



Affirming Life In Illinois

Adoption as Sons, Galatians 4:1-7

"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Galatians 4: 4-5). God has set us free from our slavery to sin, self and Satan through His Son's redeeming death on the cross and the power of His Son's resurrection from the dead conquering Satan and all his evil workers. We are adopted as sons and daughters of God. What does that mean? That means we are freed from our old sinful, selfish way of life to selflessly and sacrificially serve and love the people God places in our daily

path. That includes our un-churched neighbors and strangers who need God's unconditional love.

My wife, Marilyn's Dad, Avery, chose to invite a stranger to his family's Christmas celebration one year because he told Avery after their Christmas worship service that he didn't have any place to go for Christmas due to his very recent divorce. Even though we didn't know this stranger from church, we welcomed him into our family celebration as our "adopted" family member. He told us it was his "best Christmas ever" because he had a family who "adopted him for Christmas!"

Marilyn's brother Rob, who is with our Lord, and his

wife Janet adopted all three of their children from Guatemala, AJ, Zach and Sophie. Marilyn and I have supported them with two recent family showers for Tate, Zach and Haley's baby, and Emarie, AJ and Moriah's baby. We also spent Christmas Day with them. Thanksgiving we spent a couple of days in Omaha with Marilyn's sister Gloria and brother-in-law Rich and their adopted boys, Chris, wife Lindsey and their three children, and Scott and wife Abby. What a blessing from God adopted children are! What a blessing our adoption as God's redeemed children is!

—Pastor Dave Bottorff, President, LFL-Illinois

Lutherans For Life of Illinois Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 1

Winter 2025

Save the date, Illinois

- * Jan 19, Life Sunday
- * Jan 19-25, LFL Life Week
- * March 13-15, LCMS Mercy throughout Life Conference
- * March 25, Springfield, Illinois March for Life

A New Year and Life by the Numbers

We tend not to focus on numbers much in this newsletter. After all, part of our goal is to remind people that every Life Issue we face involves real live people with names and faces, people created by God in His own image, people for whom Jesus died, people to be received into the family of God by "the adoption of sons" purchased by Jesus, people our Father wants to see given the gift of eternal Life, people valued by God, Himself! NOT just numbers!

The beginning of a new year, however, finds us looking back at the old year to assess what it brought our way. The new year simultaneously finds us looking forward with hopes and dreams for where it might lead. If ever we are going



to talk about numbers, this year to consider them.

Looking back... Part of what brought the issue of numbers to mind is a question that was posed at last August's State Life Event in Eureka. We were asked about Chapter numbers and their meaning.

Michele Hartshorn of Lutherans For Life (national) has been helping me get some answers on that front. You can read about what we have found out on page 2 in the Chapter News column.

Looking forward... That Life Event included a follow up questionnaire to help us do a better job in the future. The LFL-IL Board met in November and studied the results of that questionnaire. The first thing that came out is that a similar Life Event addressing End of Life Issues would be welcomed by

Illinois For Life Lutherans. Therefore, you can look forward to another State Life Event to be held this coming August 23, 2025. Stay tuned for more information!

One other observation drawn from the questionnaire is that there were a wide variety of Life Issues that could be addressed, but were not mentioned by quite as many individuals. In future issues of this newsletter, we will try to have someone with expertise in those areas to share their information with us, so those ideas can also be explored, even if there isn't time to do so in one short conference.

Articles in this issue with statistical information will have those numbers printed in purple, so they are easy to find. May 2025 find you blessed with Life, Life abundant!

—LL

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Life Comes in Chapters

Every Chapter of Lutherans for Life has a number. It all began with #2, the Washington State Life Chapter., which organized on May 23, 1979. That Chapter has since dissolved. Why 2 and not 1, remains a mystery. Each Chapter was numbered consecutively from that time. Originally, Chapters were formed as circuit-wide groups by Lay people. Changing situations have resulted in Chapters stopping and starting.

Over the years, there have been 35 LFL Life Chapters in the state of Illinois. Currently there are nine active Chapters here in Illinois. 2024

saw three of our Chapters disband, The Will County Chapter, Metro East Chapter, and the New Hope LFL Chapter. Chapters can transition to deal with current realities, becoming Life Teams within a congregation or with leadership becoming a Life Advocates for their congregation.

