and fill those vacancies.**

One answer to prayer - especially as it pertains to LIFE: Recently one of our clients came in and was talking to us rather casually. The conversation led to deeper matters and she confided to us that she had come to us for an appointment at a particularly low

time in her life and her conversation with our Advocate that day saved HER life. She had a plan, but realized that day that God was real and she could have a relationship with him. It altered her life forever. We pray for each of the clients on our schedule every day, that we can be a blessing to them and point them to Jesus. I cannot think of a more direct answer to that prayer! We so often think our ministry is saving the lives of the children, and it does, but we were blessed by this reminder that eternal lives are saved as well and that is ultimately the most important work we can do!

Thank you for your prayers for us!

—LL

**"Can a woman forget her ...child, that she should have no compassion ...?
Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Isaiah 49:15 ESV**



New Maternity Home...The How

RLOM's program helps women gain the needed skills and services through a series of modules they complete and discuss. Each woman's case management is unique, as our Deaconess helps identify personal goals and maps out a path forward. Residents learn more about prenatal health and wellness, skills for getting and keeping good jobs, how to access needed social services, and cooking and nutrition. During the week, each woman works or attends school full-time. Weekends are full with personal time, home chores, outings, worship, and bible study. Each part of the program is designed to equip the women to live full and independent lives after leaving.

But the maternity home program is so much more than a place to live and some lessons on living well because this ministry was founded to share

the abundant life found only in Jesus through His redeeming love and forgiveness! Many of the residents profess to believe in God, yet few share the sure knowledge that Jesus died to set them free from their sins and from separation from God. With a close connection to a local Lutheran church, trained diaconal leadership in the house, and an expectation that all residents will participate in devotion, prayer, bible study, and worship RLOM aims to introduce its residents to the most important part of their 'But HOW?' questions, by God's grace through faith. Faith in Jesus cannot be required or demanded, but teaching, modeling and confessing our faith can help residents to be open to the life-changing forgiveness and salvation that comes only by God's grace. We plant the seeds and nourish them, while committing it all to the will of

God.

RLOM began in Florida a decade ago, and will open a new maternity home this year in East Dundee, Illinois. Hosted by Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church of East Dundee, the home will welcome single women in crisis pregnancies, providing a home, help and hope. *Your partnership in this ministry is needed. Please pray for the successful launch and ministry of this location.* You can make a difference by raising awareness about the home with pregnancy centers and those who need a home, and getting involved as a donor or a volunteer. Right now, we need partners to help furnish the house by sponsoring a room or area. Visit rlom.org and follow us on FB and IG to learn more.

by Julia Heinz, RLOM/NID



Praying them Home by Adoption

In Matthew 6:9 we receive Jesus' teaching about how to pray: "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven," Luther explains the meaning this way: "With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father." The Catechism goes on to cite Galatians 4:4-6, Romans 8: 14-16, 2 Corinthians 6:18 and 1 John 3:1 to explain how Christ's death and resurrection not only bought us eternal life, but bestowed adoption into God's family upon us. We rejoice in this, our adoption and we wish to see others enjoy, as well. It is one reason we witness to our faith.

Beyond the pure delight of our spiritual adoption, Jesus himself, set the example of physical adoption at the Cross, when he officiated over the adoption of the Apostle John to his

own mother, Mary, with the simple words: "... Woman, behold, your son!"²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. " John 19:26-27

Adoption is not as simple in our present day and age, but it is every bit as much needed. As many couples face infertility and pray for children to complete their families, many children are born into situations that leave them effectively parentless with the new state laws in many places that protect their preborn lives as never before, and many older children await adoption in the state foster care system, the need for Christians to pray over the possibility of adoption for their own family and to pray for adoption to meet the family needs of others has never been greater! Some possible actions to consider:

1. a prayer service at your

church for children awaiting adoption. Prayer cards are attached to the email that brought you this newsletter that can be taken home as a reminder to pray for specific children here in Illinois who are waiting for homes.

2. Share the cards with your church's prayer chain.

3. Remember LifeSong for Orphans and the LFL-IL fund to support adoptive families in their quest here in Illinois! Refer families or contribute!

Contact LifeSong at:
LifeSong for Orphans
P.O. Box 9
Gridley, IL 61744

When contributing, be sure to note in the memo line:

Lutherans for Life, IL #P576

Life Shines in Darkness! Save the Dates

Lutherans for Life will host the following Regional Conferences in 2024:

September 14, 2024:

Regional Conference Northeast

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Bristol, Connecticut (Hartford area)

October 12, 2024:

Regional Conference Midwest,

Hope Lutheran Church and School

Shawnee, Kansas (Kansas City area)

November 9, 2024:

Regional Conference Southeast

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Winter Garden, Florida (Orlando area)

Plan ahead to gather and be renewed! More information and links to past conference presentations at:

[LFL Conferences](#)

Prayer for Life...the promises

As we pray for Life Issues, we have a treasure trove of promises from the Lord of Life. Each one in this article serves as a link to a song or hymn that brings encouragement and reminds us of His promises. Because we are in a diverse society where many scream their views at the top of their lungs, it is possible for us to feel alone. The good news is we are NOT! Our ever-present Savior invites us to come to him in any state and find in prayer our rest and refreshment:

[Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.](#)

In the family of faith, we are not alone, either. If everyone who receives this newsletter joins in praying together for Life, there are

nearly 500 of us praying together. We have His promise that if two or three of us agree, our united prayer is heard by the Almighty.

