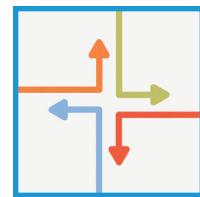


# Directions ...

For LFL's Frontline  
September-October  
2025



*Directions is sent bi-monthly to all of Lutherans For Life's Frontline—State Federations, Life Chapters, Life Teams, Life Advocates—with Bible studies and articles on leadership, faith in action, fundraising, news and notes, and facts and stats.*



*This edition of Directions includes ...*

A Bible Study: Deuteronomy

Redeeming Grace Retreat:  
A Lutheran Response to Abortion Recovery

An LFL Staff Profile:  
Barbara Lane Geistfeld, D.V.M.

Life Project: Christmas Luncheon and  
Goody Bags for Older Adults

2025 LFL National Conference



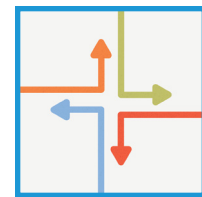
**LUTHERANS**  
**FOR LIFE**



[lutheransforlife.org/resources/journal](https://lutheransforlife.org/resources/journal)

# FRONTLINE CALL

## For All Lutherans For Life Frontline Volunteers!



If you have projects you would like to share or questions to be answered, email [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org) or call the LFL national office at 888.364.LIFE (5433) or 515.382.2077.



**Monday, October 13, 2025 • 7:00-8:00 p.m. CDT | 8:00-9:00 p.m. EDT**  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84981349520> | Meeting ID 849 8134 9520 | Passcode 411422**

**Lynn Cook**, Life Team Leader at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Collinsville, Illinois, will describe their projects that provided a Christmas luncheon for the older adults in their congregation as well as goody bags for their shut-ins. What a memorable way to remind the older adults in their congregation that they are loved and cared for! More important details will be shared on the call.

**Michelle Bauman**, Director of Y4Life, will guide us through everything we need to know about Life Week 2026. Life Week provides all of us with multiple opportunities to enrich our knowledge about life issues and gives us valuable resources to share with our congregations as well. Come and see what we have to offer!

**Michele Hartshorn**, Assistant Director of Volunteer Relations, will provide an overview of our new Congregational House of Refuge program. This program assists congregations in equipping their members and neighbors to prevent abortions in their congregation, provide healing for those affected by previous abortions, and protect the unborn and the vulnerable in their community.

**Volunteer Relations** is the team that works directly with you, our Frontline, and we encourage you to join us for the latest news.







The Lutherans For Life **Volunteer Relations Team** joyfully and diligently spends many hours speaking to individuals from Lutheran churches around the country—encouraging, equipping, and supporting them as Gospel-motivated voices For Life, whether as **Life Advocates**, **Life Teams**, or **Life Chapters**.

As an encouragement to all of you already working For Life on the Frontline, we would like to introduce to you the newest members of your Frontline community.

## New Life Chapter

We rejoice and CELEBRATE! the addition of a new Life Chapter to the Lutherans For Life Frontline.

- Altamont Area Life Chapter, Altamont, Illinois | Clark Schulze, Life Chapter President

## New Life Advocates

We rejoice and CELEBRATE! the addition of two new Gospel-motivated Life Advocates to the Lutherans For Life Frontline.

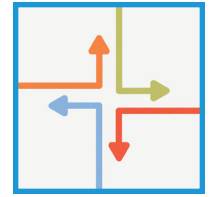
- Carol Khoury, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lawrence, Kansas
- Linda Piel, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Abilene, Texas

If you would like to know more about becoming a Life Advocate or starting a Life Team or Life Chapter, please contact Virginia Flo, Director of Volunteer Relations, at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org). **The entire Volunteer Relations Team is here to help you!**



# A Bible Study: Deuteronomy

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The book of Deuteronomy was written at the end of Israel's 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. This also places the book at the end of Moses' life and right before God led the new generation of Israelites into the Promised Land. You might think of this book as Moses' farewell speech to God's people. Before he died, Moses reminded the Israelites of the covenant that He made with them when He first brought them out of the Land of Egypt, 40 years earlier. Therefore, much of what we read in Deuteronomy is a repeat of what God reveals to us in the book of Leviticus. In fact, the name "Deuteronomy" comes from two Greek words which mean "second law."

We should not be surprised to find that many of the same sanctity of life themes from the book of Leviticus are found in Deuteronomy as well. We hear about atoning sacrifices, being clean and unclean, and civil laws on how the people of Israel were to care for their neighbors. This book also contains some things that might be difficult for us to accept, like the severe punishments that God prescribes for those who disobey some of these regulations. Yet even these more difficult passages teach us valuable lessons about how highly God values human life. As always, please speak with your pastor if you have questions about the more difficult concepts contained in this book.

Deuteronomy begins with a summary of the past 40 years, including a summary of several of the battles that Israel has just endured (chapters 1-3). In these chapters we are reminded of how God guards, defends, and protects His people. While some of this can be hard for us to understand, what does it teach us about who has the authority to take life? Being a Gospel-motivated voice For Life sometimes means facing opposition. Do these chapters teach us that we can commit violence on those who oppose the Gospel? (See also Deuteronomy 32:35 and Romans 12:19.)

Chapter 1 also includes instruction for the setting up of judges and the provision of justice (1:15-18). According to Moses, what is the purpose of a judge? What does righteous judgment look like? How can this inform us about the proper role of the government in our own day, especially regarding their role in defending life (compared with 1 Peter 2:13-14)?

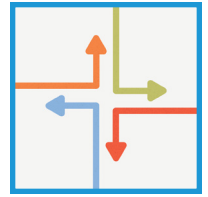
Moses repeats the 10 Commandments in chapter 5. Toward the end of the book, God said that the regulations He gave to Israel were "life and good" (Deuteronomy 30:15). We know that we are not saved by the Law (Ephesians 2:8-9), so for what purpose(s) does God give these laws to His people? Does God still intend us to keep these 10 Commandments? How does this reveal God's love for the lives and well-being of those He created?

How does God describe the land that He is bringing them in to possess (6:3, 8:7-10)? We often focus on spiritual things in the Church. Is God also concerned with our bodily needs (see also 24:19-22)? In what ways does this direct the way we deal with our neighbors?





God gives many promises throughout the book of Deuteronomy, but He also issues some severe warnings. There are even occasions when God commands capital punishment. For what reason(s) does God command this to be done? What distinctions are made between intentional and unintentional homicide (see chapter 19)? How can capital punishment coexist with, or even underscore, the sanctity of life? While the Bible does allow for the practice of capital punishment, why might some Christians have legitimate concerns about its use?



In chapter 10, God gives direction regarding the treatment of widows, orphans, and sojourners. He also speaks about the treatment of the poor in chapter 15. How does the Lord treat these marginalized people, and how does He expect Israel to treat them? How can we apply that to the life issues that we face today?