Chapter news worth celebrating, is the beginning of a new Chapter, the Altamont Area Chapter . They will soon have a number of their own.

Our other Illinois Chapters all have numbers, too. In the Mattoon Area, the Coles County Chapter is Chapter #259. In DuPage County we find Chapter #083. The Four-S Chapter is

#034. They were begun in 1982, chartered in 1983, making them the longest running, currently active Chapter in Illinois. In the Roanoke area is the Heartbeat Chapter, #271. The Illinois Valley Chapter of Jacksonville is Chapter #210. LFL Chapter 155 is the McHenry County Chapter. The Peoria Area Chapter is #268. The Southwestern Illinois Chapter is #343.

There are currently 82 active LFL Chapters across the U.S.A.

By Michele Hartshorn & Laura Laesch

Pray that God would guide and provide for the Life Chapters and multiply their efforts to affirm Life!

Find a Chapter

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

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

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

Numbers that torture

Robert H. Coase was a professor emeritus of economics at the University of Chicago Law School. He is quoted as saying, "If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything." This is one problem with statistics; Why we try so hard to check their veracity. But sometimes, even accurate statistics, based on real data can give us genuine pain. When I logged onto the We Dignify website recently, I found myself face-to face with some painful numbers. They have posted the statistical numbers on abortion for the Midwest in the form of a map. The data was for 2022, collected from State Health Departments. Here in Illinois, there were 56,457 abortions in 2022. That was the year of the Dobbs decision, so it should be noted that for half of the year, our neighboring states had to allow abortion, too, so it is not just out of state referrals that resulted in our having an abortion rate that is

26,337 greater than the total for the next highest midwestern state. If you want to see how all the midwestern states stack up, here is the link to [We Dignify](#). You'll need to scroll down a bit to see the map and statistics.

Back to Dr. Coase. Although he was speaking specifically of economics, I think what he says can be applied much more broadly and gives us a hint about what to do with painful statistics.

He says, "As I see it, progress in understanding the working of the economic system will come from an interplay between theory and empirical work. The theory suggests what empirical work might be fruitful, the subsequent empirical work suggests what modification in the theory or rethinking is needed, which in turn leads to new empirical work. If rightly done, scientific research is a never-ending process, but one that leads to greater understanding at each stage". Time to rethink the Malthusian Economics theory that has

in part, led to our current anti-life problem! Published in 1798, much has changed. It's time for a reality check.

For us, For-Life Lutherans, it means we ask the questions: What led to these numbers? What can be done to change the trajectory? How am I personally able to help? What would God have me do with this information? We take steps to do just that and then we reassess. And tweak our approach as needed. In other words, we have our work cut out for us! Each of us seeking God's direction and contributing our own gifts and talents can lead to a more God-pleasing situation. Or as Paul said, "...do not grow weary in doing good." (2 Thessalonians 2:13) —LL

Pray for direction, strength and courage to change the numbers, not through torturing the data, but through sharing the Gospel that changes hearts, minds & lives, resulting in changed outcomes.



Essay Contest 2025 – Early Info this Year!

Any student in a Lutheran school or Lutheran congregation (e.g., confirmation class, youth group, Lutheran home school) is eligible when validated by their teacher or pastor, along with parental consent.

Contest Guidelines

Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the theme **"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made"** using Psalm 139:13-14: *"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."*

