

# Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry

Consistent

Multifaceted

Unified

Gospel-Motivated

Resourced

Interfaced

Trusted

Multiplied

Careful



**LUTHERANS**  
FOR LIFE

Lutherans For Life has produced a set of training manuals called the **Life Team Tool Kit** that has been utilized over the years to help encourage the formation of Life Teams within our Lutheran churches. We discovered that the information in these tools is equally valuable for helping our Life Advocates and Life Chapters in their life ministries as well. This fact was the impetus for our series in our *Directions* newsletter about the "Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry." In Tool 3, Life Team Member Training, Module 3, we learned about each of these desirable traits. The word *facet* was chosen because, as the facet of a cut gem reflects light, so we are to reflect the light of Christ in our life ministries. The following summaries are taken from the training manual and are also found in our Volunteer Relations brochure.

### **GOSPEL-MOTIVATED**

A Gospel-motivated group is focused on gratitude to God for being rescued by Christ in the Gospel. At your meetings, discuss how to connect your equipping initiatives to the Gospel, pray for one another and your churches, and remind one another of your identity as God's beloved.

### **UNIFIED**

When you are unified, you are working in harmony with God and each other. Unified life ministries have a clear mission statement, have specific processes in place to guide their work, and ensure each member uses their unique gifts to serve others.

### **CONSISTENT**

A healthy life group seeks regular opportunities to engage their churches in the life arena throughout the year. An intentional presence of carefully paced actions will avoid overwhelming the life group and the churches.

### **MULTI-FACETED**

The life arena is not about a single issue but about many different life issues. A multi-faceted life group is constantly learning, both personally and as a group, what life issues are currently important to share with their churches.

### **TRUSTED**

Trust is critical in the relationship between the life group and the churches served. Trust is developed over time, since ministry flows from relationships.

### **RESOURCED**

A resourced life group has access to both spiritual and financial support so they can carry out their mission.

### **INTERFACED**

When a life group is interfaced, it has good working relationships with other Christian, life-affirming agencies.

### **CAREFUL**

A careful group knows their churches well, understands their current interest in life issues, knows the level of knowledge they have, and knows the degree of involvement they desire. The life group simplifies issues to meet their people where they are and always speaks the truth with love and grace.

### **MULTIPLIED**

A multiplied life group is one that has engaged other groups in their churches to become involved in the life arena as well. The life group may also partner with another life group to expand their life ministry.

Now that you have a basic understanding of the definition of these nine important facets of a healthy life ministry, we invite you to read the following articles for a more detailed, comprehensive description of what each one of these facets can mean for your life ministry.

We encourage you to review these facets on a regular basis to ensure that your ministry is on target and functioning in a healthy way. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact any member of the Volunteer Relations Team. We are here to help and guide you. May God richly bless all that you do in the name of the Lord of Life.



# Is Your Ministry Consistent?



One of the facets of a healthy life ministry as a Life Advocate, Life Team, or Life Chapter is to be *consistent*. You need to seek regular opportunities to serve your church, keep carefully paced actions, and avoid overwhelming people. How are you doing with that? When you do things consistently, people start to expect what you do and even look for it. Being consistent is a good quality in life ministry. Here are a few ideas that will make it easy to be consistent if you utilize any of these tools:

- **Life Quotes** is a great way to provide regular quotes on life issues that are just a few short sentences and are easy to fit into your weekly church bulletin or newsletter. People can read them in only a few seconds, but they are impactful. They are dated but may be used any time. If you use these unique quotes weekly, you might also consider including a standard message for those in need of spiritual guidance due to having had an abortion. Our Word of Hope ministry is ready to help. Here's what a message could look like:



Hurting from abortion? Word of Hope can help.  
word-of-hope.org | 888-217-8679

- **Life Thoughts** is a helpful means of explaining the weekly Scripture readings from the perspective of the sanctity of human life. Put these in your bulletin or newsletter, and people will start looking for them. Life Thoughts are based on the Three-Year or One-Year Lectionary from Lutheran Service Book.

Find both **Life Quotes** and **Life Thoughts** on the Resource tab at [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)

- **Life Notes** is a weekly e-news digest of the latest LFL news. You will receive notice of upcoming events and quick links to LFL programs and commentaries. Life Notes is filled with information you won't want to miss! It will become a regular resource tool for valuable information you can use in your communication efforts. To sign up, go to [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org) and click the small purple box in the upper righthand corner of the home page.
- **Frontline Teleconference Calls** are conducted consistently the second Monday of each quarter (January – April – July – October). Join this Zoom call and learn about projects LFL is sponsoring or about activities being done by Life Advocates, Life Teams, and Life Chapters. Hear about and see projects you can take back to your church and use. Check the LFL website for the Frontline Teleconference Call details.



If you need help in being consistent, reach out to our Volunteer Relations Team, and they will work with you. Feel free to reach out to any one of them. May the Lord bless you in your For Life ministry in your local churches. May you consistently serve the Lord!



# Is Your Ministry Multifaceted?



Serving in the Lord's life arena as a Life Advocate, or as a Life Team or Life Chapter member, can be very rewarding and bear much fruit. But sometimes your efforts may become too narrow as you focus on *one* life issue—most often abortion. Lutherans For Life encourages all of our Frontline workers to be *multifaceted*!

