



Affirming Life In Illinois Jesus, the Unexpected Suffering Savior

"Outside the box" could be defined as "unexpected" Our Savior led the way in the unexpected. Here are some thoughts about the unexpected Jesus, that come to us from a Lutheran Hour Ministries' description of Jesus in their "Suffering Servant" Lenten devotions from 2022, written by Dr. Kari Vo:

"Vo speaks of Jesus as a person people wouldn't expect. Even though centuries earlier, Isaiah spoke of Him as a "Man of sorrows and acquaint-

ed with grief; and as One from whom men hide their faces," people didn't get it. No surprise, really; chances are we would have missed it, too. After all, the appeal of One "despised and rejected," full of "sorrows and acquainted with grief," only goes so far—even if He was to bear "the iniquity of us all."

Vo writes,...But to us? He was nothing special. And so we ignored Him—rejected Him—and then turned on Him and put Him to death on a cross. That was the end of Him, we thought. Who could have predicted the resurrection?"

Indeed, who? Who could have predicted that atonement for our sins would come from the death-and coming back to life again-of God's own Son? But that's the grace of God at work—giving us what we don't deserve, rescuing us from what we do." He has freed us to do the unexpected: to serve, to forgive others, to share, that is, to Love! Because He first loved us.

Father, as we approach the season of Lent, enable us to love beyond all human expectation, as a reflection of your own love for us!



New Year, New Life, Set Free!

When God made humankind He did a new thing. You could say that about everything God created that first week! But everything else was spoken into existence with just a Word. When it came to Adam, God shaped him with his hands and "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," None of the animals could claim to have received the breath of God, just us! Breeze through Scripture to the post-resurrection world and you find God's Spirit breathing Life into his church at Pen-

tecost. That same Spirit began a good work in us at our baptism and we have the promise that "he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

Watchers at the Pentecost didn't understand. They accused the disciples of being "filled with new wine", even as they noted that they were proclaiming the mighty works of God.

We have watchers, too. They look on as "...we do not lose heart. Though our outer man

is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day," as Paul put it in 2 Corinthians 4:16. My guess is that they don't always understand us either. It's okay if they think we're a little crazy, because all they can see is the outer situation. Especially if that outer situation raises questions that allow us to explain the freedom and inner renewal we have in the Spirit of Jesus!

Each day of this new year, we live as those who have the breath of God in our lungs. Let the sound we exhale be His praise!

—LL

Lutherans For Life of Illinois Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 1

Winter 2026

Save the date, Illinois

- January 18, Life Sunday
- January 18-24 Life Week
- January 23, Washington D.C., National March for Life
- Feb 18-Mar 29; 40 Days For Life Lenten Vigil
- March 19, Springfield, Illinois Pro Life March

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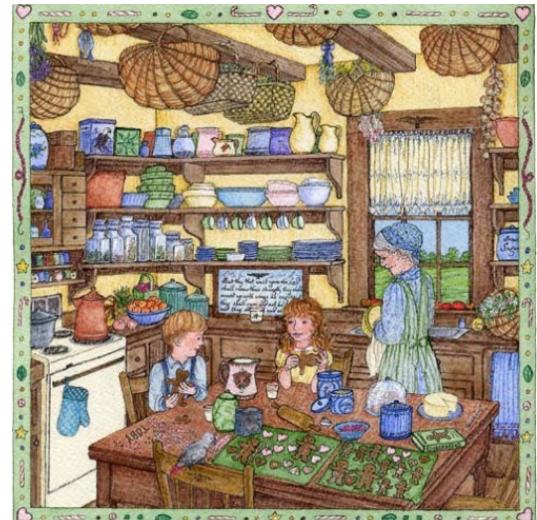
McHenry County LFL Chapter has been busy supporting the Redeeming Life Maternity Home in a variety of ways.

Life Sunday will find them sponsoring a bottle drive for the home in East Dundee, along with the usual celebration of Life Sunday.

They are located fairly close to the home, however, and that allows them to help in other ways as well. A couple times a week, they take meals to the maternity home for the moms who live there. Genny Hertel, their leader, shares that this gives them an opportunity to help tired working moms, as they prepare meals together in a family-like setting. Not to mention the joy of getting to hold those little babies on occasion!