At the end of chapter 15, the Lord also gives some direction regarding the treatment of slaves. Is God condoning slavery or preventing its abuse? How can these instructions reinforce our understanding of the sanctity of every human life?

There is a prohibition against the killing of children at the beginning of chapter 18. In what context is this prohibition given? What is the common thread between all these “abominable practices” (Deuteronomy 18:9)? How might that inform our understanding of the practice of abortion and other means of destroying human life?

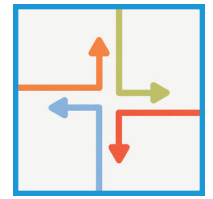
The Lord makes provisions for the rights of the firstborn in chapter 21. Does the manner or circumstances of a person’s birth affect their value before the Lord? How does He show His love and concern for the lives of all the children of Israel?

Toward the end of Deuteronomy, God promises to send a new prophet like Moses to His people, (18:15). Who is that greater Prophet that God sends to speak His Word? How does that Prophet address the sanctity of life in His ministry? What does He do that endows all human life with even greater value before God?



# Redeeming Grace Retreat: A Lutheran Response to Abortion Recovery

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In a groundbreaking initiative, **Word of Hope**, a ministry of Lutherans For Life, in partnership with Lutheran Family Service of Iowa, is launching the first **Redeeming Grace** retreat—a uniquely Lutheran, Scripture-centered program offering healing for women suffering from post-abortion grief, while also training professionals to guide future retreats grounded in the Gospel.

## Addressing a Silent Crisis

Abortion is often presented as a solution to an unexpected pregnancy—one that promises freedom and a return to normalcy. Yet for many women, the emotional and spiritual consequences linger. While abortion may remove the responsibilities of parenting, it does not erase the reality of a life created nor the grief that often follows.

*Pregnancy doesn't break women—but abortion often breaks hearts.*

## The Church Cannot Stay Silent

Research from Lifeway reveals that seven in ten women who have had abortions identify as Christian, and 43% were attending church regularly at the time of their abortion. The Guttmacher Institute reports that in 2020, over 158,000 women who had abortions identified as mainline Protestants, including Lutherans. Meanwhile, Pew Research shows 46% of LCMS Lutherans believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

These numbers make it clear: In every congregation, there are women who have experienced or are considering abortion—and many are silently suffering.

## The Weight of Shame, the Need for Grace

Many post-abortive women, particularly those in the Church, fear their sin is too great for forgiveness. Lifeway data shows that nearly half were never told by their pastors that Christ's forgiveness includes forgiveness for the sin of abortion. Over half keep their abortion a secret, isolating themselves from the very community that could offer grace.

And even women who attend secular recovery programs often leave with lingering spiritual guilt, without the healing that only confession, absolution, and the Gospel can bring.





## Redeeming Grace: A Christ-Centered Path to Healing

That's what makes **Redeeming Grace** such a vital and distinct ministry. Rooted in Lutheran doctrine and Scripture, it walks women through a Gospel-based process of confession, forgiveness, and restoration—affirming the sanctity of life and the boundless mercy of Christ.

The first **Redeeming Grace retreat** will take place **November 13–16, 2025**, at **Wildwoods Ranch in St. Charles, Iowa**. Staff and trainees will arrive one day early for prayer, team building, and setup. Participants will be welcomed Thursday afternoon, with shuttle service available from the airport. Each woman will receive a thoughtful gift basket including a Bible, journal, writing supplies, and self-care items to support her throughout the weekend.

### A Transformative Experience

Across six structured sessions—**Recognize, Respect, Relate, Release, Reconcile, and Restore**—participants will engage in holistic faith-based experiences designed to promote emotional healing and spiritual renewal:

- **Liturgical Worship:** Christ-centered worship nourishes the soul with Word and prayer.
- **Educational Workshops:** Learn about the emotional, biological, and spiritual consequences of abortion.
- **Bible Study:** Encounter God's truth and rediscover your identity in Christ through the Scriptures.
- **Journaling & Group Discussions:** Safely reflect and share in fellowship with others on a similar path.
- **Art Therapy:** Use creative expression to process grief and honor the life that was lost.
- **Outdoor Activities:** Hiking, equestrian experiences, and campfires help foster peace and vulnerability.
- **Poem of Lament:** Give voice to grief in a sacred and creative way.
- **Mindfulness Exercises:** Learn to be present with God and His creation, cultivating peace and gratitude.
- **Confession & Absolution:** Experience the healing power of Christ's forgiveness in a deeply personal way.
- **Ongoing Support:** Connect with **Word of Hope** for spiritual care and resources beyond the retreat.

### Why This Retreat Matters

- **Fellowship is essential for healing.** Abortion often leads to shame and isolation. Redeeming Grace creates a compassionate, Christ-centered community where women are no longer alone in their grief.
- **Healing is multidimensional.** Through Scripture, worship, time in nature, art, personal reflection, and open conversation, women are given space to grieve, process, and begin to heal—body, mind, and soul.



As the retreat concludes, participants will depart with **renewed hope, stronger faith, and practical tools** for continued healing. Follow-up check-ins at six weeks and six months will help assess growth, offer encouragement, and support long-term recovery. Those trained as leaders will also reconnect at six months to explore launching **Redeeming Grace** retreats in their own communities.

### You Can Help Bring Healing

The need is great—and the opportunity is now.

You can help make **Redeeming Grace** possible for women who desperately need to hear that Christ's mercy is for them:

- **Share** information about the retreat with your church, community, or those who may benefit.
- **Give** financial gifts to support retreat scholarships, materials, and training.
- **Pray** for the women who will attend, the leaders who will guide, and the churches that will offer this grace.

In a world that offers abortion as relief, **Redeeming Grace** offers something infinitely better: redemption through Jesus Christ. Learn more at [word-of-hope.org/rgr](http://word-of-hope.org/rgr).

# Redeeming Grace Retreat

## Forgiveness & Peace After Abortion



Nov 13-16, 2025

Wildwood Hills Ranch, St. Charles, IA

**LEARN MORE** [word-of-hope.org/rgr](http://word-of-hope.org/rgr)

### RETREAT PARTNERS




**LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE**



Lutheran  
Family Service







*I praise you, for I am  
Fearfully  
and  
Wonderfully  
Made.*

[lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2026](https://lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2026)



Bulletin Inserts • Bible Study • Children's Message • Worship Service • Sermons

# Spotlight on

# LIFE

Spotlight on Life brings awareness of life issues through brief locally hosted events. From abortion to euthanasia, human trafficking or disabilities, sexuality and gender, or marriage and family, we work with you to find the right expert speaker and set up for your life event needs.

