



Affirming Life In Illinois

The Meaning of Motherhood

What is the meaning of Motherhood to YOU today? Do you think of your own mother as your model of motherhood? My mother was a committed Christian woman who loved me unconditionally and repeatedly shared Jesus as her Living Lord and Savior with me. When I was old enough to understand and come to believe in Jesus as my Savior and Lord, my mother prayed with and for me to believe Jesus died to take away my sins and rose from the dead to conquer death and the devil so that I and all of His disciples could live with Him forever in heaven.

I pray your mother also shared Jesus as her Living and Loving Lord and Savior with you repeatedly. But that is not the norm today. What is the meaning of

motherhood in today's American society? The old norm of a mother raising her children to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10: 27) still exists, but in a smaller segment of our American society than two generations ago. Those words in the Bible are a lawyer's summary of the 10 Commandments to Jesus. Jesus responds with "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live" (Luke 10:28). Today we have a multi-faceted approach to motherhood, depending on your upbringing. No matter what your upbringing was, I pray that your mother loved you with a deep enough love that you knew she really loved you, no matter what your background was.

My sister-in-law has three adopted children. They know she loves them deeply. They know they are adopted; but see her as their true mother and grandmother. There are no divisions concerning their background or adoption. They are beloved by their mother; and they know it deep down where it counts.

Motherhood starts with a mother loving us, and us loving her. When a mother lives out her love for her children, then her sharing of her faith in Jesus as her Loving Lord and Savior takes on real meaning that can deepen the meaning of motherhood from a good mother to a godly mother whose faith in Jesus is reflected in her children and their love for God.

By Rev. David Bottorff,
President, LFL-IL



Children are a Gift!

According to the Bible, children are

- A gift
- A reward
- A Heritage
- A Blessing

Depending on which translation you read, you might find them called any of those words when you read Psalm 127:3. None of these words describe something to be avoided, dreaded, or resented.

Once you look away from the Bible, it is another story! For example the field of psychology...

According to BBC Science Focus magazine: "The sleepless nights, the dirty nappies, the expense, the mess, the fact that your life is no longer your own: all these and more can really ramp up

the stress and related negative emotions. It's just how your brain works.

But then, you also experience the joy of achievement, the intense love for your child, the fun you have together and the pleasure of seeing them mature."

Then Psychology Today author, Neel Burton, chimes in with:

"As well as financial costs, there are also opportunity costs. We swap friends, free time, restorative lie-ins, sleek interior décor, romantic evenings, and spontaneous travel for dirty diapers, temper tantrums, broken sleep, broken things, babysitting, and school runs—and all, perhaps, to end up with a miserable or obnoxious teen on our hands."

That is popular psychological thought on the matter.

Hollywood, Wall Street, and the social media influencers

continue the litany of "burdensome responsibility, no fun doom and gloom." From Sally Fields assuring the world that abortion is a good thing because it gives one the freedom to succeed in a career, to the anti-life investments of Buffet and Gates, the beat goes on.

Friends, it is time to get back to the Bible, back to the basics, to receive little ones as gifts to be treasured! Generally, we are delighted to receive gifts. We look forward to the events where this will happen; we don't avoid them. Even a huge gift like a car or boat requires routine maintenance and some expense, but that doesn't make us refuse the gift if we're given one! From the anticipation of the pre-born, to the softness of a newborn to the creativity of a 10 year old to the exuberance of a teenager, "Children are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is His reward!" —LL

Lutherans For Life of Illinois Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 3

Summer 2026

Save the date, Illinois

- June 23, 4-7 pm, Open House, First Step Women's Center, Springfield, RSVP 217-523-0102
- August 29, 8:30-2:00, LFL-IL Summer Life Gathering, Yorkville
- Sept 18, LFL Fall Gala, Des Moines, IA, with Dr. Lamb speaking.
- October 1, St. Charles, IA. Redeeming Grace Retreat for Post abortion Healing

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Human Trafficking Prevention Starts with Awareness

Remember in Matthew 25, how the individuals on the right and the left of the glorious throne **both** responded to the judgments they received, "Lord, when did we see you hungry...thirsty,... naked...a stranger... Sick... or imprisoned...?" We are not always aware of the difficulties and needs right around us!