What does this mean? *Multifaceted*, as defined by the Merriam Webster online dictionary, is “having many facets or aspects”—multiple parts making up the whole. Multifaceted, as it applies to life issues, means you are aware of and work with *many* life issues from fertilization to natural death—or as we like to say at LFL: From Fertilization to Forever!

Single-faceted ministries are the opposite of this and are less desirable. You will find greater success and impact in being multifaceted. As a worker in the life ministry of the Body of Christ, you will certainly need to address the horror of abortion, but you may find that people run the other way when you focus *only* on this issue. Somehow, you must be able to open hearts, minds, and ministries to the vast numbers of hurting people that have absolutely no personal association with abortion at all but still need the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the hope, strength, and peace He can bring to their lives amid *their* life issues. And when you *do* deal with abortion, your heart must be compelled to act as Jesus would act by showing love and compassion to the mom, dad, grandparent, or other persons touched by this tragedy. If you do this, you are already expanding your vision and becoming multifaceted!

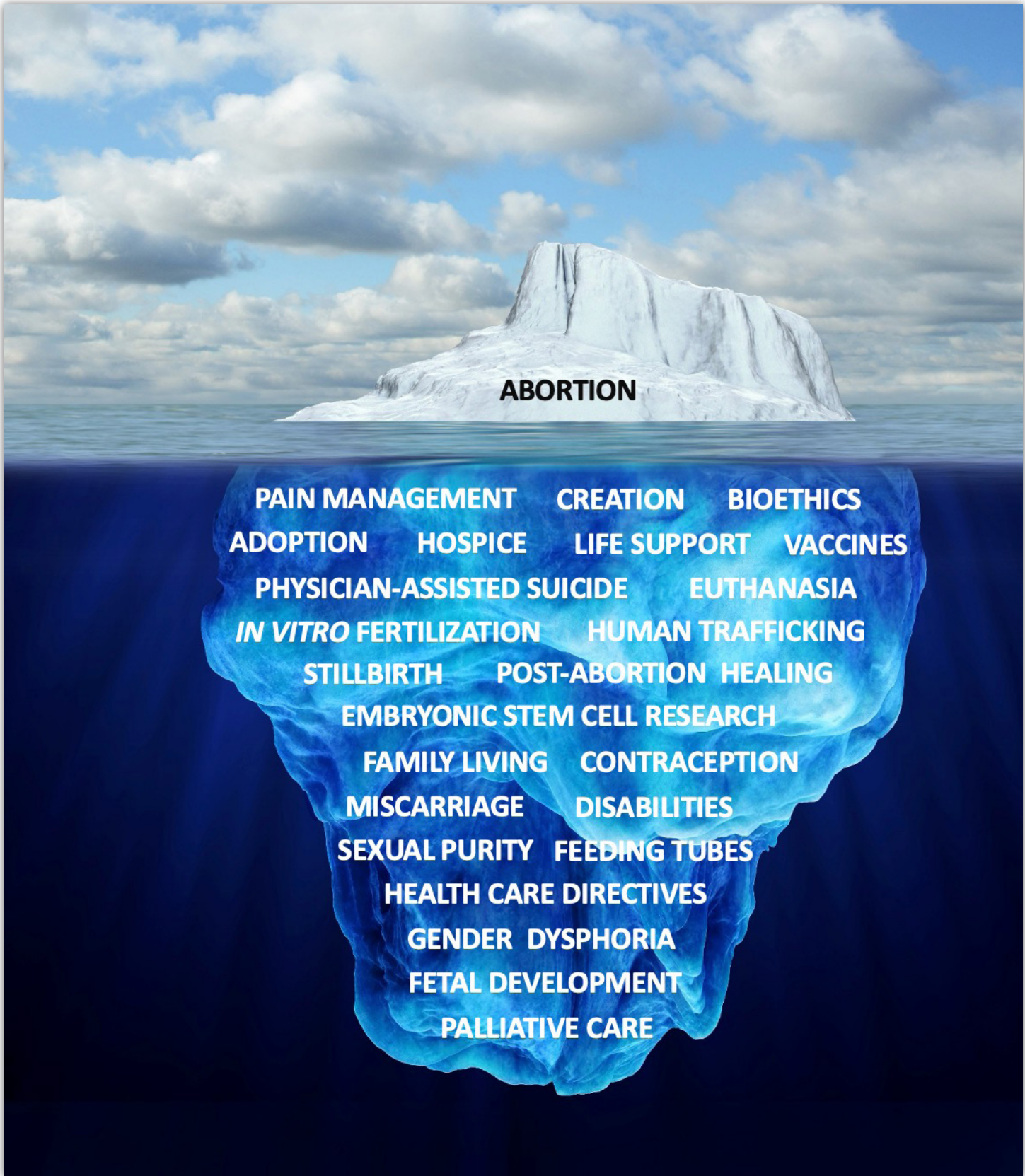
How can you equip your church and your community to recognize and care about a variety of life issues? Rest and trust in God. Pray. Become true friends with people in your congregation so you know what life issues they may face. Be aware of the needs in your community. Then research and explore ways to help people with a specific life issue. Involve your pastor(s). **God truly cares about every human heart that hurts, and He will bless your efforts.**

Know that *someone* needs to know the information you are providing on a specific life issue if you have researched local needs and have prayed about it! Life ministry is an ongoing process, and you should keep learning and keep developing your resources. Life issues continually evolve and change, so you should keep current with local laws and trends. Above all, come to Lutherans For Life! Our website, publications, and Volunteer Relations Team can inform and educate you about a vast multitude of life issues that affect all of us. We know this may seem daunting, but the Volunteer Relations Team is here to work with you!