Willing to host a brief event in your church to promote life?  
Contact us for more information [info+spotlight@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info+spotlight@lutheransforlife.org).

***Help your life event shine!***

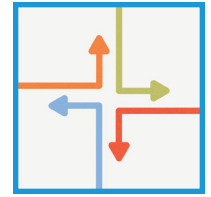




# An LFL Staff Profile:

## Barbara Lane Geistfeld, D.V.M.

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Barbara Lane Geistfeld, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, also known as “Barb,” began her work at Lutherans For Life on July 1, 2015, as the Regional Director of Texas. She traveled to Lutheran churches and schools giving presentations, displaying LFL resources, and gifting over twenty sets of fetal models to schools. She attended LWML rallies, pastors’ conferences, and other Lutheran church gatherings, always as a Gospel-motivated voice For Life. As the structure changed at LFL, she became an Assistant Director of Volunteer Relations and is now a Volunteer Relations Associate serving the Frontline via email, phone, and writing for *LifeDate* and *Directions*.

Barb comes from Grand Rapids, Minnesota, 100 miles south of the Canadian border. Her dad, Robert, was a marine who served in the South Pacific during WWII. He attended Dunwoody Technical College and became a master machinist. He worked in the iron ore mines and then attended college so he could teach high school machine shop. Her mom, Lois, was an at-home mom who enrolled in the local community college when Barb did and then earned her Bachelor of Science from Bemidji State. Barb was very proud of her parents as they were the only ones of their seventeen siblings to get a college degree. Barb has one younger brother, Ron. They grew up on the shores of Prairie Lake, spending summer days fishing, hiking in the woods, climbing trees, playing softball, and swatting mosquitoes. Winter hours were filled with sledding, skating, ice fishing, and melting ice chunks off mittens and boots. Does she miss minus 40- to minus 60-degree windchills? *No*. Does she miss mosquitoes? *Never*.

Barb entered the U of M College of Veterinary Medicine in 1969 after two years of junior college. There was a handsome young man in her class, Jim Geistfeld, who caught her eye (and *vice versa*). Barb was raised in the First Church of God, Anderson, Indiana, and her faith was important to her. Jim was a Missouri Synod Lutheran, about which she knew nothing, and he, too, was sincere about his love for Jesus. They married in July of 1972 between their junior and senior year and recently celebrated their 53<sup>rd</sup> wedding anniversary. Being married to her best friend for more than half a century, and serving the Lord together in the Lutheran church, has been an incredible blessing. Luther’s revelation became her revelation and changed her life: **“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”** (Ephesians 2: 8-9).

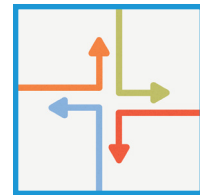


After graduation, the Geistfelds lived in a variety of places. Matthew James was born in 1977, and exactly two years later, almost to the minute, Erin Michal was born. Barb worked part-time for other veterinarians until her children were three and one and then started seeing private clients in her home. Every time Jim started a new position, she took her equipment and set up a new practice in her home. For twenty-eight years she raised her children and practiced her beloved profession at the same time. What a privilege!





Barb and Jim were bitten by the travel bug early in life. On their own, as well as with Heifer International, Lutheran World Relief, and other venues, they have traveled to every continent and visited all fifty states. They have seen incredible sights and met wonderful people who have enriched their lives. They often took Bibles with them in the language of the people they visited and believe they have enriched the lives of others as well. Travel now includes trips to upstate New York and Maryland to visit their children and four granddaughters: Ava and Brooke (Matt's) and Ella and Hannah (Erin's), ages 12, 10, 7 and 5.



Barb and Jim retired in 2008 to their beloved hill country of Texas. Settled by the Germans in the mid-1800s, it is full of great German cooking, confessional Lutheran churches, Tex-Mex, barbequed brisket, and best of all, people who can correctly pronounce “Geistfeld” on their first try.

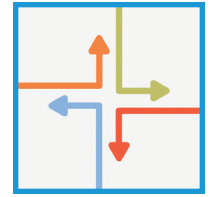
Barb's greatest loves are traveling and birdwatching. She has thousands of birds on her Life List. She also loves to read, cook, bake, and sew for her four granddaughters. In the summer she puts up the produce that Jim brings in from his garden.



Barb never envisioned being a part of Lutherans For Life until God called her out of “retirement.” Pastor Michael Salemink, LFL's most recent Executive Director, once said to her, “We would never have intentionally looked for a veterinarian for our staff, but you have been a tremendous blessing to our ministry.” She will hold this affirmation deep in her heart as she retires from LFL on October 31, 2025. It has been a wonderfully enriching ten years, and she will continue to be a voice For Life wherever the Lord leads her. Her plans are to write two books, travel, watch her grandchildren grow up, and aim for her 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Let's see what the Lord says about all that!



# Life Project: Christmas Luncheon and Goody Bags for Older Adults



*This project has been shared by the Good Shepherd Lutheran Life Team in Collinsville, Illinois. Thank you to Lynn Cook, Life Team Leader, for her helpful information.*

**“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger’” (Luke 2:10-13).**

Christmas is a time to celebrate Jesus’ birth and be with family and friends. Unfortunately, not everyone is able to attend Christmas events with their loved ones. The Christmas Luncheon was started many years ago by a pastor’s wife at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Collinsville, Illinois. As she became an older adult, the Good Shepherd Lutheran Life Team saw the importance in continuing the event and started hosting it.

The Life Team starts their planning early in the year by picking the theme. This theme flows through the entire event. By their July meeting, the Life Team knows who will help with the various tasks, and all tasks are assigned by November.

Volunteers are essential in making this event successful. Volunteers decorate, cook, clean, and possibly provide rides as needed. They are scheduled in shifts and are given specific tasks to complete. This ensures the event runs smoothly and on time without a few people being burdened with many tasks. For Good Shepherd Lutheran’s luncheon, they have 15-20 volunteers and an average attendance of 75 older adults who attend. It is a wonderful opportunity for the younger members in the congregation to cook, serve, and clean up. Lynn Cook always sends a personal thank you note to all the volunteers. She wants them to feel that their work and service to others has not gone unnoticed.



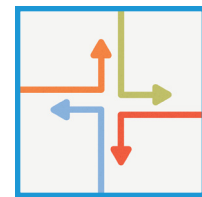
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is blessed with two volunteers who love decorating and take on the task every year. While some of the decorations have been elaborate, many luncheons were simply decorated with Christmas decorations found at any local store. Christmas trees, red and green decorations, snowflakes, angels, and items that fit the theme are some possibilities. Poinsettias are used and given away at the end of the event. Your church or group may even have decorations ready for use. The tables also have a favor at each seat for the attendees. These are typically Christmas cookies but can vary depending on the theme for the event.