In a "For Life Live" presentation, Rev. Dr. Mark Steiner addressed the topic of human trafficking, drawing from Matthew 25 to describe "the situation faced by victims of human trafficking. The victims are deprived of food, water, shelter, and clothing—and are often drugged and imprisoned. They suffer from illness and injury. The righteous described in Matthew 25 are

those who believe in Christ and perform righteous works. The righteous, led by the Holy Spirit through the saving news of the Gospel, engage in works of righteousness—Righteousness Works!"

The beauty of Rev. Dr. Steiner's presentation is that he doesn't engage in help-less hand-wringing over a very difficult and dark situation, but guides us step by step to some very practical actions that can shine light in the darkness and bring the love and hope of Christ to hurting individuals whose lives have been devalued in their current situation.

He addresses "the following points:

- Scripture on Human Trafficking
- References

- Human Trafficking Description
- An Ignoble Economy
- Wealth and Power
- Data Points
- A Prophetic Voice
- Law and Policy
- Medical Surveillance
- Courses of Action"

The quoted info is all from the Lutherans For Life website. While there were a few difficulties in sharing his presentation, it is worth working through! Here's the link:

[Human Trafficking Prevention: Righteousness Works](#)

Find a Chapter

Altamont Area Lutherans for Life

Altamont Area LFL #354

Contact: Clark Schulze

clarkschulze@yahoo.com

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

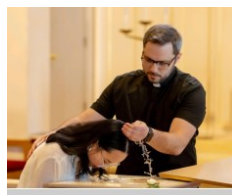
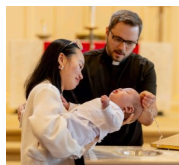
Meets via Facebook & email
Contact: Jennifer Roscow,
618-972-5366

RLOM Illinois Maternity Home News...

Abundant Life- "I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly."- John 10:10

Our "Abundant Life" theme continues to shine throughout the year at our maternity and transition homes! We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside moms and their precious babies through the blessings of home, help and hope during this special season of life. We're also excited to share that, over the past few months, baptisms have taken place at both maternity home locations—a beautiful reminder of God's grace and blessings at work in our ministry.

March 28, 2026, "Mia" and her sweet baby were baptized at Immanuel Lutheran Church in East Dundee, IL.



May 10, 2026—"Grace" and her sweet baby were baptized at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Sanford, FL. We thank God for the gift of baptism and the promise that they are dearly loved children of God. RLOM is. Thankful for the support provided, giving us the blessing to walk alongside the moms and babies in our homes and wit-



ness these beautiful moments of faith, hope, and new life. Please join us in this ministry of the heart. Visit our website to learn more at rlom.org

Our Missouri expansion is well under way as we work toward opening a maternity home in St. Louis. Jessica Thompson shares that "plans are underway for a third location of Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries in St. Louis, Missouri. Currently, we are working to raise awareness and establish partnerships with area churches, as well as applying for grants and seeking financial donations that will be used towards the purchase of a St. Louis home. Our prayer is that we can be ready to serve women and babies in Missouri by the end of 2027." To learn more, please visit our website, rlom.org/Missouri.



Outside the Box Celebrations and Observations of Life

Let's use the weird and whacky "National Days" on our calendars to affirm Life and share the Lord of Life!

July 2 is **Special Recreation for the Disabled Day**. This would be a great time to get in touch with your local park district and see what is being done to provide playgrounds that can be used by the disabled. Find out what volunteer help they might need to facilitate improvements or maintenance of special recreation opportunities and organize a group to lend a hand.

July 13 is **Barbershop Music Appreciation Day**. You might have to start working on this a little ahead of time, but why not grab a few friends willing to do 4 part harmony with you and get in touch with the Activities Director of your nearest senior center, offering to celebrate the day with those who live there. Nobody is too old to enjoy the benefits of the Gospel! Here's a fun way to bring it to those who are often overlooked.. Need an idea for a song, [here's one](#), but you can google others or use the hymns you already know and love.

July 30 is **World Day against Trafficking in Persons**. You could observe the day by contacting the manager of your nearest truck stop and see if they would allow you to post flyers in restroom stall doors with tear off phone numbers for the National Human Trafficking Hotline. That number is 1-888-373-7888 and will put callers in touch with those who can help them escape and start fresh.