You know the saying, “A picture is worth a thousand words.” We hope the iceberg graphic on the next page will raise your awareness of the multifaceted aspect of life issues. Not every congregation will deal with every life issue. Caution and care must be used when discussing certain sensitive life issues. We suggest you work closely with your pastor(s) and focus on one life issue at a time to maximize your efforts. Did we mention the Volunteer Relations Team is *always* here to help you?

As you minister to those around you, you know in your heart you are to meet people where they hurt. Your role model for ministering to the needs of others is Jesus. Matthew 25:37-40 says it all: **“Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’”**





**ABORTION**

- PAIN MANAGEMENT**
- ADOPTION**
- PHYSICIAN-ASSISTED SUICIDE**
- IN VITRO FERTILIZATION**
- STILLBIRTH**
- EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH**
- FAMILY LIVING**
- MISCARRIAGE**
- SEXUAL PURITY**
- HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVES**
- GENDER DYSPHORIA**
- FETAL DEVELOPMENT**
- PALLIATIVE CARE**
- CREATION**
- BIOETHICS**
- LIFE SUPPORT**
- VACCINES**
- EUTHANASIA**
- HUMAN TRAFFICKING**
- POST-ABORTION HEALING**
- CONTRACEPTION**
- DISABILITIES**
- FEEDING TUBES**



# Is Your Ministry Unified?



As you may have previously heard or read, there are nine facets of a healthy Life Chapter or Life Team. When you incorporate these nine facets within your life ministry group, you will make a greater impact For Life! Our focus today is on the facet *unified*.

Merriam Webster's dictionary defines *unified* in this way: **brought together as one** – “When people or groups are all on the same page, working for the same goals and doing the same thing, they are unified.”

The Free Dictionary defines it this way: *unified* – **formed or united into a whole**. Sound familiar? What Christian can hear these words and not *immediately* think of our Lord Jesus and His Body, the Church? “One” and “whole” *define* the Body of Christ! For example, our Lord Jesus, in His prayer to His Heavenly Father recorded in the Gospel of John, is very specific about how He sees those who believe in Him. He is very specific about how He wants us to become “one” ... in other words, “united.”

John 17:11: “... I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

John 17:20-21: “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 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.”

The Apostle Paul confirms this in Ephesians when he speaks of all the parts supporting one *whole body*, one *unified body*.

Ephesians 4:15-17: “**Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**”

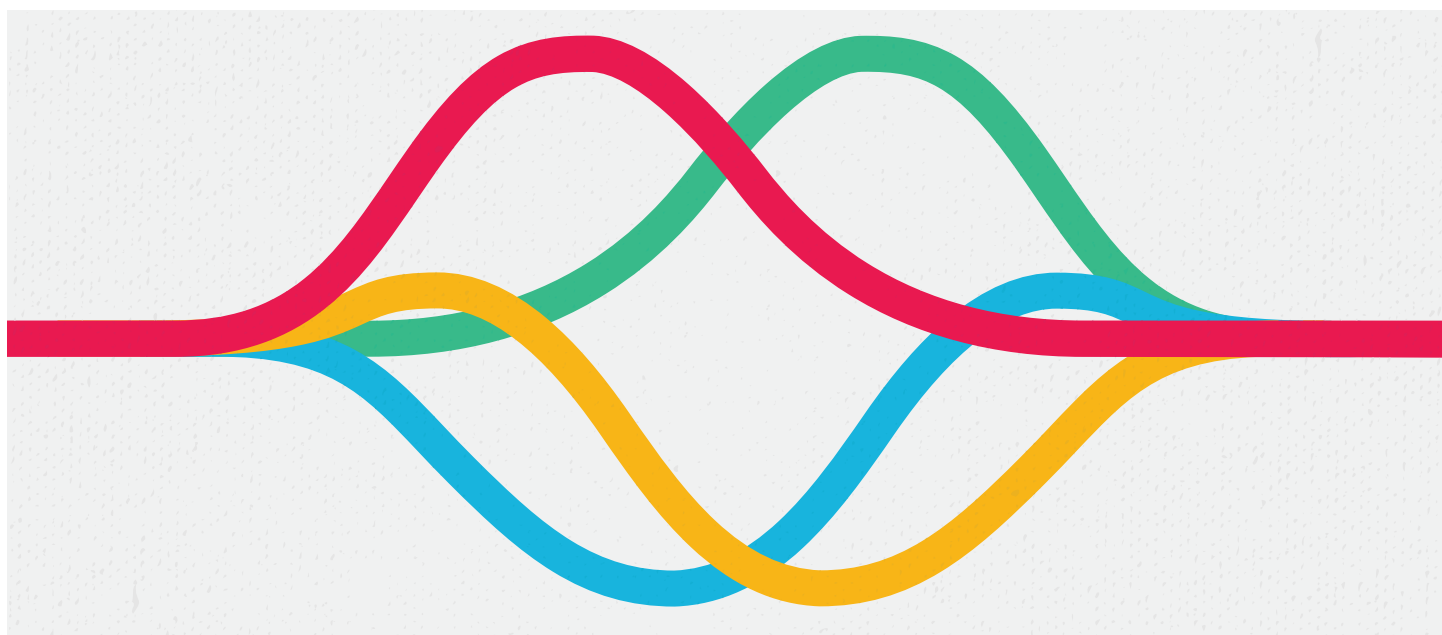
How do these words apply to our Life Teams and Life Chapters? Our latest Volunteer Relations brochure puts it this way: “UNIFIED: When you are unified, you are *working in harmony with God and each other*. Life Chapters and Life Teams who are unified have a *clear mission statement to guide them* in equipping their churches. They have *specific processes in place to guide their work*, and *each member uses their unique gifts to serve others*.”