1. Examples of topics the essay could deal with are - but are not limited to - abortion, disabilities, adoption, foster care, infanticide, physician-assisted suicide, hospice care, sexual purity, etc. For more information on life topics, see [lu-theransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org).
2. The first page of the essay must include the student's name, grade, school or church, a personal mailing address, email address, and phone number (of the student or parent).
3. All entries must be submitted by a teacher or pastor and include their contact information.
4. Grades 6 - 8 should submit essays up to 400 words, e.g., The word count does not include the title, footnotes, or bibliography.
5. Grades 9 - 12 should submit essays up to 750 words e.g., The word count does not include the title, footnotes, or bibliography.
6. Entries must be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word or Google Docs (*PDF files or other formats will not be accepted*). Email your entry to cathy.benning.os@gmail.com by **March 15, 2025**.
7. The following are items that will cause disqualification when not followed:
 - A. The essay must include the theme and theme Bible verse.
 - B. Each essay must include a title. Using the required theme as a title is acceptable but does not replace using the theme and verse within the essay.
 - C. The essay must be in complete agreement with the Lutherans For Life mission to "Equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life".
 - D. A Bibliography listing sources used is required.
 - E. Exceeding the appropriate word count is not acceptable.
8. Essays should make good use of standard essay writing components, including introduction and conclusion, main points, organization, style, mechanics, sources, and bibliography (*See page 2 for directions on using these elements*).
9. There will be a \$200 first-place award and a \$100 second-place award for each of the two categories. The two first place category winners will advance to the national contest.
10. The national award for the winning entry in each category is \$500 for first place, plus free conference registration to the 2025 Lutherans For Life national conference for the student and his/her parents, one-night stay at the conference hotel for the student and his/her parents, \$200 travel expense reserved for conference travel only, and a framed certificate. The second-place award is \$250 and a framed certificate.
11. All entries, including exclusive copyrights, become the property of Lutherans For Life.
12. For support or resources on the sanctity of life, see lutheransforlife.org.

Helpful Information about Good Essay Structural Elements



Introduction and Conclusion - The reader is engaged by a well-developed introduction that creates interest. The conclusion effectively wraps up the essay by clearly drawing a conclusion to support the essay position.

Main Points - The main idea and statements are clear and may come from a variety of sources, including personal experience, observations, feelings, or prior knowledge. Supporting details are accurate and helpful to the main point. Statistics and other research, if used, are used effectively.

Organization - The essay shows a logical progression of ideas that enhance the essay. Transitions are graceful, with a smooth flow.

Style - The paper is honest and enthusiastic. The language is natural and shares a message from the heart of the writer. Writing is smooth, skillful, and makes sense.

Mechanics - Punctuation, spelling, and capitalizations are correct with no run-on sentences.

Sources - All sources for references, statistics, and quotes are referenced within the essay by listing the author or source in parentheses after the quote.

Bibliography - A simple bibliography/works-cited page gives references for the sources used including the author, source title, page number or website.

Y4Life Summit

I think we are all encouraged to see young people taking a stand For Life. Y4Life, the youth For Life Ministry of Lutherans For Life sent me the following information about their upcoming Summit...

"The 2025 Y4Life Summit is approaching, and that means we have an exciting opportunity to serve those in the Chicago area! At the 2025 Summit, we will be assembling bags for mothers and babies with the Breakfast with Baby group. To fill these bags, we need YOUR help!

We have put together an Amazon wish list with items for the bags, but we need help to share the list and collect

the items. That's where YOU come in! How can you help? Please choose an item on the Amazon list to purchase, share the list with those at your church or school, or donate Joann's e-gift cards to Y4Life. (Send cards to Michelle at michelle@y4life.org.) These are all ways that you can help us collect the items we need to fill the bags for mothers and babies in the Chicago area. You can find the Amazon list [HERE](#) and the donations flyer [HERE](#).

The items purchased through the list will be delivered to the Y4Life Team before the Summit, and we'll have them ready to sort and stuff in bags during the service project on the af-

ternoon of February 22, 2025. Want youth from your congregation to help us assemble the bags? Have them register for the 2025 Y4Life Summit [HERE](#). Registration is FREE!!

We are thankful for the gifts God has given us, and we want to share His love with mothers and babies through these bags. Thank you for helping us collect items for families in need, and we look forward to seeing youth from your congregation at CUC for the Summit in February!"

If you want to encourage the youth, respond by **early February**, so everything is in order by the start of the Summit.

Pray for the youth & leaders at this summit!

Mercy: Love Throughout Life



The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod is hosting a conference that you can attend, no matter where you are! Called, Mercy: Love Throughout Life, the confer-

ence will have three in-person locations and can be attended by zoom from anywhere in the U.S

"Presentations will focus on advocating, teaching and caring for human life; marriage, life and family; and spiritual care". They are to be held March 13th—15th .