The event is held on a Friday in early December. It starts at 11:00 a.m. with punch. The pastor leads the group in devotion before and after the activities. The meal is served at 11:30 a.m. and there is a short





presentation that fits the theme. The school's music director is invited to bring a couple of grades to perform. The festivities always end with singing Christmas carols. The luncheon concludes around 1:00 p.m.



The group enjoys having a different menu every year. Here are some menu examples:

- Hashbrown casserole, Italian beef and bread, peppermint ice cream, and cookies
- Lasagna, Italian salad, Italian bread, and cherry dessert
- Ham and sweet potatoes, green Jello, and desserts
- Chicken breast, potatoes, cranberries, and eclairs
- Chicken tetrazzini, green beans, cranberries, and eclairs

Advertising for the luncheon begins in early November. The Life Team puts out a sign-up sheet to ensure they know how many to prepare for. The meal is funded with a \$250 Thrivent Action Team Grant. To describe this project when applying to receive a grant, you could refer to it as a Senior Recognition Christmas Luncheon.

“The most important thing is getting the people together,” said Lynn Cook, as encouragement for others that a simple event will be just as welcomed and enjoyed as an elaborate luncheon with magnificent decorations.

### Christmas Goody Bags

Along with the meal for older adults, the Life Team assembles Christmas goody bags to bless homebound members. The bags remind these members that they are cared for and loved during the Christmas season.

Christmas gift bags may be used, but the Life Team found they can be pricey. Plain brown gift bags are used, which are decorated by the school's third-grade class. The bags are given to the teacher in October to provide plenty of time for planning and decorating by the students.



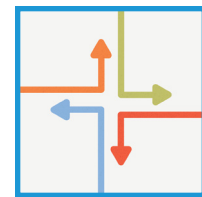
This project is also funded by a \$250 Thrivent Action Team Grant. If you decide to apply for a grant, referring to the project as a Senior Christmas Gift Bag project would be a helpful description. Standard items that Good Shepherd Lutheran Life Team puts in the bags are stationery and pre-stamped envelopes, cookies made by a lady from the congregation, a devotional, and footie slippers (including a pair for husband and wife, if the bag goes to a couple). One year a member donated homemade lap robes for each bag. Another year devotional books from Concordia Publishing House and reading magnifiers were purchased. Candy and other snacks may be added.

It typically takes the Life Team an hour to put 25 bags together. Each bag is labeled with the name and address of the recipient. They are then placed on a table in the Narthex for congregation members to deliver to the homebound person on the label. The Life Team also puts together two to three bags without names that can be given to a member's neighbor or friend in need of a pick me up.



# 2025 LFL National Essay Contest

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The annual Lutherans For Life Essay Contest, sponsored by the Council of Federation Presidents (COFP), continues to offer our Lutheran students the opportunity to affirm and express their belief in the sanctity of life. The theme this year was **“Fearfully and Wonderfully Made,”** based on the Bible verse **“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”** (Psalm 139:13-14).

The national essay contest is offered to students in two categories: grades 6-8 and grades 9-12. Students in both Federation states and Non-Federation states are eligible to participate. After each state has submitted their first-place winner, a national committee selects a national first-place and second-place winner in each category. Any student in a Lutheran school or Lutheran congregation (e.g., confirmation class, youth group, or Lutheran home school) is eligible to participate when validated by their teacher or pastor, along with parental consent. All state winners should be commended on winning at their state level as the number of submitted essays increases every year. The national first-place award in both categories is \$500, a framed certificate, free LFL conference registration for both the student and parents, a one-night hotel stay for the conference, and \$200 for travel expenses. The second-place award for both categories is \$250 and a framed certificate. Information about the 2025 Essay Contest can be found on the Lutherans For Life website.

## 2025 LFL Grades 9-12 National Essay Contest Winners

**First Place: Casey Joy Steiner**, Mayer, Minnesota, won first place in the grades 9-12 division of the National Essay contest. She is fifteen years old and was a freshman at Mayer Lutheran High School, Mayer, Minnesota, when she won the award. Her father, Matt, is a teacher at Mayer Lutheran High School, and her mom, Bethany, teaches third grade at Trinity Lutheran School in Waconia, Minnesota, where the family also attends. Casey has one sister, Relin, who is twelve. Casey enjoys volleyball, golf, reading, traveling with her family, and spending time with friends from school and her youth group. Her favorite Bible verse is 1 Timothy 4:12 (NIV), which reads, **“Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”** Casey strives to live out the words of this verse and to share God’s love with others. Her future plan is to attend Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. You may read Casey’s essay on the LFL website at [lutheransforlife.org/article/2025-lfl-national-essay-contest-winners](https://lutheransforlife.org/article/2025-lfl-national-essay-contest-winners).

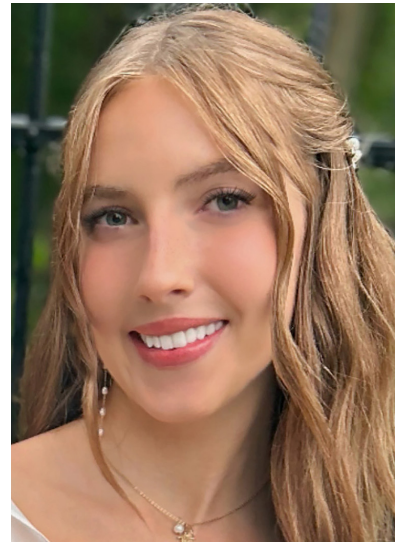


Thank you, Casey, for shining a light on the need for people to adopt these tiny embryonic humans who are waiting to be knit inside their mom’s womb and to join their forever home.





**Second Place: Sadie Silcox**, Sterling Heights, Michigan, won second place in the grades 9-12 division of the National Essay contest. She was a senior at Lutheran High North of Macomb, Michigan, when she won the award. Her essay titled “Foster Care: A Life Worth Living” demonstrates her understanding of the value of fostering children. Sadie is one of four children, two of whom were adopted from the foster care system in Michigan. Writing this essay came easily for Sadie as this is a topic that has changed her whole family in a wonderful way. Sadie even hopes to one day adopt a child herself. Sadie has a deep passion for animals and plans to attend the University of Findlay for undergraduate coursework and then pursue her dream of becoming a veterinarian. She enjoys drawing and watching movies in her spare time.



Thank you, Sadie, for sharing the joy that comes from adopting foster children into your family.