How do you know if your Chapter/Team is unified? How might you *become* unified? We suggest you schedule a way to communicate with all of your members—in person, via media, or through e-mails and work through these following unified items *together*. Ask each person to honestly answer these items and then compile the results. *Discuss where you are and where you want to be*. This will take time, effort, and much prayer, but **it is essential for building oneness and wholeness: i.e., you become unified!**



1. Our Life Chapter/Team works harmoniously together.
2. Our Life Chapter/Team listens to one another.
3. When discussing initiatives, our Life Chapter/Team Leadership helps the members focus and set goals.
4. Our Life Chapter/Team leadership communicates with us simply to encourage us.
5. Our Life Chapter/Team holds one another accountable on action items.
6. Our Life Chapter/Team has a written mission statement.
7. When setting goals, our Life Chapter/Team strives to discern God's will and follow His lead.
8. As a Life Chapter/Team, we share the work and tasks.
9. Our Life Chapter/Team filters opportunities through our mission statement.
10. I pray for our Life Chapter/Team at least once a week.
11. Our Life Chapter/Team is learning information about the life arena together, e.g., sharing articles, bringing in speakers to a Life Chapter/Team meeting, etc.
12. When there is conflict, the Life Chapter/Team seeks godly resolution. This last item is critical. We are the Body of Christ. He calls us to be one. He calls us to be a vital part of the whole. He calls us to repentance, forgiveness, and harmony in our relationships with one another.

So, does all this seem a bit scary? Don't know where to start? Fortunately, the Volunteer Relations Team will help you! Give us a call or send us an email describing your needs, and we will work alongside you. Blessings to all of you as you minister to those around you in the life arena. Your work is vital to the oneness and wholeness—the unity—of the Body of Christ and its For-Life message!



# Is Your Ministry Gospel-Motivated?



**“Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:1-2).**

**I**s your For Life ministry *Gospel-motivated*? That may seem like an unusual question, because of course you are! This question is intended to encourage you to dive deeper into how the Gospel might be applied to the preparation and implementation of your For Life work.

First and foremost, I trust that you and your For Life group are focused on gratitude to God for sending Jesus to save us from our sins. Without being rescued, we have no hope and no future. God gave us life, and it has always been His intent that we should never perish but be with Him in eternity. Based on His promise of a Savior and the sending of Jesus as our Savior, we are eternally grateful. This is our motivation for serving Him and promoting the sanctity of human life!

Let’s continue to ask some questions that will help you recognize and apply some important actions that will keep your group focused on your Gospel motivation.

When you discuss a new project, event, or activity, do you spend time addressing how this project will connect with a Gospel message rather than just being an activity? Do you outwardly express that Gospel message in your communications and equipping efforts as you promote and engage in your chosen project? *Always* look for ways to apply God’s Word For Life to those you target with your activity.

Do you open your meetings with a devotion and prayer? You may have one person who has a gift for this and desires to provide a devotion for each meeting. Alternatively, you may share this task as a spiritual growth opportunity for all of your members. You might ask your pastoral counselor to provide the devotion for each meeting. Whatever you decide, ask your pastor or contact our Volunteer Relations Team for suggested devotional resources, if needed.

Do you keep an ongoing list of people that need to be lifted up in prayer at your meetings and in your personal prayers? It’s a wonderful way to keep those with life issues in your hearts and prayers, always keeping God in the forefront. He is the Great Physician for those in need of care. With permission, you may want to share your prayer list with the church(es) you serve so they may include these needs in their prayer lists as well. We know that staying in touch with God through prayer is one of the most important means of communication we have with our Lord and Savior. He desires that we reach out to Him, especially in time of need. And don’t forget to give thanks for the many blessings you and your life-affirming partners in ministry have received as you work in His kingdom. God always deserves the glory.

A close-up photograph of the word "GOSPEL" in large, metallic, block letters. The letters are arranged in a single row and are set against a dark, textured background. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic sheen and the shadows within the letters.