Speakers will include, Deaconess Dr. Tiffany Manor, managing Director of the Missouri Synod's Human Care and Ministerial Support. Also presenting will be Rev. Dr. Brian Heller. Rev. Heller is currently serving as the manager of LCMS Specialized Care

Ministry, which equips, trains, and provides resources to those pursuing chaplaincy roles within the

Attendees will also be able to hear from Rev. Dr. Ross Edward Johnson, director of LCMS Disaster Response.

You can get more information and register to attend, whether in person or via zoom by clicking [here](#).

As For-Life Lutherans gather to learn how better to serve the Lord of Life at these conferences, pray that God will bless them with His guidance, greater understanding and the impetus to carry out His mission of Mercy!

Good News for Life...

Numbering the opportunities for Life: This comes to us from the summer issue of the Human Life Alliance newsletter and brings some warm thoughts our way as we start the new year.

"Women have real choices. A Charlotte Lozier Institute study says that there are **fourteen** women's health and pregnancy centers for every Planned Parenthood in the United States. See a side by side comparison at:

www.lozierinstitute.org/realchoices

"We admire their hard work and commitment to their communities, ensuring that both born and unborn individuals have opportunities for success. It's encouraging to see a rise in the number of pregnancy centers opening in areas that need their assistance the most. In the United States, the number of Pregnancy Centers now surpasses that of Planned Parenthoods. Ac-

cording to the Charlotte Lozier Institute, as of January 2023, "there are over **2,700 pro-life pregnancy centers** spread across all 50 states, while Planned Parenthood operates around **585 facilities** in just **48 states**." This collective effort of communities coming together to support the unborn and the parents bringing new lives into the world is truly remarkable."



Safe Haven Box in Lebanon, Ohio does its Job!

On Monday, December 2, the City of Lebanon Communications Center received an alarm from the Newborn Safety Incubator (Safe Haven Baby Box) which is located at their local fire station.

The Lebanon Police and Fire units responded to the Safe Haven Baby Box and located a female infant. The baby was immediately transported to Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

"God is so good. I am so thankful for my colleagues on Lebanon City Council who supported this proposal to build a Safe Haven Baby Box, and then for Jean Schmidt working with me to empower these at the state level," said Rep. Adam Mathews. "A little girl will live, and this life should be added to the legacy of Tom and Bonnie Ariss as they were key donors to build the box. To God be the Glory!"—Story from Life News.com , Dec 4, 2024.

One Million Dollar Matching Grant for Life

God's people in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) love children and families. Since 2022, local, pro-life efforts at the congregation and district level have been happening Synod-wide, made possible by matching grants from the [Million Dollar Life Match](#).

For instance, members of Trinity Lutheran Church in Clinton, Mo., have reached out to mothers in their community by opening a maternity [home](#). In Carol Stream, Ill., members of Our Savior Lutheran Church host monthly [Breakfast with Baby](#) events, an outreach ministry that provides baby supplies and opportunities for fellowship to families in need.

Does your congregation or district need support for projects like these? Are you interested in starting a pro-life effort at your congregation? Consider applying for a grant from the Million Dollar Life Match.

[Grant applications for 2025 will open on Jan. 1](#). All member congregations and districts of the LCMS within the United States are eligible. Congregations and circuits may collaborate on a project and application.

There are many ways to use a grant. Congregations and districts can get directly involved with their neighbors through outreach efforts that support pregnant women and families with young children. Congregations and districts may also partner with LCMS Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) or local pregnancy centers by sending volunteers, donating baby items and giving financial support.

Projects eligible for this grant include expanded or new projects that are focused on the beginning-of-life stage:

Human care — Support the body and soul needs of families and children.

Advocacy — Speak up for the value of every life created by God.

Education — Teach about the sanctity of human life.

Projects must be carried out in close proximity to the Word and Sacrament ministry of the congregation.

Need some ideas for how to get started? Read more on the [Lutherans Engage the World website](#).

Questions about the application process should be directed to Kris Freeman, manager of LCMS Life Ministry, at lifeministry@lcms.org or by calling 314-996-1217.

Christ laid down His life for us. We love in deed and truth.

This article was first published by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 2024.