## 2025 LFL Grades 6-8 National Essay Contest Winners

**First Place: Alexa Ulanoski**, Chanhassen, Minnesota, won first place in the grades 6-8 division of the National Essay Contest. Alexa was thirteen years of age and an eighth grader at St. John’s Lutheran School in Chaska, Minnesota, when she won this award. She is the daughter of Tracy and Stephen Ulanoski and has one older sister, Hannah. Alexa enjoys a wide range of activities including baking, traveling, spending time with friends, and most notably, diving. As a competitive club diver for North Star Diving Club, Alexa has already achieved remarkable success at a young age. Some of her standout accomplishments include placing twelfth in the nation on platform at the 2023 USA Diving Junior Nationals and earning a bronze medal at the 2024 AAU Diving Nationals. This achievement qualified her to represent Team USA and AAU in Aachen, Germany! This fall, Alexa will begin her high school journey at Minnetonka High School. She’s especially excited to join the high school diving team, attend school dances and sporting events, and explore Minnetonka’s unique course offerings. One program that particularly caught her eye is the school’s highly regarded aviation program. Inspired by her love of travel and exploration, Alexa is considering a future in aviation and is also interested in exploring the U.S. Air Force Academy. With big dreams and a bright future ahead, Alexa is honored and grateful to have been selected as both the Minnesota state and National grades 6-8 first-place winner. She looks forward to the adventures and opportunities that lie ahead! Alexa shared this with us: “I’ve learned that when you work hard, stay passionate, and trust God’s plan, incredible things can happen. This is just the beginning, and I’m so grateful for the people and experiences that have shaped me. I want to see the world, meet people from all walks of life, and leave a lasting impact wherever I go—knowing that God’s purpose for me is greater than I can imagine.” You may read Alexa’s essay on the LFL website at [lutheransforlife.org/article/2025-lfl-national-essay-contest-winners](https://lutheransforlife.org/article/2025-lfl-national-essay-contest-winners).





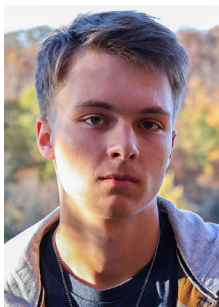
Thank you for sharing the story of your adoption, Alexa. You are so right in saying that God has always had a plan for you. He gave you loving parents, and He gave you eternal life in Christ. These are indeed the greatest gifts anyone could ever receive!

**Second Place: Eden Anderson**, Moorhead, Minnesota, won second place in the grades 6-8 division of the National Essay Contest. She was in seventh grade homeschool at the time. She, her parents, and her older sister are members of St. Paul's Free Lutheran Church in Fargo, North Dakota, where Eden especially enjoys youth group and helping with VBS. Having a love for writing and a concern for God's truth, Eden eagerly entered this year's Lutherans For Life essay contest. Not surprisingly, English ranks as one of her favorite subjects, and joining a Shakespearean theater group highlighted her seventh-grade year. Eden can often be found listening to audiobooks on her headphones while enjoying her fairy garden outside or doing hobbies inside. Her favorite hobby is crocheting, and the keychain creatures she creates are sold at a local store. After high school, Eden hopes to attend the Free Lutheran Bible College. She dreams of someday living on a hobby farm where she will own a horse and find inspiration for writing books. Eden's essay titled "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made" depicts her understanding that life is a gift from God that should be preserved, and abortion cannot be morally right.



Thank you, Eden, for proclaiming this truth in your essay and believing it in your heart.

### Additional 2025 State Essay Contest Winners Grades 9-12



**Nate Navurskis**  
First Place Iowa  
King of Kings Lutheran  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa



**Caleb Filipek**  
First Place Kansas  
Concordia Academy  
Wichita, Kansas



**William Townzen**  
First Place Missouri  
St. Paul's Lutheran High  
Des Peres, Missouri



**Asher Boggs**  
First Place Nebraska  
Boggs Academy  
Tilden, Nebraska



**Jack Arnold**  
First Place Texas  
Lutheran South Academy  
Houston, Texas



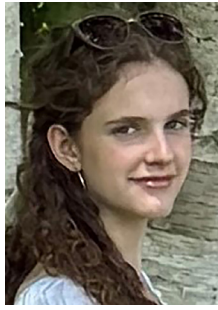
**Olivia Brown**  
First Place South Dakota  
St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Spearfish, South Dakota



**Rose MacPherson**  
First Place Non-Federation States  
Mount Hope Lutheran  
Casper, Wyoming



## Additional 2025 State Essay Contest Winners Grades 6-8



**Elise Terracina**  
First Place Illinois  
Good Shepherd  
Lutheran School  
Collinsville, Illinois



**Claire Navurskis**  
First Place Iowa  
King of Kings  
Lutheran Church  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa



**Jamie Schkade**  
First Place Kansas  
Hope Lutheran School  
Shawnee, Kansas



**Christiana Klamer**  
First Place Michigan  
St. Paul  
Lutheran Church  
Fowler, Michigan



**Rory Acton**  
First Place Missouri  
St. John's  
Lutheran School  
Hannibal, Missouri



**Piper Nelson**  
First Place Nebraska  
St. Paul's  
Lutheran School  
Arlington, Nebraska



**Aubrey Schuldt**  
First Place South Dakota  
St. Paul  
Lutheran Church  
Spearfish, South Dakota



**Pierce Dodson**  
First Place Texas  
Westlake Lutheran Academy  
Richmond, Texas



**Maria Lombardero**  
First Place Non-Federation States  
Trinity Delray Lutheran School  
Delray Beach, Florida





## Life Quotes 2025

Share the For Life message all year long with **Life Quotes!**

**Life Quotes** are quotations on life issues—many from LFL resources and publications—for use in weekly congregational bulletins. You are also free to use the quotations in your monthly newsletter.

The quotes are dated but could generally be used any time.

**Life Quotes** are available at [lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes](https://lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes).



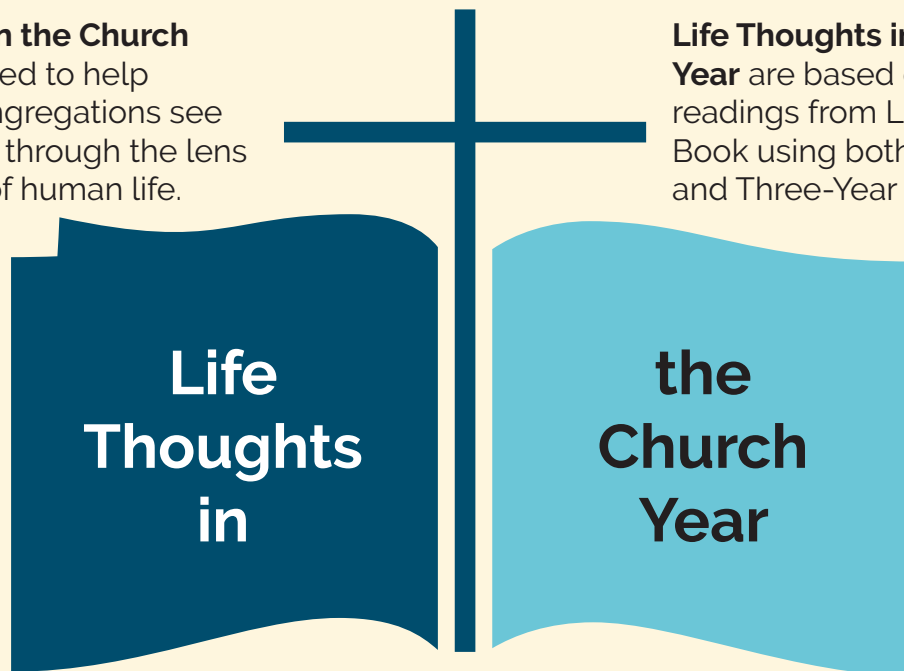
## Free Downloadable Resources!