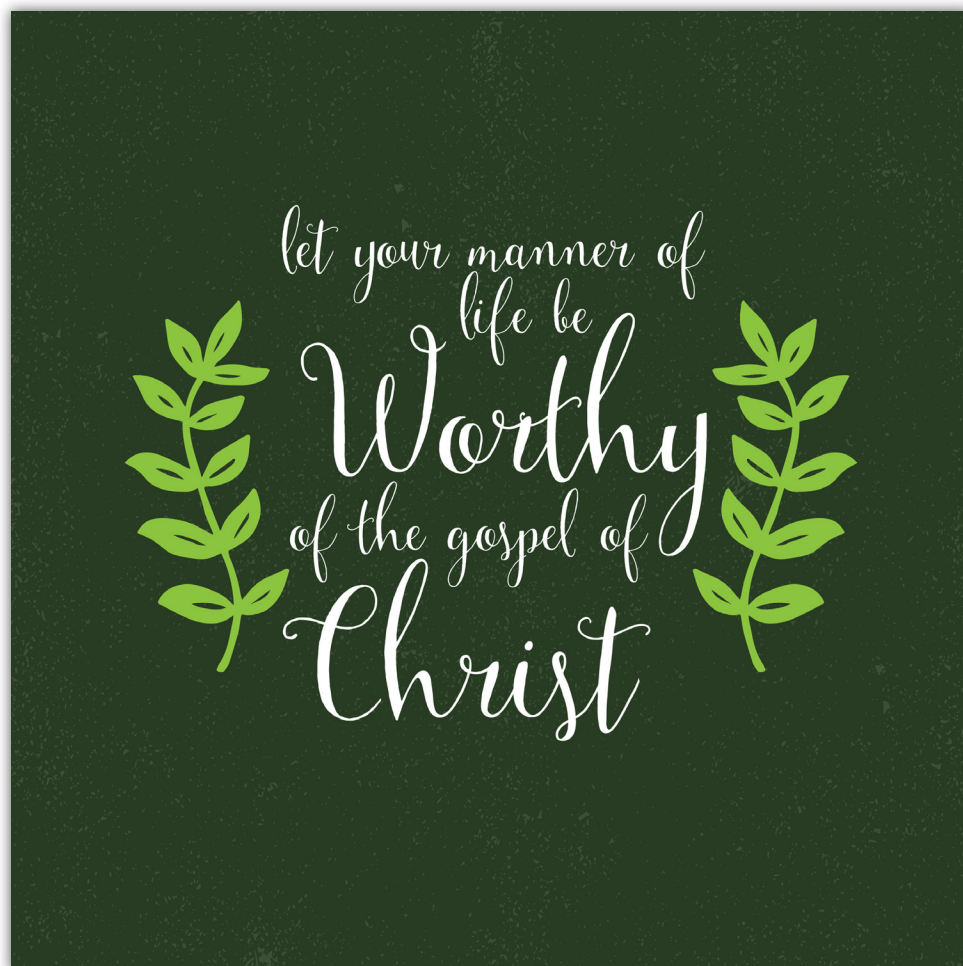




In your meetings, do you address the need to be *faithful* in your efforts, rather than focusing totally on *fruitfulness*? It is okay if you do not accomplish every expectation you have set up for each initiative if you are faithful in your efforts. Always keep in mind that our task is to plant the seeds. God is the one that nourishes them and makes them grow. Keep your focus on being *faithful stewards* in your life-affirming work.

Do you exemplify a Gospel-motivated approach to all that your group does? It is particularly important for each of your group leaders to be an example your group will respect and follow. Are you the one that keeps your For Life group pointed in the direction of the Gospel in all that you do? If so, thank you very much. Keep up the great work! If, however, you are struggling with this job, turn to the Lord in prayer and let Him lead the way.

Being Gospel-motivated is a joy! It will make your jobs as champions For Life easy and rewarding. Keeping your focus on the Gospel will reduce your burden because God is there to guide you and make your burden light. As His child, may you continue to be imitators of Him, and may you feel the joy that comes with serving the Lord of Life. In doing so, you will fulfill *your* part of the mission to equip Lutherans and our neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.



# Is Your Life Ministry Resourced?



In our series of informative articles directed toward the Lutherans For Life ministries within the Body of Christ—Life Advocates, Life Teams, Life Chapters—we have been discussing the *Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry*. We believe these facets, or important principles, are essential components of your life ministries that will enable you to be fruitful and to reach your full potential as Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

So, today we want you to ask yourselves, “Is our Life ministry *resourced*?” What does this mean? The Oxford Language Dictionary defines the verb *resource* (past tense: *resourced*) as this: “to provide (a person or organization) with materials, money, staff, and other assets **necessary for effective operation.**” Too often, the Body of Christ asks their members to carry out their different ministries as volunteers with no resources whatsoever. Expenses come out of the pockets of the volunteers themselves! Those of you who are financially able may have no problem giving both your time and treasure to a particular ministry, but how long can you sustain it? What about those of you with a passion to be part of this same ministry who do not have the funds to do so? You may struggle to meet the need, but if you truly cannot afford to do so, you will be left out. Or you may choose to not even try to participate if you feel you cannot financially support the ministry, and then the joy of serving the Lord in that ministry is denied to you. Additionally, if your volunteers’ financial resources run out, the ministry stops or is curtailed. Small goals may be met, but bigger dreams and projects are out of reach.