Illinois March for Life 2025

CID-LCMS is once again hosting a pre-march service at Trinity Lutheran Church in Springfield. Observations from years past: It is worth the drive, if for the singing alone! (Speakers have been great, too.) The Lutheran service is fol-

lowed by an open air pre-march rally in front of the State Capital. Observation from past years: Inspirational messages all around. And then the march...around the State Capital complex, in sight of legislator's offices. For those concerned about such

things, last year I did not spot **one** single counter-protester! Lutherans sing their way around the route. Since specifics are not yet available, we'll send out more information when it comes out! LL

Fostering Life

How much information can you jam into a 6-inch square? Check out the new Y4Life infographic about Foster Care to find out!

You'll find answers to questions like "What is Foster Care?", "Why Do We Care as Gospel Motivated Voices For Life?", "What if I Can't Foster?", and "How Do We Uphold and Affirm the Lives of Those in Foster Care?"

You'll also find a lot of facts and figures regarding the current state of our foster care system. Some of that is good news, like **50%** of all foster children are able to return to their birth families because the unsafe situation in which they found themselves has been resolved!

Some of it is more challenging news, like the system across the U.S., as of 2021, includes **223,770** children.

You will also find some thought provoking responses to common misunderstandings regarding foster care. This includes the idea that the need for foster care justifies abortion...an idea that definitely needed to be debunked!

Finally, the back page includes a plethora of resources so you can easily explore the topic further.

Available for \$2.00 at [CPH](#).



Not included in this folder is the local information about Foster Care. I was shocked to learn last fall that **700 children** from my own small county were in foster care. In other words this is not just a big city problem! Here in Illinois as of 2022, there were **20,815 children** in foster care, according to "The Imprint".

May is Foster Care Awareness Month. Now would be a wonderful time to begin planning ways to share this wonderful resource with your congregation. Whether in May or at another time, this gives us a number of excellent ways to affirm Life!

—LL

Let's pray for all families impacted by foster care!

About the Gospel and the number 2...

There's something about twins... 40 Days for Life participants have noticed that an ultrasound showing twins almost always stops an abortion-bound mom in her tracks and results in a choice for Life. In the Judeo-Christian tradition we share in the West, they are viewed as double blessings...apparently even in difficult circumstances.

Superstitions in other countries can cause a very different view of multiple births. When we lived in a rural area of West Africa, years ago, we were told that in the case of twins, one of them must be a demon, but since there was no way to tell which it was, mothers who gave birth to

twins usually left them in the bush to die and reported that the child was born dead upon her return to town, lest she be accused of dealing with demons. This kind of thinking was prevalent in West Africa. But the Gospel makes a difference.

Friends who were missionaries in another West African nation adopted two sets of twins when Christian relatives searched for the newborns and rescued them, because they had learned how precious the gift of Life is to God. But the grandparents still didn't dare bring twins to town themselves, as they'd be penalized for bringing demons into town!



On the other side of the world in Southeast Asia, translators with Lutheran Bible Translators heard that Christians were amazed by the translation of the story of Jacob and Esau because the Lord "blessed" Rebekah and gave her...twins in answer to prayer! Tradition there dictated death to the "demons" and 20 days of banishment to their mother when twins were born.
—LL

Pray that the Gospel will be shared freely around the world and that as people understand it and are set free from superstition, they will also understand that all lives are precious, including twins!

75% Without a Choice...it's not what you think!

The following comes from "A Different Approach to Pro-Life Ministry" by Pastor Patrick Darnell, former director of Operation Saving Life. You can read the full article by clicking on and scrolling down to page 21 of the [NALC News](#).

"In reality 75 percent of all women who have had an abortion report that they were forced into the procedure. Nearly every woman in our program at Operation Saving Life was a victim of domestic violence, risked losing her job or home by having another child, faced extreme poverty, or had family or partners who were demanding that she have the procedure. It is a reality that those in the abortion industry don't often share because you can't

be pro choice if you don't have the freedom to choose in the first place.

The issue of abortion for many of these mothers, then, doesn't focus on morals, but rather survival. This is how the Church must respond to the issue as well. While we should never shy away from calling abortion a sin, beginning our approach to saving a life with a moral argument will only condemn and lead a mother further from Christ.

More often than not, she knows that abortion is wrong—in fact, she doesn't want one—but does not see any other option out of her situation than to end the pregnancy. She is trying to survive and avoid hard-

ship that she does not believe that she can bear.