August 9 is **Book Lover's Day**. Donate a life-affirming book to your local public library. Got a "Little Lending Library" in your neighborhood? That would be a great place to share a copy of *Horton Hears a Who*, *Gianna*, or *A Snowflake Named Hannah*. If you don't have a little library box, or a public library that accepts donations, consider what fellow-book lover you might just lend a good, life-affirming book and do it!

August 20 is **World Mosquito Day**. Officially it is in honor of the discovery of the connection between the mosquito and malaria, but let's take a different tack and consider the African Prov-

erb: "If you think you are too small to make a difference, you have never shared your room with a mosquito." With that in mind, let's take today to ask God how He might like to use us to speak for the voiceless as Gospel Motivated Voices For Life . . . And to remember that He can use the smallest of things to achieve eternal results.

September 15 is **International Dot Day**. Based on a popular children's book, *The Dot*, "this day serves as a reminder that everyone can make their mark in the world, no matter how big or small, and that creativity is a powerful tool for self-expression and personal growth." (according to the list of national days.com) Is praying at Planned Parenthood part of your life? Why not set up a blank sheet of posterboard, draw dots, and invite passersby to make a dot or two. It would take 90,600 dots to illustrate a conservative estimate of the number of babies lost to abortion in Illinois in one year. It might also be good to thank artists who contribute a dot with a bookmark or handout illustrating the stages of fetal development, as the "dot" is a representation of size and numbers, not a "blob"!

Independence Day Thoughts 250 Years Later

These thoughts come to us from Justice Clarence Thomas, as part of a speech delivered at UTA Law School, and reported in Life News.com.

"America's Declaration of Independence, Thomas asserted, contains two unique and crucial principles. The first is that **the rights of man come from God, not from the Constitution or the government**. "Even as so much of our God-given and constitutional rights were denied us," Thomas said, recalling the laws of racial segregation and the prevailing racial hostility which permeated his home state of Georgia growing up, "we still faithfully said the Pledge of Allegiance, memorized the preamble to the Constitution, and yearned for the fulfillment of its promised ideals." He continued, "At home, at school, and at church, we were taught that we are inherently equal, that equality comes from God and that it could not be diminished by man." Thomas insisted, "**We were made in the image and likeness of God**. That proposition was not debatable and was beyond the power

of man to alter. Others with power and animus could treat us as unequal, but they lacked the divine power to make us so."

The second key principle of the Declaration, Thomas said, is found in the document's final line: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." The sense of self-sacrifice evinced in that line, the commitment to uphold one's beliefs and principles even at the cost of one's life, Thomas said, is the "supreme act of courage. Those principles were more important than their fear. Nothing in the Declaration of Independence, I now realize, matters without that final sentence. Without that sentence, the rest of the Declaration is but mere words on parchment paper."

"What changed the world was not the words, but the commitment

and spirit of the people who were willing to labor, sacrifice, and even give their lives — what Lincoln at Gettysburg called the 'last full measure of devotion' — for the Declaration's principles," the nearly -35-year veteran of the Supreme Court averred. That "devotion" was lived out in the nation's founding, by the men who fought and, in many cases, died for the then-fledgling United States, and has been lived out in successive generations who have fought, toiled, and sacrificed

for the good of the nation. "Sadly, these sentiments are not as widely shared among our fellow citizens today, and they certainly do not seem to have that sustaining strength that they had back then," he observed. "In fact, all

too often the sentiments tend toward cynicism, rejection, hostility, and animus toward our country and its ideals."

You can read the full article [here](#)



Illinois Youth Life Essay Contest News



This year the LFL Youth Essay Contest had the theme "That They May Have Life," based on Jesus words in John 10:10. Our Illinois youth provided some thoughtful and passionate writing, as they explored the topic in their essays.

The high school winner here in Illinois was Christian Westfall from Christ the Rock Lutheran School in Centralia. Christian's essay was entitled "That They May Have Life, The

Meaning Between Life and Death." He shared from his heart the experience of losing loved ones, saying, "End-of-life care is not about death; it is about love. It is about presence, mercy, and honoring the image of God in every person until their final breath."

Although Christian will not be able to join us at the Summer Life Gathering to read his essay, one of our LFL-IL Essay Coordinators will read it on his behalf, so those in attendance will be able to hear all he has to say on this issue.