You as volunteers are also part of the “resources.” Are you adequately trained? Are you recruiting new members and nurturing and educating those you already have? What happens if the leader steps down? Will your For Life ministry continue to bear fruit or will it close? Have you encouraged your congregation to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life and to be completely invested in this ministry with their prayers and deeds as well as their finances? Remember that you can engage your congregational members to be important workers in your ministry without them being actual members of your team.

Let’s examine this a bit more closely. Any thriving church ministry needs financial resources, communication resources (such as access to newsletters, announcements, and the church’s website), physical resources (such as meeting rooms, kitchen access, etc.) and of course staff (member) resources. As a viable and trusted ministry within the church, your Life Advocate, Life Team, or Life Chapter will need these things as well. You want your ministry’s financial needs to be part of your church’s budget so you can plan projects that fit within that budget. Of course, for bigger endeavors, special requests may be made as needed. Resources often follow the level of trust that is established between the life ministry and the leaders of the church. It is important for you as life ministry leaders to work closely with the leadership of your church to determine how much a project may cost and how this project will



be financially supported. Working together to manage your desires for certain projects with available financing is critical, and being good stewards of these finances is equally important. Together, you and your church leaders should ensure that your projects and ministry efforts are always Gospel-motivated. It may take prayer, time, and compromise for a life ministry to become fully resourced, but the fruits of your labors will bless you, your church, and your neighbors! The table below gives you an idea of what to look at in determining how well you are resourced.

RESOURCED ITEMS	RATING: 1-4
Our life ministry has the financial resources to do what it needs to do.	
Our life ministry is given access to church resources (e.g., meeting rooms, copy machine, website, newsletter, and announcements).	
Our life ministry has the people to do what it needs to do.	
Our life ministry has the educational resources to do what it needs to do (brochures, videos, Bible studies, etc.).	
Our life ministry does activities specific to fund raising.	

Now, your determination of financial resourcing is important, but there is one more area of resourcing that is critical. Your life ministry thrives best if it is spiritually resourced as well. A special effort must be made to grow spiritually together as a life ministry with Bible study, prayer, and discussions of the needs you identify as well as the directions you must take to meet those needs. In your planning, always ensure that your ideas and projects will bring the Gospel to those around you, both within your church and without. Regularly remind your congregation that your project or program is designed to bring the Gospel-sanctity-of-life message to them and to their neighbors. The Apostle Paul’s reminder to the Saints in Colossae is valid to us today:

**“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving” (Colossians 3:23-24).**

We at Lutherans For Life encourage you to build and maintain relationships within your own congregations so that you will be fully resourced and fully supported—working together for the Lord and His kingdom For Life!



# Is Your Life Ministry Interfaced?



In our series of informative articles directed toward the Lutherans For Life ministries within the Body of Christ—Life Advocates, Life Teams, Life Chapters—we have been discussing the *Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry*. We believe these facets, or important principles, are essential components of *your* Life ministries that will enable you to be fruitful and to reach your full potential as Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

The next facet to be addressed is how you *interface* with other organizations and ministries as you consider supporting them or inviting them to speak (e.g., pregnancy resource centers, hospice facilities, adoption agencies, nursing homes).

The Oxford dictionary defines the verb *interface* as follows: “**to interact with** (another system, person, organization, etc.),” as in, “His goal is to get people interfacing with each other.”

As part of the Lutherans For Life Frontline, your definition is more critically focused. As Christ-centered Life Chapters, Life Teams, and Life Advocates, you want to be interfaced—interacting in a relational manner and having good working relationships—with *Christ centered, life-affirming agencies*.

Isaiah 55:8 reminds us of an important truth: “**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.**” But, as a *member of the Body of Christ*, given through God’s grace and mercy in your Baptism, you have been gifted with the “thoughts and ways” of God as revealed by the Holy Spirit who lives in you!

**“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).**

**“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind” (Romans 12:2).**

Your life ministry is part of the Body of Christ! This means you must carefully select any ministry partners with which you interface by careful planning, detailed research of that organization, and prayerful examination of their ministry. Here are four key areas in which your life ministry should align with a partner’s ministry:

- **Theological essentials**—Does the potential partner group affirm your church’s core theological teachings?
- **Mission**—Does the potential partner fit with your ministry’s mission and strategies?
- **Values**—Does the partner match your ministry’s values on the sanctity of life from fertilization to forever as expressed in God’s Word? Partner with someone who values life. Also, you value grace, truth, and Gospel-motivated words. You would not want to partner with a ministry that is abrasive or confrontational.
- **Partnership**—Does the partner embrace your ministry on an equal basis? Beware of partners whose attitude is “Here’s what we can do for you.” You want a partner that answers your question, “What can *we* do for *you*?” with meaningful opportunities to share your knowledge and ministry values.



Throughout this entire process of choosing life-affirming partners with which to interface, it is important to involve your pastor and church leaders. *Any partnership that involves your Life Team, Life Chapter, or role as a Life Advocate deeply and directly involves your local church as well.* Make sure you share all gathered information with your pastor/leaders so decisions of this magnitude are made together.

May God bless your labors as you seek to expand your Gospel-motivated life outreach to those around you.

For additional assistance, you may contact the Volunteer Relations Team any time ([lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations](http://lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations)).