### Life Thoughts in the Church

**Year** are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life.

### Life Thoughts in the Church

**Year** are based on the appointed readings from Lutheran Service Book using both the One-Year and Three-Year Lectionaries.



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







LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE

# 2025 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Fearfully  
and  
Wonderfully  
Made



GREAT WOLF LODGE,  
COLORADO SPRINGS  
**SPEAKERS**

Jim Daly •  
Jack Phillips •  
Judge Ruth Neely •  
Joy Pullman •  
and many more •



SEPT 24-26, 2025

**REGISTER TODAY**

Learn More  
[lutheransforlife.org](https://lutheransforlife.org)



Contact Us  
888-364-LIFE  
(5433)





## Great Wolf Lodge | Colorado Springs, Colorado

"I praise you, Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14).

Get equipped to deal with life issues with Gospel-motivated speakers at the **Great Wolf Lodge in Colorado Springs** during this three-day national event! The sweeping views of Pike's Peak from the conference center will inspire us as we hear testimonials from courageous For Life speakers. *This family-friendly venue offers the largest indoor water park in Colorado, along with dozens of engaging activities for children of all ages.*

**Keynote Speakers**  
Jim Daly | Focus on the Family  
Jack Phillips | Masterpiece Cakeshop  
Judge Ruth Neely | Retired Wyoming Judge  
Joy Pullman | The Federalist  
Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske | LFL

Registration includes access to all conference sessions, as well as breakfasts and dinners at the conference hotel. *Note: Lunches and afternoons will be on your own to explore the area!*

**Registration Fees | [lutheransforlife.org/conferences](https://lutheransforlife.org/conferences)**

Adult: \$150

Students and Youth, 13 years old through college-age: \$25

Children, 12 years old and under: FREE



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Adult: \$150

Students and Youth, 13 years old through college-age: \$25

Children, 12 years old and under: FREE





# Want to be a voice For Life?

## Lutherans For Life can help YOU!

*Serving all God's people...from the youngest to the oldest!*

### THREE WAYS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

† **It only takes one!** A Life Advocate works with their pastor to share God's love For Life!

† **Grab your friends!** A Life Team is a group of life-affirming volunteers at church creating meaningful and fun ways to support life!

† **Strength in numbers!** A Life Chapter is one or more churches working together to impact their communities.



**LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE**

[lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations/](https://lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations/)

*...from fertilization to forever*



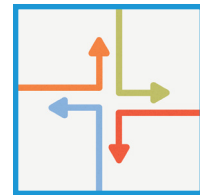


# YA For Life Connection Kits

Each YA For Life Connection Kit contains resources that are designed to be used by young adults and Life Teams as they address life issues in their congregations and communities. Kits include practical information on how to plan for and set up a Connection Event; ideas for addressing life issues through worship, education, service, and celebration; and practical tips for including families and youth. Learn more and get your kit today at [YAForLife.org](http://YAForLife.org).



# LAMBs – Mercy Blankets



Although our world might tell us otherwise, children are truly a blessing. Lutherans For Life would like to celebrate children—especially those families with a lot of them! Through the skillfulness of some LFLers in Ohio and elsewhere, along with the Miami Valley Life Chapter, a project called “**LAMBs**” (**L**utherans **A**ssembling **M**ercy **B**lankets) was established.

We would like to celebrate families that are awaiting the birth of their fourth or more child by gifting them with a homemade blanket. Do you know such a family in your Lutheran church? If so, please contact Virginia Flo, our Director of Volunteer Relations, at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org) so that she can arrange for this gift to be sent to them. (Alternatively, you can fill out the form below and send it to Belén Fry of the Miami Valley Life Chapter.)

Thank you for helping us care for your neighbor in this way!

**“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward”** (Psalm 127:3).

## LAMBs – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets

Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? Wouldn't it be nice to give them a homemade blanket in celebration of this new life? Simply fill out this form and the Miami Valley Lutherans For Life Chapter, and other Lutherans from the state of Ohio, will ensure that a blanket made with love will be sent directly to the expectant mother anywhere within the continental United States as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. There are no strings attached. As the Body of Christ, we want to use this as an opportunity to share the mercy that our Savior Jesus Christ first showed us on the cross.

Your Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's & Father's Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Baby's Gender: Boy \_\_\_ Girl \_\_\_

Mother's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

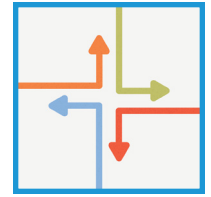
Please send completed forms to: Belén Fry  
Miami Valley Life Chapter  
1505 Tipperary Court  
Middletown, OH 45042-3038



**“He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms”** (Isaiah 40:11a).



# Owen's Mission



**"A PERSON'S  
A PERSON,  
NO MATTER  
HOW SMALL"  
-DR. SEUSS**

Horton the elephant was right! The Bible agrees! In fact, the Bible says more: A person's a person created by God (Psalm 139:13-14), a person redeemed by Jesus (Galatians 3:13), and a person the Holy Spirit wants to call to be His child (1 Timothy 2:4), *no matter how small!*

Owen's Mission is a very special project of Lutherans For Life. The goal of this project is to honor Jesus by presenting a set of *Touch of Life* fetal models to every Lutheran elementary and high school in the country. We want students to understand the God-given value of each life from the moment of conception. We want students to be motivated by what God has done as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier that gives value to life. We want students to value themselves and to value others as persons because of this God-given value.



Where did Owen's Mission come from? From a very small and special baby named Owen. Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former executive director of Lutherans For Life, shares his story:

"I held my little grandson Owen in the palm of my hand. He died at 21 weeks during prenatal surgery to remove a large tumor. The nurse brought him to our son as we waited in the recovery room for Owen's mother. I find it difficult to describe what I felt when I was able to hold him. I had held the 20-week *Touch of Life* fetal model in my hands hundreds of times in front of students from preschoolers to seminarians. Holding Owen revived in me the reality behind those models. I will never hold them in the same way again."