At the middle school level, our state winner was Connor Jones from Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Collinsville. Connor's Essay was entitled "Against the Odds," and explored the life-affirming value of foster care. Connor wrote, "Foster care is a way to live out the command to care for

the fatherless so that they may have life. . . an abundant life means stability, safety, and belonging."

Connor's Essay has gone on to win the National Lutheran's For Life Youth Essay Contest! If you see Connor, be sure to thank him for

representing our state well! His essay will also be shared at the LFL-IL Summer Life Gathering on August 29th. Christian and Connor are just a few of the youth who serve as such an encouragement! We thank all those who took part in the essay contest and we thank God for a new generation that loves Life!

Keep Illinois Youth in prayer, as God raises up a new generation that loves Life! May He hold them in the palm of His hand and nurture vibrant faith among them.

Coalition Life, Affirming Life in Illinois

Coalition Life will be hosting a benefit dinner on July 16th.

"Join us on Thursday, July 16 for the **Coalition Life Banquet and Gala** at the Greensfelder Recreation Complex in Queeny Park. This annual evening brings together supporters committed to protect-

ing women, children and families. Registration and program details will be announced soon. For sponsorship and RSVP info, email Joe@CoalitionLife.com Or scan the last QR Code



The Greensfelder Recreation Complex, Queeny Park, St. Louis

Good News for Life...You Prayed, God answered!

Among the prayers we offered up together as of our last newsletter, was a request for God's intervention and help for Rose Docherty of Scotland who had been arrested for offering conversation "only if you want" outside a hospital where abortions are performed. Thanks for praying! Rose is free and the charges against her dismissed.

The story was recently shared in an [article](#) by Steven Ertelt.

"Sheriff Stuart Reid at Glasgow Sheriff Court ruled that prosecutors "failed to disclose an offense known to the law of Scotland" and dismissed the two charges of "influencing" within the zone pro loco et tempore.

Docherty, a Christian grandmother from Glasgow, had stood silently with a sign reading: "Coercion is a crime, here to talk, only if you want." She did not approach any-



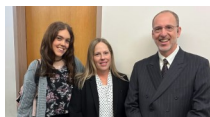
one, did not discuss abortion and offered conversation only to those who wanted it."

Outside court, Docherty hailed the ruling as a victory for free speech.

Docherty also said: "Simply for being available for the lonely, the afraid and the coerced, I have been treated like a violent criminal. But thankfully, today the charges have been dismissed. The judge ruled that the charges were irrelevant and that they were a breach of my Article 10 free speech rights."

Her legal team, coordinated by ADF International, argued the charges were insufficiently clear and violated her right to freedom of expression

...The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children called it "a stunning victory for freedom of speech and common sense in Scotland."



In another answer to prayer, Anastasia Rogers, the young California Pro-lifer who was arrested for videotaping an "air handshake" in front of Planned Parenthood and posting it on social media was heard by a jury that has refused to prosecute her! The vast majority of the jurors found her "not guilty", but the jury could not come to consensus, leading to a mistrial. And now, the court has dropped the case.

"This is a tremendous answer to prayer and a very encouraging step forward," said Alexandra Snyder, CEO of Life Legal Defense Foundation.

"Anastasia should never have been dragged through a criminal trial for peaceful pro-life advocacy. We are grateful that she can return to the sidewalk and continue offering help, hope, and truth to women and their children

Thank you for praying and **thank God for His beautiful answers!**

Abortion in the News: the Need for Chastity

In discussing the 6th commandment, Luther speaks to both the single person and those who are married.

We understand the admonition to "flee youthful lusts" (2 Timothy 2:22) as part of the answer to preventing unplanned pregnancy. But we sometimes forget that the call to chastity is also for married people and that a lack thereof can lead to abortion, as well.