Like many of us, the McHenry County Chapter would like to have more young members to join in their efforts.

Father in Heaven, thank you for the dedicated service of the McHenry County Chapter of LFL! Please provide the extra help they need, as they seek to serve the moms and babies at the maternity home! Grant each of our Chapters all that they need, including new members and new opportunities to serve Your children in life-affirming ways in their own locales.



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

RLOM Maternity Home News

We can be pretty quick to accept sound bites without really giving them deep thought in our culture. Therefore, you probably have friends as I do, who genuinely want people to have choices and do not realize the extent that the "pro-choice" movement only honors one choice, that women are often pressured to abort, or that "choice" is used to cover up abuses of women and girls. For those who are sincere in the matter of choice, service could be a wonderful eye-opener.

Last fall, Julia Heinz submitted the following outside the box thinking about the concept of "choice" and how it might be used to help others see the value in supporting the choice for Life:

"Maternity home ministry not only helps women and babies. It helps Christians and churches live out their faith, offering an active help that affirms life and serves as a witness to the world. Perhaps our "pro-choice" friends can be invited to support moms and babies in need? If they are truly pro-choice, and truly support all choices, even the choice to courageously carry a precious baby to term, they can support a maternity home! Imagine the impact this can have in their hearts, when they see how helping a woman in a crisis pregnancy results in God-honoring outcomes—healthy moms and babies, women who are empowered and employed, families breaking out of generational poverty. Please pray for the impact of our Lutheran maternity home to honor life

and to change hearts, all to the glory of God!" —by Julia Heinz

You can read about a new RLOM home planned for the St. Louis area [here](#).

Keep the RLOM Maternity Homes in your prayers, as they serve women and children here in Illinois, in Florida, and we hope soon in the St. Louis area! As our own Southern Illinois has been turned into an abortion hub for St. Louis, RLOM seeks to offer the help moms need to choose life there, as well. May God provide the staff, the financing, the volunteers, and everything they need to carry out this wonderful, Life-affirming ministry!



Outside the Box Celebrations and Observations of Life

This falls under the category of using what we have to achieve our goals. We often joke and roll our eyes about all the "national day of (you name it!)" but since we have them, why not use them? They can be opportunities for sharing the message that Life is precious! With that thought in mind, here are some that might work during the first quarter of 2026:



January 11, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, is a good time to make folks aware of the Human Tracking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888.

Feb. 1 is National Dark Chocolate Day, as well as National "Get up Day". Why not use the occasion as an excuse to gift staff at your local pregnancy help center with chocolates? Or the volunteers who staff your local food bank? It is a way to thank and encourage those who help others "get up" when they feel like they can't!

February 11 has been designated National "Shut in Visitation Day". You probably know somebody who falls into this category who would enjoy a visit. If you can't think of anyone, check in with your Parish Nurse or your Pastor. If you have been thinking of beginning a ministry to shut-ins in your congregation, why not now?

February 11th is also known as "Don't Cry over Spilled Milk Day". Wouldn't this be a great day to do an ingathering of formula for your local pregnancy help center or your local food pantry?

February 17 is known as "National Random Acts of Kindness Day". What if we used this day to have flowers delivered to the local Crisis Pregnancy Center or Senior Center with instructions that they are to be delivered to the person most in need of a bright spot in their day?

February 20, the 3rd Friday in the month is "National Caregiver's Day". Caregivers can always use a word of encouragement, but if you have not yet found a way to bless them in their efforts, today is the day! A simple "thank you" card or encouraging word is good. If you know someone who is filling this role for a family member, consider ways to lighten the load...help in transporting to medical appointments, a meal that can be pulled from the freezer on a hectic day, just listening, for example!

March 12th is National "Plant a Flower Day." You could check with a disabled friend or senior citizen who can't get down on their knees, and see what kind of flower they might like planted! One way



to brighten the life of another... If you do this, don't forget to show up periodically to help with weeding chores, as well!

March 15th is "National Shoe the World Day". You could celebrate by holding a shoe drive for your local homeless shelter, organize an ingathering of children's shoes for a foster care help organization, or donate baby and toddler shoes or shoe store gift certificates to your local pregnancy help center.