[Wherever two or more are gathered in my Name, there am I among them](#)

As we watch the news or read the papers, we may feel that those whose actions are contrary to Life are winning and that we must be the most hated people on earth. Jesus told us that we would be despised by the world, even as He was despised by the world...the world for which He gave his Life! He also told us how to handle the situation:

[But I say to you love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.](#) Not an easy prescription! And it is one we definitely cannot pull off

by our own strength or effort!! But there is good news: part of prayer is [casting our cares upon Jesus, for He cares for you.](#)

And of course we pray in Jesus' Name... for the things He has told us He wants. "(If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it." Like, [eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.](#)), we pray for marriages and families ([Let marriage be held in honor among all](#)), we pray for those like Mary, who find their lives interrupted by a pregnancy they didn't plan ([Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding](#)), and we pray with hearts of gratitude for all He's done! [In everything give thanks...](#)

So, Let's Pray! [Whatever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.](#)

—LL

THANKS FOR YOUR GIFTS!

We really appreciate your support! Let's keep the Life-affirming attitude and share the love God has for us and all people. Let's gently give the word of forgiveness to those who are hurting and those who have hurt us...because love affirms life!

Lutherans in our state are disappointed and upset that so many in our society are continuing to cast fragile humans aside ... May God make us into Gospel-motivated voices for life!

Thanks be to God that He has paved the way through Christ for the gift of forgiveness and for us to belong to Him!

(Inspired by LFL-Kansas Newsletter)

Lutherans For Life of Illinois is a State Federation of Lutherans For Life, a 501c3 charitable organization dedicated to equipping Lutherans for becoming Gospel Motivated Voices for Life. We are on the web at <https://www.lutheransforlife.org/lfl-of-illinois/>

Send news items and prayer requests to the editor at: laeschfamily@gmail.com

Let your love
affirm Life
with Lutherans For Life

___ Yes! I want to join LFL...

Please select membership category

___ Annual ___\$35 ___\$50 ___\$75 ___Other

Any amount is welcome!

Note: Membership Contributions are shared with LFL Chapters and State Federations.

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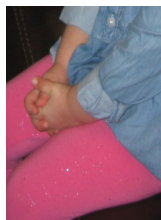
Church body ___AALC ___AFLC ___CLBA ___ELCA ___LCMS ___Other

Send to: Lutherans for Life, 1101 5th Street, Nevada, IA 50201

Or donate online at www.lutheransforlife.org

Let's Pray!

1. Father, we thank you that you willingly gave your most precious Son for our sakes! We thank you, Jesus, that you were willing to lose all the glory of heaven and come to earth, that we might gain fellowship with you in that glory forever! We ask that you would be with those who currently face loss...loss of job, loss of home, loss or marriage, loss of respect, loss of hope. Protect them from choices or external events that lead to further loss: abortion, suicide, random violence or out-right persecution. Please provide protection from the elements, protection from violence, and restoration that includes the lifting of shame, guilt, and the healing of hurt that can only come by way of Jesus!
2. Thank you, Lord for the work you are doing to complete the New Maternity Home in Northern Illinois! Thank you for the material goods, the volunteer labor, and the dedicated staff you are providing! We ask that you would bless many through this ministry and that you would uphold each person involved in this labor of love that it would always be a reflection of your love and grace, bringing honor to Your Name.



"Rejoice evermore.¹⁷ Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.¹ 1 Thess. 5:16-18

3. Thank you Father for your Church in our state! Please bless your people and raise up faithful leaders who will preach and teach your Word in truth and purity and who will count Life precious and lead our congregations to do the same. May we see those around us as You do and be channels of your love and blessing so they would also come to love and trust You.
4. Thank you Lord, for the work being done at Pregnancy Resource Centers all across Illinois and our nation! Thank you for the court ordered injunction that protects them as they serve those in need! Please provide strength, gentleness, unwavering love for your people, as those dear, dedicated workers need on any given day! Grant them discernment, wisdom,

and just the right words, that many lives may be saved both here and for eternity!

5. Thank you Father, for the gift of family! We rejoice in your design as a reflection of the perfect fellowship you enjoy with Jesus and the Holy Spirit! Forgive us our imperfections as we live out this analogy in our world, please bind us to one another through forgiveness, grace, and kindness. You have shown us the way and you provide all the power to do what our mere flesh cannot and we thank you! Please protect the family in our upside down world where it is under assault from within and without! Teach us to really love one another as conduits of your perfect love, even when our own best efforts at love would fail!
6. Thank you Lord, for the gift of children! We ask your help and protection for the children of our day who are so vulnerable. Please protect those yet unborn and grant their parents deep and genuine love for them. Those who find themselves parentless, please grant the gift of loving Christian families where they can grow to be the people you designed them to be. Protect them from those who would lead them astray and grant them the joy of adoption into Your Family!