It is nothing new that abortion is used to cover up infidelity or abuse. The problem has been compounded by the easy availability of abortion pills. In Glasgow, Scotland, it was

recently reported that a paramedic was found guilty of assault and sentenced to 10 1/2 years in prison for causing his girlfriend's abortion via pills. His motive? He hadn't told her that he was a married man! Legal cases recently in the news in Texas, in Louisiana, and here in Illinois, as well as a growing number of other places in the U.S. involve women who have been forced to take abortifacients against their will by men who got the drugs through the mail. This does not result in a "choice" for the mother, but does add to the transgressions against the 6th commandment trans-

gression against the 5th commandment: "You shall not kill." Much as David tried to cover his sin of adultery with Uriah's death and was left with a heavy heart until he took it to God, people still use death as a cover, hoping that the transgression will remain hidden. Our Gospel motivation moves us to share the truth of needing chastity and the truth of forgiveness and healing only Christ can bring!

Let's pray with David, "Create in me a clean heart, O God!" so that "we may lead a chaste and decent life," as Luther put it. And let's pray for a national surge of the desire for chastity and the God-powered ability to flee lust.

Abortion in the News: Limiting Medical Choices

"Brionna Johnson was first diagnosed with fibroids, a condition that can cause severe pain, pressure, and other complications, in October 2024. For over a year, she searched for answers.... Then in December 2025, she found out she was pregnant.

As her baby grew, so did the physical toll. The fibroids caused intense pain and made it difficult for her to walk. Concerned for her health and the safety of her child, she went back to the doctor looking for help that would protect both of them.

Instead, she was told her baby's life would have to end. Brionna refused. She did not see her child as a problem to be eliminated. She saw a life worth protecting.

They said, "Hysterectomy would be my best option, and I was like, 'absolutely not,'" the mother, from Chicago, told ABC7 in a story published on Friday, April 17.

Brionna sought a second opinion and found a physician willing to consider a different approach, one that did not begin with killing her child. She came under the care of Dr. Pierre Johnson, an obstetrician-gynecologist at Loretto Hospital in Chicago.

At 17 weeks pregnant, Brionna underwent a complex surgery to remove the fibroids. In a case later described as one of the most remarkable of his career, Dr. Johnson successfully removed the entire 27-pound mass through a small incision without harming her baby.

What she had been told was not possible happened."

Her story highlights a reality many women face. When serious medical complications arise during pregnancy, abortion is often presented as the only solution. That framing leaves little room for alternatives and can make an already difficult situation feel hopeless."

From an article by Ashlynn Lemos in Life News.com

Pray for the medical community to consider Life worth the effort of grappling with difficult situations! Thank Him for Dr. Johnson & all medical professionals who seek to save lives, even when it's a challenge!

Abortion in the News: No Immediate Amendment in IL

Thank you to all of you who prayed and emailed the Governor about the proposed amendment to the Illinois Constitution! On May 5th, The Chicago Tribune declared "a rare pro-life victory," as it was decided not to push the amendment. forward

"The decision comes after months of sustained advocacy led by Illinois Right to Life, which warned that such an amendment would permanently

enshrine abortion—and other sweeping "reproductive freedoms"—into the Illinois Constitution. If adopted, a constitutional amendment would have made Illinois' abortion policies significantly more difficult to change through future legislation.

Illinois Right to Life's concerns were confirmed earlier this year through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

request filed with the Pritzker administration. After a weeks-long process, the administration released records showing internal discussions about a potential "single-vote amendment" combining abortion rights with broader LGBTQ-related provisions."

That's when you were asked to email!

The above quotes are from Illinois Right to Life, who assures us that they will continue to monitor the situation.

LFL Position Statement... Abortion

WHEREAS, Scripture clearly states that God is the Creator of all human life (Job 10:12) from the moment of conception (i.e., fertilization) (Psalm 139:13,14); and

WHEREAS, Human life, even though marred by the Fall, has a unique and valued place in God's creation (Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:5); and

WHEREAS, God sent His Son to die and redeem all human life (John 3:16); and

WHEREAS, Willful abortion is murder, and God says murder is wrong (Exodus 20:13);

therefore be it

RESOLVED That Lutherans For Life opposes willful abortion as a moral option, except as a tragically unavoidable result of medical procedures necessary to prevent the death of the mother, such as ectopic pregnancy; and be it further

RESOLVED That members of Lutherans For Life are committed to helping women experiencing crisis pregnancies and offering hope to those who suffer the aftermath of abortion.

Updated February 20, 2026

All LFL Position Statements [here](#).