Though not on the National Day Calendar, where these other reasons to celebrate originated, a novel idea from Care Net of Central Texas...

"Over the past year, amidst challenges and changes, Care Net Pregnancy Center of Central Texas has not only adapted but flourished. From ... to providing a guest house for clients in need of immediate housing, their innovative approach reflects a deep understanding of the diverse needs within their community" Anybody have property that could be used as a guest house? Maybe a check with your local crisis pregnancy center is in order, to see if they could make use of it! One more way to serve as a "For Life Lutheran!"

Remember, EVERY day is a great day to share the love of Jesus with a hurting world!

—LL

Voting with Your Pocketbook...in support of Foster Care

One of my Life Team members has been back and forth to Michigan frequently the last couple years. When there, she made a stop at Lavender Life Farm, where she met the Xander Bunny. This is a project that grew out of a grandma's love for her grandson, who came to their family via the foster care system, and the desire to ease the stress for foster children everywhere. Using lavender grown on their own farm, she created a special plush bunny with a pocket where a pouch of warmed cherry pits infused with lavender could make this floppy, lovable toy especially comforting. You can see the farm and hear the story [here](#).

The mission has grown, as has the inventory they offer. I bought a couple for some children who would soon be traveling internationally, thinking this could be a good stress reducer for those long flights. I was able to ask for their favorite colors and their favorite kind of animal and sure enough, Lavender Life had puppies in just the colors the girls liked best. The plush toy part of their work has been named the Xander Community and is a 501c3 public charity. Eve-

ry time you purchase a plush toy from them, they donate one to children in foster care. Their mission is "getting a plush, warmable, lavender-filled Xander Friend into the hands of all 440,000 children in foster care in America. While doing this, they wish to encourage those on the front lines of rescuing kids and restoring families. They also hope to rally and mobilize community around the crisis of neglected and abused children...to get people asking "What else can be done?"

If you don't have any young ones who might benefit from a gift like this in your circle of friends, the Xander Community does accept donations, as well.

But maybe you just want one for yourself...who couldn't use a warm fuzzy? You can order [online](#), of course, or plan a trip to Caledonia, MI and visit the farm in person, where you are invited to "Relax and Retreat", shop their 180 lavender based products, and enjoy goodies from the bakery. The bakery includes such intriguing offerings as lavender cheesecake, lavender shortbread, a variety of cookies, and a number of coffees and teas all including lavender.

At the time I made my Xander Friend purchase, they had given nearly 90,000 such furry friends to comfort foster kids around the country. While they are a bit pricey, they are also high quality, unique, and support a good cause.

—LL



Help Needed!

Redeeming Life Outreach Ministry is in need of a project manager for the Northern Illinois maternity home. They are a Christ-centered nonprofit dedicated to walking alongside women in crisis pregnancies and young mothers striving for independence. Headquartered in Sanford, Florida, RLOM offers safe, nurturing, residential programs where women discover stability, develop life skills, grow spiritually, and experience the hope found in Christ.

A summary of the position states that the Program Manager provides leadership and oversight for the clinical, programmatic, and spiritual development of RLOM's East Dundee Illinois mater-

nity home. This role manages the full case-management process, sets the structure of the program, ensures accountability, and coordinates services and partnerships that support long-term resident growth.

The Program Manager serves as the primary case manager and program administrator, ensuring that each woman's journey through the home is intentional, measurable, and grounded in grace and truth.

The qualifications needed include:

- Deep, mature Christian faith; LCMS Lutheran affiliation preferred or willingness to serve within LCMS doctrine and practice.

- Bachelor's degree in social work, human services ministry, or related field, Master's preferred.
- Strong organizational and administrative skills with reliable follow-through.
- Experience leading teams or supervising staff preferred.

To see the complete job description, all qualifications, get instructions to apply, and for contact information, check the attachment to this email. If God brings someone to mind, feel free to share the job description with them.

Pray that the person of God's choice will soon be found to carry out this important service in the cause of Life!

A Snowflake Named Hannah, a Book Review

Some of you may have heard of author, John Strege, as a sports writer. He is especially known for his writing covering golf. However, this is a very different type of writing for him. Not play by play in the third person, but play by play of his and his wife's own story of adoption "outside the box". John and Marlene Strege were the very first parents to adopt a frozen embryo. Their daughter, Hannah, is the result of that adoption. It is a heartwarming story of faith, family, science, and politics.