The response of the Church must begin with compassion by responding to the barriers that she feels she has in bringing a child into this world. By showing her that there is a path to having this child and to thrive, we are giving her hope. In a very real way, our goal is to embody the words of Isaiah 40:3: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Pray for the 2700 Pregnancy Help Centers across the U.S. May God help them make a way forward for parents of the "least of these little ones" as if for Jesus, Himself!

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made...3 Pounds of Wonder

This is the miracle of human Life by the numbers! Illustra Media's

Three Pounds of Wonder is an incredible look at the marvel of the

human brain. See it at their website, [The John 10:10 Project](#).

RLOM Maternity Home News

Life is Precious...Do Something!

Redeeming Life's maternity home offers a home, help and hope in crisis pregnancies. Both the life of the baby and the mother are gifts of God, precious and worthy of our help.

Residents arrive with so many needs... employment, prenatal care, housing, clothing, emotional support, spiritual care, and more. Our

program meets each woman where she is and gives her the tools and support to build a stable life. Each resident works hard to meet her goals and change habits and beliefs; she can do it...with YOUR help!

How? **Pray** for the residents as they work and grow. **Connect** the ministry with your contacts to yield job opportunities, grants, jobs, and resources. **Tell** others about this ministry, offering help

for those in need and a worthy cause for those with resources. **Share** gifts- goods and services, assets such as cars and stocks, and much needed financial support to help us pay the bills! rlom.org/donate

By Julia Heinz,
Director of Mission Advancement,
Redeeming Life Outreach Ministry

(RLOM offers presentations to churches, schools and other groups!)



Position Statement...Embryo Adoption

"WHEREAS, God is the Creator and Sustainer of all life (Nehemiah 9:6; SC Creed First Article); and WHEREAS, Through in-vitro fertilization (IVF), medical science has attempted to assist couples who are unable to conceive children, in the process creating multiple human embryos for further development until the baby is ready to be born; and WHEREAS, Not all embryos thus formed are transferred to wombs immediately, and many are frozen for future transfer or research, and the freezing and preservation process itself in some cases is lethal; and WHEREAS, This process has resulted in a population of untransferred embryos currently set aside in long-term storage; and WHEREAS, The endpoint for these embryos, if left untransferred, is eventual death via discarding or use in medical research; and WHEREAS, It is estimated that there are **more than 1.5 million frozen embryos** in the United States; and WHEREAS, Each of these embryos is a human being for whose salvation Jesus died and rose again (Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 2:4); and WHEREAS, Since 1999, it has been possible for couples to adopt these

children who are undesired by their biological parents, by transferring them into the adoptive mother's womb; and WHEREAS, Having been so adopted during the embryonic stage of their development, **more than 8,500 children** have been born alive, each of whom may then be brought to the saving waters of Baptism (John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7; 1 Peter 3:21) and catechized in the Christian faith (Deuteronomy 6:7; Ephesians 6:4); therefore be it RESOLVED, That although Lutherans For Life continues to firmly oppose the practice of IVF, nevertheless, we affirm that embryo adoption is a method to rescue imperiled children that is consistent with Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions; and be it further RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life encourage the biological parents of these embryos to prayerfully consider completing the process of carrying and bearing them; and be it further RESOLVED, That, Lutherans For Life commends those families and homes that recognize the inherent value and dignity of these embryos and wish to adopt them; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life urges couples interested in embryo adoption to test the spirits (1 John 4:1-6), seeking the counsel of their pastor, and working through a Christian agency such as [Lutheran Family Service of Iowa](#)."

Lutherans For Life has position statements available on their website for a number of Life Issues that we currently face. You can read them all by clicking [here](#).

Here are a few more numbers regarding embryo adoption, from their own program, cited by "Snowflakes, a division of Nightlight® Christian Adoptions.

"More than **120 babies** are expected to be born through the program in 2024, making a total number of over **1,300 Snowflakes Babies born** since it began in 1997!" From the [Snowflakes](#) website.

Pray that God would make it possible for all 1.5 million frozen embryos to be adopted and that those suffering the grief of infertility would be strengthened to trust in God's timing and means for building their family rather than participating in IVF and adding to the number of untransferred embryos.