As Owen's grandpa, Dr. Lamb wanted to do something special to remember Owen, honor Jesus, and help others understand the value God gives to even the smallest of lives. With the help of Owen's family, *Owen's Mission* was born. We are training facilitators to present these fetal model sets along with a DVD message from Dr. Lamb.

**You can support Owen's Mission by encouraging your Lutheran elementary or high school to have an Owen's Mission presentation! Call 888.364.LIFE (5433) or email [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org).**

[lutheransforlife.org/owens-mission](http://lutheransforlife.org/owens-mission)





# Life Advocates Life Teams Life Chapters State Federations

**VOLUNTEER RELATIONS** is a Lutherans For Life team dedicated to serving the Frontlines, including Life Advocates, Life Teams, Life Chapters, State Federations, pastors, and congregations. They assist them in starting and maintaining a strong, healthy, and vibrant life ministry within their congregations and communities. Our team is here to share ideas, to mentor, and to walk alongside you as a life ministry consultant and partner.

## **Virginia J. Flo**

Director of Volunteer Relations  
651.333.0337  
vflo@lutheransforlife.org

## **Michele Hartshorn**

Assistant Director of Volunteer Relations  
612.816.6194  
mhartshorn@lutheransforlife.org

## **Barbara Lane Geistfeld, DVM**

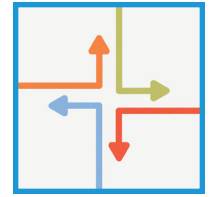
Volunteer Relations Associate  
830.935.3415 (H) | 830.388.8640 (C)  
bgeistfeld@lutheransforlife.org

## **Amanda Nicks**

Administrative Specialist of Volunteer Relations  
231.622.2506  
anicks@lutheransforlife.org



# Lutherans For Life Online



- Check out [word-of-hope.org](http://word-of-hope.org) and [y4life.org](http://y4life.org).
- Be sure to “Like” and follow LFL on social media! See links below:

[www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife](https://www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife)

[www.facebook.com/groups/lflfrontlines](https://www.facebook.com/groups/lflfrontlines)

[www.facebook.com/WordOfHopeHealingHearts](https://www.facebook.com/WordOfHopeHealingHearts)

[x.com/ForLifers](https://x.com/ForLifers) • [instagram.com/lfly4life](https://www.instagram.com/lfly4life) • [www.tiktok.com/@lfly4life](https://www.tiktok.com/@lfly4life)

[www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife](https://www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife)



- Join our Frontline Facebook group for Life Chapters, Life Teams, and Life Advocates: [facebook.com/groups/lflfrontlines](https://facebook.com/groups/lflfrontlines). The group includes an idea exchange and is a place to connect with other Frontline volunteers.

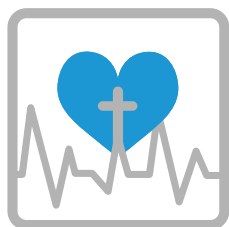
facebook

- LifeDate is a great way to share the For Life message with your congregation. Order LifeDate in bulk quantities at no charge. (Donations for shipping cost will gladly be accepted.) Call 888.364.LIFE (5433) to order. ([lutheransforlife.org/resources/journal](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/journal))

## LIFEDATE

- Life News is available each month to download and print. Life News is a free monthly bulletin insert with life-issue news and more. Go to [lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news](http://lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news).

## LIFE NEWS



## LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Available in App Stores







# INTERESTED IN STARTING A LIFE TEAM AT YOUR CHURCH?

It just got easier, making it possible for you to be a trusted, certified Life Team Leader or Life Team Member!

Here are the simple steps:

- Talk with your pastor about starting a Life Team at your church.
- Contact Volunteer Relations about next steps.
- Use the link provided to Volunteers Academy to register for the Life Team Leader Training for only \$25!
- Engage other members at your church to be Life Team Members.
- Life Team Member Training is FREE!

<b>Tool 1 – Why and How to Start a Life Team</b>  This course will give you an overview of the Life Team training process.  free <input type="button" value="Enroll"/>	<b>Tool 2 – Life Team Leader Training</b>  This course will equip you to guide your Life Team in being Gospel-motivated voices For Life.  \$25 <input type="button" value="Enroll"/>	<b>Tool 3 – Life Team Member Training</b>  This course will equip you to participate with your Life Team in being Gospel-motivated voices For Life.  free <input type="button" value="Enroll"/>	<b>Tool 4 – Resources</b>  Tool 4 contains resources that supplement Tool 2 & Tool 3.  free <input type="button" value="Enroll"/>
 <b>LIFE TEAM</b> Introduction and Roadmap	 <b>LIFE TEAM</b> Leader Training	 <b>LIFE TEAM</b> Member Training	 <b>LIFE TEAM</b> Resources

Register at:

[volunteersacademy.lutheransforlife.org](https://volunteersacademy.lutheransforlife.org)

Questions? Contact Volunteer Relations:

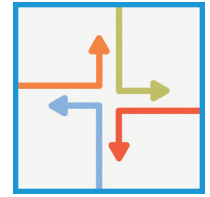
[lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations/](https://lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations/)





# The Basics of Lutherans For Life

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**Our Mission:** Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

**Our Vision:** Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same

## Structure and Relationships

A local Life Chapter is a local organization that has been chartered by National Lutherans For Life. The Life Chapter is formally associated with and subject to, but not a part of, the corporation known as Lutherans For Life, Inc.

A Life Team is a group of dedicated church members forming a For Life group within one congregation to serve under the auspices of the local congregation.

A Life Advocate is an individual working to support the church's pastor in keeping the flow of educational information in front of the congregation on a regular basis. *Life Teams and Life Advocates do not qualify for the remittance program.*

A State Federation is an organization that has been chartered by Lutherans For Life, Inc., in a state where there are at least five chartered Life Chapters. In a state where a State Federation exists, the Life Chapters also become affiliated with the State Federation. This occurs automatically at the same time a Life Chapter becomes chartered by Lutherans For Life, Inc. These relationships are basically the same whether or not the Life Chapter is incorporated. Thus, Lutherans For Life consists of a network of individual entities formally associated with each other.

## Membership Information

All officers of State Federations and Life Chapters and Life Advocates must be members in good standing of Lutheran congregations and members of National Lutherans For Life. Membership contributions are divided among the national organization, State Federation, and local Life Chapter if it is chartered.

Life Chapters that wish to include a membership form in newsletters or correspondence are asked to maintain the form and information provided by the national office. The local Life Chapter may not establish its own membership program since LFL has a "unified membership" program. When sending a membership form to the national office, make sure the Life Chapter name and number, if chartered, is written on the form in the space provided. This will ensure that the State Federation and local Life Chapter receive the proper remittance payment.