I found this an easy read, neither

repetitious, nor difficult to understand.

John and Marlene are a dedicated Lutheran couple who understand the concept that Life begins at conception. That is why they felt compelled to adopt, not receive a "donation". Faith compelled them to ask what was acceptable to God, as they went along. The language surrounding embryo donation, reminded Marlene of shopping for a car and babies are not "things." Their stand for Life and their situation as parents of the first frozen embryo adoption, propelled them into the embryonic stem cell research debate. Easy read that it is, nonetheless, it has

some of the best For Life quotes I've run across. You know the kind: getting a lot of meaning packed into a few words. Here are a few I enjoyed thinking about:

"These boys and girls are not spare parts." —President George W. Bush
In applying the old Yogi Berra quote to politics, Strege writes, "But on matters of when "it" is over, he was wrong on one front. It is never over in politics" I like the quote taken from posters designed by one of the snowflake moms, "...There is one thing that you and I have in common. Before we were born, before we were a developing fetus, we were an embryo." Words to ponder and a book worth reading.

—LL

Good News for Life...

Celebrate Baby Xander! Living with disability, but living large! The following comes from a heart-warming story by Ashlyn Lemos carried in Life News.com

"Doctors said he wouldn't make it 12 weeks in the womb. But 15-month-old Baby Xander has just gone home—smiling, laughing, and proving everyone wrong.

Born with Trisomy 18, a rare genetic condition caused by an extra copy of chromosome 18, Xander faced impossible odds. The condition often leads to severe disabilities, and many doctors tell parents there's little hope.

"I was about 10 weeks pregnant at the time, and our doctor had told us that I had two weeks left of the pregnancy. That these babies don't survive. They don't make it to birth," Alesia Zeh told A4 News.

But Alesia and her husband, Bradshaw, refused to give up.

"When we went to Mott's, they immediately changed our perspective, and they gave us a new hope," Bradshaw Zeh said. That hope carried them through 450 long days in the NICU. In that time, Xander faced—and overcame—more challenges than most people see in a lifetime.

"He has gone through five or six major surgeries throughout his life, and even we got a cancer diagnosis when he was about six months old. So he's even undergone chemo and liver resection surgery," said Alesia Zeh. "He's stronger than anyone, anyone we know."

Each small milestone became a celebration.

"The first time we took him on a stroller ride was the biggest deal. The first time he smiled, it just your heart explodes, right? The first time we got to hold him. And these are things that most people don't take a second look at, right?" said Alesia.

Now, as Xander settles into his home for the very first time, his story is

inspiring others to choose hope instead of despair.

The Zehs want other families to know that there is life after a difficult diagnosis."



Pray that babies who receive an adverse diagnosis before birth might, like Xander, be allowed to live out the days God has ordained for them! May God grant parents the resources they need to nurture and care for them! May the body of Christ support, comfort, and encourage those parents!

Out of the Box thinking to Nip in the Bud

"Scientists working for a small startup in San Francisco are pursuing something that bioethicists have been warning about for decades: creating genetically engineered children.

News of this dystopian venture comes to us courtesy of the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ). In a recent [feature](#), the WSJ shone a light on the effort being pursued by a company called Preventive, located in Silicon Valley, California.

Editing genes in human embryos is banned in the U.S. To get around this, Preventive is instead trying to find a location where they can carry out their "research" without falling into trouble with the law, such as the United Arab Emirates.

While Preventive claimed to only be pursuing research to cure preventable diseases, experts are far from convinced that this is the case.

"These people are not working on genetic diseases," Fyodor Urnov, a di-

rector at the Innovative Genomics Institute at the University of California, Berkeley, told the WSJ. "They are either lying, delusional, or both. These people armed with very poorly deployed sacks of cash are working on 'baby improvement.'"

From an article by Fr. Shenan Bouquet, Human Life International entitled, "The Fight Against the Ideology of Designer Babies"

Father deliver us from arrogance and the love of money and grant the love of Life!

More Out-of-the Box Thinking to Nip in the Bud

This comes to you from an opinion piece by Raimundo Rojas, Outreach Director for National Right To Life Committee, published in Life-News.com.