Marriage: the "New" Sexual Revolution

A bit of year-end looking back, here.... A friend shared an article from Breakpoint.org of the Colson Center that urged looking way back. In discussion with historian, Tom Holland, the authors, John Stonestreet and Jared Hayden made the point that the entrance into the world of the Christian concept of marriage was actually the first "sexual revolution". "Christianity's esteem for moral restraint, chastity, marital fidelity, procreation, and human dignity all revolutionized societal expectations, including that husbands should honor their wives and children in sacrificial

commitment. Women heard for the first time that they were equal to men in the eyes of their Creator, Who had made them in His image, body and spirit."

Then the authors looked back, but a little closer to our time, to the 1960's, when another "sexual revolution" separated the act of procreation from marriage and any concept of honor, commitment and responsibility. They point out the results, a return to a state where there is a lack of care or concern for women and children.

They wonder if Christians might be

the "spark" of change for the future that looks like: "... recovering what is true about the human person, including the sacredness of our bodies and of living embodied lives. Central to living out this theology of the body is demonstrating the inherent and good connection between sex, marriage, and children. In a world where these have been severed, Christians could show that God's design returns a meaning to sex beyond pleasure, a design to marriage upon which the future can be built, and dignity to children beyond mere lifestyle accessories."

Read the article at [Breakpoint](#).

An Opportunity to Shine through service

In recent years, your Lutherans For Life of Illinois Board has seen a lot of changes! Some have retired. Others had illness call them away from service on the board. Pastoral calls have taken board members to other states. Those of us who remain are committed to serving the Lord of Life here in Illinois, but we

are few in number and would like to change that! There are three possible ways you can serve in this situation:

- 1.. Consider serving for a year on a nominating committee to nominate others for service on the state Board. If you would like to help in

this way, contact Rev. David Bortorff, President of LFL-IL, at: dmbot7222@comcast.net

2. Pray about the possibility of serving on the Board.

3. Pray that God will complete our State Board with the members of His choice!

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.

___ Sponsor: I commit to a monthly gift of ___.

___ I'm not interested in membership, but am enclosing a contribution of ___ to support the work of LFL.

Name _____

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City, State, Zip _____

Congregation _____

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...for IL!

1. In 2022, according to our state health department, Illinois was the site of **56,457 abortions**. We grieve our position as the leading state for abortion in the Midwest! We look to our merciful and loving Father for forgiveness for Jesus' sake! May He guide us to help change things for the better! May He grant forgiveness and healing to the parents and their families who suffered these many losses, granting mercy in the Lord of Life and the good news of forgiveness available through Jesus!
2. In 2023 there were **124,743 live births** in Illinois according to the CDC. We thank God for each of these children, asking him to protect them all the days of their lives, from physical harm, from spiritual harm, and from mental harm. May He lead His church across our state to support parents in their task of nurturing these precious lives that they might know their Savior and have Life eternal, as well as the gift of physical life.
3. The U.S. Census bureau estimates that as of 2023, here in Illinois, **10,355,562** of us over



"Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!"

Psalm 141:2

4. the age of 15, are married. We pray for each of these marriages, that they would be a reflection of the love shared by Christ and His Church. May each married couple be in accord with God's plan for marriage and provide a safe and loving home for the children God grants them, whether through birth or adoption! May their love for one another be multiplied in the love they share with others!
4. According to the World Population Review, in 2020, Illinois uncovered **243** cases of human trafficking, with the vast majority falling into the category of sex trafficking. Other categories include forced labor, for harvesting organs for transplant, and combinations of purposes.

May the God who created each of these individuals and the others who are still enslaved as "disposable" human beings watch over them! He who "is not willing that any should perish" is our help in demonstrating the value of their lives! May He also protect those who are targeted for trafficking, providing great wisdom for those who care about them that they might be spared!

5. Here in Illinois there are **794** Congregations of various branches of Lutheranism. May the Spirit of Truth guide each of us to trust in his Word for guidance, deliver us from critical or judgmental attitudes, and make us safe places for people of every age, from conception to forever. May He make us welcoming places for any soul seeking the forgiveness and mercy our Savior offers! And may He move us to love and serve one another as Christ has loved us!
6. The Illinois Department on Aging states, "**20,567** reports of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and financial exploitation were received by the APS Program from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021." Pray that we would truly honor our elders and bear one another's burdens!