## Membership Classifications

### *Annual Membership*

- Annual members join by making a membership donation accompanied by a completed copy of the membership form (or by joining online).

### *Sponsor Membership*

- Sponsor members pledge to contribute a certain amount each month and to pray regularly for Lutherans For Life.
- Sponsor members receive a monthly letter from the executive director.
- Sponsor members are asked to renew their monthly pledge each year as part of the annual membership drive.

## The Remittance Program of LFL

All MEMBERSHIP donations are shared with the chartered State Federation and/or local Life Chapter to which the particular members may belong. The membership donations are divided as follows:

### *Annual Memberships:*

- 20% goes to the local Life Chapter (If there is no local Life Chapter, this 20% goes to the State Federation.)
- 20% goes to the State Federation
- 60% remains at national

### *Sponsor Memberships:*

- 1/12 goes to the local Life Chapter (If there is no local Life Chapter, this 1/12 goes to the State Federation.)
- 1/12 goes to the State Federation
- 10/12 remains at national



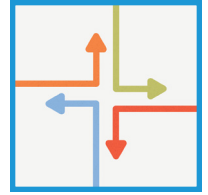
## National Lutherans For Life Staff

Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske – Executive Director  
Rev. Scott Licht – CFO/COO  
Lowell J. Highby – Director of Communications  
Michelle Bauman – Director of Y4Life  
Cori Meier – Y4Life Assistant  
Diana Ladislav – Y4Life Media Resource Assistant  
Virginia Flo – Director of Volunteer Relations  
Michele Hartshorn – Assistant Director of Volunteer Relations  
Dr. Barb Geistfeld – Volunteer Relations Associate  
Amanda Nicks – Administrative Specialist of Volunteer Relations  
Dave Probst – Director of Development  
Jerilyn Richard – Donor Relations Director  
Jan Nessa – Administrative Assistant  
Deaconess Chrissie Gillet, PsyD – Director of Word of Hope  
Deaconess Janet Nicol – Phone Counselor  
Lorelei Humphrey – Word of Hope Assistant  
Erika Peterson – Events Coordinator  
Katie Friedrich – Gift Entry Specialist  
Julie Kyrola – Data Assistant

## National LFL Board of Directors

Diane Albers, President – St. Louis, Missouri  
Rev. Byrene K. Haney, Vice President – Fort Dodge, Iowa  
Dr. Roni Grad, Secretary – Tucson, Arizona  
Alice Steljes, Treasurer – Pawnee, Illinois  
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Col. John Eidsmoe – Pike Road, Alabama  
Dr. Adam S. Francisco – Wheaton, Illinois  
Kyle McMillian – Oakland, Florida  
Deaconess Pamela Nielsen – Ballwin, Missouri

Rev. Dennis Norby, State Representative – Valley City, North Dakota  
John Talley – Newark, Illinois  
Diana Vaughn – Ponca City, Oklahoma



## State Federation Presidents

Rev. David Bottorff, Illinois – Bourbonnais  
Daniel Lindemeier, Iowa – Ames  
Rev. Caleb Stoeber, Kansas – Hepler  
Rev. Paul Clark, Michigan – Fowler  
Mike Albers, Missouri – St. Louis  
Berniece Stulc, Montana – Belgrade  
Bob Saeger, Nebraska – Waco  
Rev. Dennis Norby, North Dakota – Valley City  
Jill Johnsen, South Dakota – Wessington

**Lutherans For Life**  
**1101 5<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**Nevada, IA 50201-1816**

[info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org)  
[lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)  
**888.364.LIFE (5433) or 515.382.2077**

**LFL Business Hours:**  
**Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. CT.**  
**Hours subject to staff availability.**

**Since 1973: 65,464,760 abortions in America**

Source: [www.lifenews.com/2024/01/17/65464760-babies-have-been-killed-in-abortion-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973](http://www.lifenews.com/2024/01/17/65464760-babies-have-been-killed-in-abortion-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973)

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# *Mindfulness in Christ*

Tuesdays starting at 7:00 P.M. Central Time,  
September 2- October 28.

Wednesdays starting at 1:00 P.M. Central Time,  
September 3-October 29.

## *Why Mindfulness in Christ?*

Unlike the worldly view of mindfulness, this course emphasizes being actively present with the Lord to make wise decisions based on Christ-centered values. It aims to improve self-control in managing emotions, thinking patterns, interpersonal interactions, and distress tolerance.



Email us at  
[info@word-of-hope.org](mailto:info@word-of-hope.org)

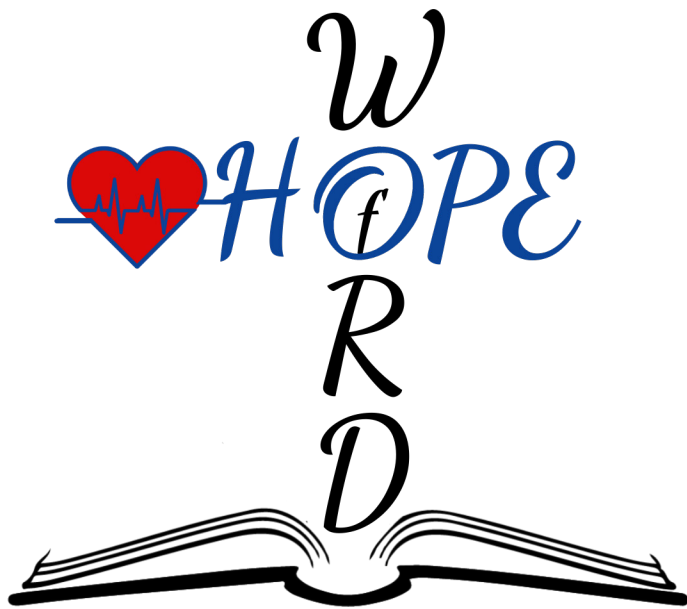
WORD  
OF  
HOPE

Join **Word of Hope** for an online nine-week class this fall! In this Christ-centered course adapted from dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT), you will learn skills that will help you develop a non-judgmental awareness of your thoughts and emotions.

A Tuesday evening class and a Wednesday afternoon class will be available, beginning the first week of September. There are only eight places available in each class, so sign up soon by either emailing [info@word-of-hope.org](mailto:info@word-of-hope.org) or by calling the hotline at 888-217-8679.







For those who have had an abortion—  
there is a **Word of Hope** for  
broken hearts.

Call 888.217.8679 or go to  
[www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org).

**Word of Hope** is confidential and  
caring.

**Word of Hope** is a ministry of  
Lutherans For **Life**.

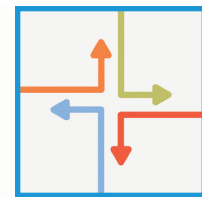
I'm **4Life** ... Now what?



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