Mr. Rojas begins by stating that certain pro-life leaders have floated the idea of arresting women who have abortions! His response to the idea follows:

"We must resist the temptation to look for "quick fixes" in the criminal code. Arresting the woman might feel like a show of strength, but what it truly reveals is a weakness in our compassion. And worse, it will drive women away from the very places built to help them: our pregnancy resource centers.

Do we understand what that means? A woman in crisis may fear that walking into a pregnancy resource center puts her at risk of being reported, judged, or jailed. She might seek out one of the dangerous abortion options now available in states that have built their border economies around ending unborn life. Compassionate care becomes collateral damage in the rush to "get tough."

That's not pro-life. That's just punitive.

Real pro-life advocacy means meeting women at the intersection of crisis and grace. It means offering ultrasounds, diapers, car seats, housing help, job support, counseling—yes, even forgiveness. It means welcoming women with tears on their cheeks and

fear in their voices. It means turning our pregnancy resource centers into sanctuaries, not surveillance hubs.

Let's not trade away our moral clarity for the illusion of control. We must remain the movement that offers help, not handcuffs. The movement that lifts up, not locks away, because abortion ends when support begins. Our movement's job is not to scare women away from abortion with threats.

It's to love them out of it with radical compassion, real alternatives, and relentless presence."

Thinking like this is why the pro-life movements needs the Gospel-motivated voices of Lutherans For Life. Lord, help us always speak from that perspective!

Position Statement...

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Eugenics

WHEREAS, Eugenics is defined as the science that deals with the improvement of the races and breeds, especially the human race, through the control of hereditary factors; and

WHEREAS, Human beings are created by God in His image and therefore should not be subject to value judgments relative to superiority or inferiority (James 2:9) but are dependent upon the sovereign plan and purpose of God who knits people together in their mothers' wombs and fashions them according to the plan inscribed in Psalm 139:16; and

WHEREAS, Certain individuals or groups who consider themselves superior, elite, and responsible for establishing a "superior" race or class of people are advocating or utilizing the practice of selection, genetic manipulation, sterilization, or the physical elimination of certain individuals or classes of people by abortion, euthanasia, or outright killing; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes the following:

1. all methods of genetic experimentation, "engineering" or manipulation that would seek to "breed a superior class or race"; and
2. any practices of forced sterilization intended to "breed a superior human class or race"; and
3. any practice or process of elimination of presumed "inferior" races or

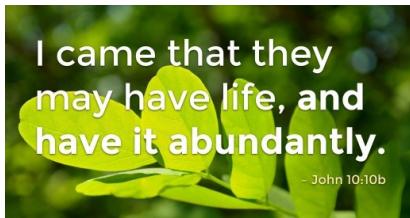


"Jesus loves the little children, ALL the children in the world"

the selection of some race or class of people deemed "superior."

Psalm 33:13–15a

"The Lord looks down from heaven;
he sees all the children of man;
14 from where he sits enthroned he
looks out
on all the inhabitants of the earth,
15 he who fashions the hearts of
them all "



LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

2026 Illinois

Essay Contest

Sponsored by the LFL Council of Federation Presidents

For Students in Grades 6–8 and 9–12

Any student in a Lutheran school or Lutheran congregation (e.g., confirmation class, 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 **“That They May Have Life”** using John 10:10, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

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 lutheransforlife.org.

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).

All entries must be submitted by a teacher or pastor and include their contact information.

Grades 6–8 should submit essays up to 400 words. The word count does not include the title, footnotes, or bibliography.

Grades 9–12 should submit essays up to 750 words. The word count does not include the title, footnotes, or bibliography.

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** at cathy.benning.os@gmail.com by March 15, 2026.

The omission of any of the following required items will cause disqualification of the essay:

The essay must include the entire theme and entire theme Bible verse as part of the written text.

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.

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”.

A Bibliography listing sources used is required.

Exceeding the appropriate word count is not acceptable.

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*).

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.

The national award for the winning entry in each category is \$500 for first place, plus free conference registration to the 2026 Lutherans For Life 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.

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

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.