# Is Your Life Ministry Trusted?



There are nine facets of a healthy Life Chapter or Life Team that we have been learning about in this *Directions* series. So far, we have deepened our understanding of **Gospel-motivated, Unified, Consistent, Multi-faceted, Resourced, and Interfaced.**

Many of us have found that when we incorporate these facets within our life ministry group, we make a greater impact For Life!

Our focus today is on the facet *trusted*. This facet is a truly critical one, as we will see. The Oxford Languages dictionary defines *trusted* as being “regarded as reliable or truthful” as in “a trusted advisor.” Synonyms are credible, dependable, honorable, loyal, and reliable. The word means “an assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone. Great relationships give life [and Life Ministries] significantly more purpose.”<sup>1</sup>

So, what traits do trusted individuals have?<sup>1</sup>

1. They are consistent. They have the self-control to maintain character and follow through on what they say they’ll do.
2. They show compassion and humility. Both these traits demonstrate that they think well of others and don’t consider themselves as more important than anyone else.
3. They respect boundaries. They don’t try to impose their will on others because they don’t feel the need to control those around them. They avoid bullying.
4. They compromise and don’t expect something for nothing. As trust is a two-way street, they are willing to give a little now to get something back later.
5. They are relaxed (and so are you). If the person seems at ease, they likely have nothing to hide and are being honest and open with you.
6. They are respectful when it comes to time. Trustworthy people do their best not to be late or cancel plans at the last minute because they know doing so inconveniences you and violates promises.
7. They show gratitude. Trustworthy individuals are willing to admit they can’t do it all alone and value teamwork. They give credit where it’s due.
8. They give up all the facts, even if it hurts. Truth and transparency matter to trustworthy people.
9. They confide in you. It demonstrates that they already trust you and that they want you to be open with them as well.
10. They do not gossip. They prefer to get information from the source and to let the source speak for itself. They avoid rumors. When they do talk, their language is empowering and respectful.
11. They are learners and know they don’t have all the answers. They look for ways to learn and improve themselves and are willing to share the resources and facts they find.
12. They are there for you and for others. They will listen to and support you. They do their best to be available to help, whatever you might be going through.



Wow! This is quite the list of traits for a trusted individual, but now is when it gets a little tricky! A Life Advocate is one person, and Life Teams and Life Chapters may have anywhere from three to thirty members, so does this mean we need *all* of them to be trusted for the Life Advocate, Life Team, or Life Chapter to be trusted? Short answer? Yes. How can this happen? Relationships. Relationships between the individual members and Jesus their Lord and relationships between the members themselves can lead to trust. It does not and cannot happen all at once. It takes time. As we trust in the Lord for our strength and direction, He helps us learn to trust one another. By definition, a Life Team (or Life Chapter) is a group that works together in harmony. A big step toward this harmony is to become more trustworthy—more dependable, honorable, and loyal. As each Life Advocate, Life Team, or Life Chapter member grows in trustworthiness, so does the life ministry itself.

Once we know our Life Advocate and Life Team and Life Chapter members are trustworthy, how does this relate to our relationship with our congregation itself? A trusted life ministry group *as a whole* should exhibit the following characteristics:

- Have open communication with your church leadership so ideas can be discussed and adopted.
- Seek counsel from your church leadership or pastoral advisor. Attendance by the pastoral advisor is very important in planning your goals, mission, and projects.
- Follow through with assigned tasks.
- *All* members of the team/chapter should intentionally offer their support to the goals and missions.
- Meet regularly with your pastor(s) to monitor your life ministry, check on progress, and discuss new ministry ideas.
- Encourage the congregation to take an active role in the life events and activities planned for your congregation. Ask for your pastor's support in this.
- Above all, continue to develop relationships with your own church members as “ministry flows from relationships.”

Repentance and forgiveness also play an important role in the trustworthiness of your life ministry. Words may be spoken or mistakes may be made that impact your group and thus the congregation. Prompt intervention with grace, love, and forgiveness can make a big impact.

**“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).**

We have focused thus far on the trustworthiness of the individuals in our life ministries, which in turn earns the trust of our congregations. But sometimes our trustworthiness fails; our harmony is broken. Thankfully, there is *One* above all that we can *trust* above all. That is our Heavenly Father. As we turn to Him individually and together as a Life Advocate, Life Team, or Life Chapter, He is always there. He is the most trustworthy, dependable, and loyal Person we will ever know. We can totally rely on *His* character, ability, strength, and truth. What a wonderful promise, and what a perfect model of trust for us all.



**“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).**

For additional assistance, you may contact the Volunteer Relations Team any time ([lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations](http://lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations)).





# Is Your Life Ministry Multiplied?



There are nine facets of a healthy Life Ministry that we have been learning about in this *Directions* series. So far, we have deepened our understanding of Gospel-motivated, Unified, Consistent, Multi-faceted, Resourced, Interfaced, and Trusted. When you incorporate these facets into your life ministry group, it will make a greater impact For Life!

Our focus today is on the facet *multiplied*. What does it mean for a Life Ministry to be multiplied? Why should being multiplied be our goal?