Illinois Pro Life March

Once again, Trinity Lutheran Church in downtown Springfield, Illinois, will be the site of a pre-march Matins Service, hosted by the Central Illinois District of the LCMS. The service begins at 11:00, as everything has been moved an hour later to accommodate local traffic concerns. Lunch and parking are once again available at the State House Inn.

Prior to the service, beginning at 10:00, Illinois Right to Life Action and House pro-life Republicans will host a meet and greet with pro-Life Illinois lawmakers. This will be held at the Stratton Cafeteria at the Capitol. An early lunch will be available, there as well.

This year's rally begins at 1:00 and features speakers, such as: Mary Kate Zander of Illinois

Right to Life, Bishop Paprocki of the Springfield Diocese, Kramer Soderberg, Head Coach of Millikin University's Men's Basketball,

At 2:00, the march begins. God loves a joyful noise, so come sing with your fellow Lutherans as we trek around the perimeter of the State Capitol! It is so good to know we are not alone...the battle is the Lord's, so yes, we are not in this alone! But his children who love Life are many and the joy of fellowship among them is evident as they march, reminding us that we also have like-minded fellow-believers who stand with us to call upon Him and ask for His mighty works to be done right here in Illinois!

At 3:00, time has been set aside for those who wish to meet with

their lawmakers to do so. You can find out how to make this an effective meeting with tips and guidance on the [Illinois Pro Life March](#) website. While the group as a whole makes a statement in the street, only you can tell your lawmaker your own story and why Life matters to you. Here's a chance to do just that. If like me, you are blessed to have a Representative and Senator in Springfield who vote pro-Life, it would still be worth it to tell them why it matters to you and to THANK them! They are a minority in our state and knowing that we stand behind them, appreciate them, and pray for them is important, as well.

I hope to see you there! Meanwhile, **let's pray for those planning the day, for our lawmakers, our governor, and all those who have a role to play in protecting Life in Illinois!**

Life Week 2026

Life Week 2026: Sunday, January 18 - Saturday, January 24, 2026

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

This Word of God reveals the care and intention that God takes in the creation of each and every human being. It teaches us that from the very first moments of our conception, God's hands are upon us, carefully and lovingly crafting each one of us through our fathers and mothers. And while each person is created by God with their own unique characteristics and personalities, the care that God takes in creating each person shows us that every person, from the moment of fertilization on, is precious to God regardless of their age, size, condition, or ability.

Download [Life Week 2026 Flyer](#)

Check out more resources: [Store: Life Sunday 2026](#)

LFL Life Week Connection Opportunities

Life Week 2026 Zoom Link



[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83862063962>

Meeting ID: 838 6206 3962

Passcode: 823940



Use the link above for all Life Week 2026 online presentations.

All Zoom sessions begin at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. Find more details below.

Schedule and means to join:

Sunday, January 18 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... As God's Own

Join Live on Zoom

Monday, January 19 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... With a God-Given Identity

Pre-recorded for flexible use

Tuesday, January 20 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... Despite the Pre-natal Diagnosis

Join Live on Zoom

Wednesday, January 21 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... For a Forever Family (adoption and foster care) Pre-recorded for flexible use

Thursday, January 22 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... For Life

Watch on Face Book live.

Friday, January 23 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... Even When it Hurts

Join live on Zoom

Saturday, January 24 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made ... To Serve and Be Served

Watch on Face Book live.

Life Week 2026 continued...

All of the Information included on the previous page, came from the [Lutherans For Life Website](#).

You can also find Life Week Coloring Pages for every day of the week. You will find a brief overview of the topic for the day, as well as names of presenters. Each Day of Life Week has an Activity Sheet where you will find a number of ideas for affirming Life in keeping with the themes of the day, some may be ideas your church has already put into practice while others may be new for your congregation. All are doable and there is enough variety that you can easily find something that is a good fit for your congregation and community.

Each Day of Life Week also has a "Fact Sheet" for the topic of the day, so that you can have the statistics and important information "at a glance" to be well-informed about the Life Issue of the day.

Another goodie provided for every day of Life Week, is a devotion for the day. All of these are available at the above link.

So what do we do with all this good information? Since our focus has been "outside the box" thinking this issue, here are a few thoughts that hopped out of my box:

Organize a "watch party", using the devotion for an opener, joining by the listed means, and sharing the activity page. Munchies are always a draw, discussion of possible directions your group may be led, and prayer wonderful additions!

Preview the topics offered and consider several small group viewings, based on the interests of the group.

Choose a topic you know they might enjoy learning about and go watch it with a friend who can't get out.

The pre-recorded session could be viewed at any time, so one of them could be part of lunch with a friend.

We can't do everything, but we can do something! There are a lot of good tools to help us here with Life Ministry, it's just a matter of figuring out how they are best used with our particular gifts and talents in the particular community where we've been placed.

Local Opportunities for Life-Affirming Activity

Opportunities in Illinois shared by Renee Mullen

LET'S BLESS AN ABORTION SURVIVOR

WHEN: ONGOING

WHERE: Send cards and letters of encouragement to Michelle Hardy c/o Richard Craig, 116 S. Arlington Heights Road, Suite 200, Arlington Heights, IL 60005

WHAT: Our local abortion facility has been mentioned in national news for a horrific legal case filed by a former patient named Michelle Hardy. Ms. Hardy was severely injured during the course of obtaining a surgical abortion and filed a lawsuit against Equity Clinic. The lawsuit alleges that Dr. Keith Reisinger-Kindle perforated Hardy's uterus during an abortion procedure and left half of the 22 week old aborted baby inside her. Let's flood her attorney's office with cards and letters of encouragement from many of us, letting her know we are praying for her, and sharing information about post-abortion healing programs like Deeper Still and Rachel's Vineyard, and pro-life resources.

COMMUNITY ECUMENICAL MEMORIAL PRO-LIFE PRAYER VIGIL

WHEN: Thursday, January 22 at 7 pm

WHERE: Savoy United Methodist Church, 3002 West Old Church Road, Champaign



WHAT: This annual prayer vigil honors all the lives lost to and affected by abortion. This multi-faith collaboration includes scripture readings, music/singing, a rose and candle procession, testimony, and fellowship. This year's speaker is Micaella Clay, an abortion survivor, former foster child, adoptee, and adoption advocate. In addition to having survived an attempt to abort her, Micaella also chose to place her own child for adoption many years ago at a time when she felt she couldn't be a parent. This year's theme is Choosing Life, Choosing Hope. All are welcome.

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 _____

Address _____

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!

1. As Israel said to Joseph, the son he thought he'd lost, "I never expected to see your face, and behold God has let me see your offspring also." (Genesis 48:11) May many parents who don't expect to see the face of their child, be turned away from the intention to abort and be blessed not only to see that child's face, but that of their grandchildren! May God bless the Pregnancy Help Centers that minister to them in their hour of need! May His hand of blessing be on the sonographers who allow those parents to see the face of their unborn child! May He provide for the needs of pregnancy help centers beyond all expectation, even as budgets are tight and the economy difficult.
2. Pray with confidence that God has it all under control for our nation and our state. We may be surprised, but God never is. As Adonijah, David's popular son said in 1 Kings 2:15b, "All Israel fully expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the Lord." Even when the unexpected happens, we can continue



²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3: 19-21

to trust God, that He sees, he knows what needs doing, and who can best do it. May His hand never leave our nation or our state, as we ask His will to be done.

3. May God, who owns it all, continue to provide for all Life-affirming ministries, including Lutherans For Life, during difficult economic times. As many have declared that they will not be making their normal end-of-year donations to charities of all sorts this year, it is beyond normal expectations that God's people would be moved to the kind of generosity that would continue the work of Life Ministry, but we pray that is ex-

actly what would happen. God has moved such unexpected generosity before, he can do it again! Let's ask Him! "and this [generosity], not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us." 2 Cor. 8:5

4. As Planned Parenthood is defunded, as they are closing their facilities, as many states have passed life-protecting laws, the angry rhetoric seems to be ratcheted up even higher, acts of violence against pregnancy help centers and churches alike are on the increase. Let's pray that we would be enabled to do the unexpected and love our enemies as Jesus asked us to! John reminds us in 1 John 3:13, "Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you." Let's pray for courage, calm, and deep faith that He will keep his promise to be with us always!

5. Let's pray with thanksgiving for the amazing, lavish, unmerited love of God! "But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" 1 Cor. 2:9