As is our custom in this series, let's start with a definition. Merriam-Webster defines *multiplied* as “to increase in number, especially greatly or in multiples; to augment.” Wow! Is there any other word that so clearly defines the goal of the Church in sharing the sanctity of life message with the world? Multiplied. Greatly increase in number. Hmm. Where have we read that before?

**“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied” (Acts 9:31).**

In other words, it greatly increased in number, in multiples of believers, and in influence. We surely want our Frontline ministries—Life Advocates, Life Teams, Life Chapters—to grow in numbers of members and to be more active in more churches. But numbers aren't everything! We also want to multiply our *influence* on others and help them, too, become Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

How does “being multiplied” happen in our Frontline ministries? One immediate way is to engage our fellow church members into participating in our sponsored activities and being the recipients of the ongoing For Life communications we share. Also, consider engaging existing groups in your churches and help them become involved in the life arena. Perhaps you can partner with your worship or outreach committees, your youth and Sunday school leaders and teachers, your women's and men's groups, or your Stephen Ministers to involve them in the For Life message of your church family. Plan events together. Weave your goals and theirs into life-affirming words and actions.

Here are some thought-provoking statements to which your answers may be “yes,” “no,” or “we're working on it.” These may help you determine if you are multiplying and expanding your life ministry to those around you or if there is room for improvement.

- Our Life Ministry seeks out people in our churches who are life-affirming.
- Our Life Ministry looks for opportunities to equip our congregations for Gospel-motivated ministry in the life arena.
- People in our churches are engaged in the life arena because of our work.
- We have implemented at least one equipping effort in the past year that involved members of the congregation: e.g., March for Life, 40 Days for Life, Diaper Drives, supporting our local pregnancy center, working with the elderly, etc.
- Our Life Ministry expands our impact by mentoring other Life Advocates, Life Teams, or Life Chapters, or being a catalyst in helping other churches start a life ministry group.



How did you do? As a Life Team Leader in my own congregation, I confess that we could be doing more. What is the solution? As seen in the Bible verse quoted above, God has the answer. We are to walk in the fear of the Lord and be filled with the Holy Spirit. We cannot multiply by our own strength!

**“The Lord your God has multiplied you, and behold, you are today as numerous as the stars of heaven” (Deuteronomy 1:10).**

Pray that the Lord would grant us the grace, perseverance, and strength to multiply Life Ministries to be as numerous as the stars of heaven!

Pray that the Holy Spirit would open doors so more hearts would hear and respond to the words of life coming from our lips and seen through our actions.

May God’s proclamation to “Go, be fruitful and multiply” be the power behind our desire to multiply the influence of the For Life values that He has revealed to us, His Church, and to us, the Life Ministries within His Church.

To God be all the glory!



# Is Your Life Ministry Careful?



**“With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it. He did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything” (Mark 4:33).**

It is amazing how Jesus knew how to deal with every situation with such ease and wisdom. That perfection is worthy of imitating, even though we will never be perfect. Jesus used parables when He spoke with people so they could easily relate and understand. He went into greater depth with His disciples, as they were in a place where they could absorb more than the other lay people. This is how your life ministry should also work in your church.

One of the most important reasons for keeping things simple is that we need to be *careful*. We don't want to overwhelm the people in our churches with the complexity that can come with life issues. They will become disinterested if we are too quick in our presentation of information or throw things at them with too many details. Work at understanding where your people are and how much they already know. Be methodical in your equipping process, especially when an issue is sensitive and sometimes controversial. Grow the message as people start to understand more clearly.

Today, people have been bombarded with politics, the media, and communications that have caused factions and even severed family relationships. The world has focused on humanist elements such as “you have the right” and “whatever makes you feel good.” The morals of our society have moved in a direction that condones things that are contrary to God's Word. Abortion, physician-assisted suicide, cohabitation, gender transitioning—and the list goes on—have become normal and acceptable in our society. Deep down, people may know—and their conscience may tell them—these things are not God-pleasing, but when they practice them, they get an immediate sense that they have solved the problem of the moment, and they feel good about it. (Maybe!) Indeed, those choices may haunt them for decades or even for a lifetime until they receive God's forgiveness when they come to terms with their sin and their need for repentance and God's grace.

Because these lifestyles and behaviors have become acceptable—and everyone may know someone who has participated in these practices, including themselves—sharing information becomes a sensitive issue. The political arena has often made loyalty to parties and candidates superior to what is often right, and thus politics can defy God's Word. Because of this, we always need to be careful in our communication.

Walking slowly doesn't mean we never address life issues as we must. We simply need to do it in a manner that would be God-pleasing. It means we need to discern where people are and carefully pick our words. Never apologize for sharing God's Word. Never excuse holding or defending a godly position that clearly states how a life issue stands according to Scripture. Abortion is wrong, as is assisted suicide, and many other life issues happening in our world.

Jesus presented His message by fitting the stories to His hearer's experience and maturity. We need to do the same. Do not be afraid to speak the truth but do it in love. Be consistent in your message, and the truth will prevail. God's Word is the ultimate authority. When we refer to it rather than our own understanding, we will find ourselves in a safe place. Continue to pray for discernment and understanding, and God will give you the guidance you need to be careful.



# Helping You Connect God's Word to Life Issues!

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



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



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