Fostering Life...A Ministry Idea to Replicate

As of fiscal year 2025, Illinois had 16,610 children in foster care. During 2025, 254 children aged out of foster care in Illinois. What becomes of those children? The statistics are not good. If you are into statistics, you can read lots and lots of them at [The Christian Alliance For Orphans](#) and [World Metrics.org](#) the sources from which I gathered the above. Beyond that, what can we, the church do about the situation?

One answer that demonstrates the love of Jesus to children who have aged out of foster care, comes to us from Life Song for Orphans, the group that manages our LFL-IL adoption assistance fund. Some of their members in Texas have begun a project, called "My Family's Farm", to

provide the structure, sense of belonging, and methodical launch into adult life that is missing for this segment of our population.

"On an 8-acre working farm in Austin, Texas, young women are welcomed into the steady, everyday rhythms of life together. Here, they care for animals. They help with chores, share meals, attend life-skills classes, and gain work experience. They learn responsibilities and communication and what it means to be part of a healthy community.

After a 90-day stay in the guest room in the main house, each young woman is invited to sign a lease for a tiny home. She then begins paying monthly rent that increases slowly over time to mirror real-world cost of living, helping her build responsi-

bility and confidence. Half of each payment is saved for her in a high-yield account, and when she completes her time at the farm, she receives the full savings—often nearly \$20,000—toward housing, a car, or education as she launches into independence.

It's practical. It's ordinary. And somehow, by the grace of God, it is also deeply healing.

Because sometimes healing looks like therapy and counseling, and sometimes healing looks like sitting down at a dinner table every night with people who know your name, notice your absence, and expect you to show up again tomorrow.

Sometimes 'belonging' is built one meal, one chore, and one conversation at a time." Read the full article [here](#).

Quotes to Ponder, Dr. Mildred Jefferson



"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver."—Prov. 25:11

From an article on "Breakpoint", honoring the efforts of Dr. Mildred Jefferson, who overcame many obstacles to become the first black woman graduate of Harvard Medical School. She has a long string of "firsts", including speaking clearly for life.

"In 1970, the American Medical Association decided it was ethical for physicians to perform abortions in jurisdictions where they were legal. Dr. Jefferson saw this as a travesty and believed it vio-

lated both the Hippocratic Oath and Judeo-Christian ethics. She immediately began working for the pro-life cause in Massachusetts, co-founding Massachusetts Citizens for Life. In 1971, she was appointed to the board of the National Right to Life."

Some of her notable quotes are:

"I became a physician in order to help save lives. I am at once a physician, a citizen, and a woman, and I am not willing to stand aside and allow the concept of expendable human lives to turn this great land of ours into just another exclusive reservation where only the perfect, the privileged, and the planned have the right to live."

"The fight for the right to life is . . . the cause of every man, woman and child who cares not only about his or her own family, but the whole family of man."

"Late in 1972, a Boston public television station featured Dr. Jefferson in "The Advocates," a series that covered abortion issues. The program aired nationwide and highlighted Dr. Jefferson as an eloquent speaker with impeccable logic. Her appearance was so effective, many minds were changed "

[\(Full article here\)](#)

May God raise up many more logical, eloquent, Gospel-motivated speakers for Life!

A Forgotten View of Motherhood

I ran across a poem recently in an older "Ideals" magazine. It was entitled "The Old Rocking Chair", by LaVerne P. Larsen. It caught my eye because I happen to have an old rocking chair that belonged to my mother, where I can rock and remember her. Many of the mental images presented in that poem are those I can relate to...images of a mother's love lavished on her children with joy. I think we need those reminders in a world that sees motherhood as a course in drudgery 101! So here are a few verses from "The Old Rocking Chair":

"I could see my mother rocking
By the lamplight every night
As I climbed into her lap
With a cozy, warm delight.

She would tell me lovely stories
And sing sweet lullabies;
With gentleness she'd hold me
Till I'd close my eyes....

Then I seemed to see my mother
With folded hands in prayer
As she did so many evenings
In her grand old rocking chair."

Many of the memories from my own mother's rocking chair were of adult conversations that ran far into the night. She had two rocking chairs in the nook off her kitchen and there we talked and prayed and navigated countless challenges.

May every child have a praying mother, a listening mother, a mother who reads stories and gently holds and nurtures! We in modern day America may have closed the door of history on this picture of motherhood, but, dear friends, it has immense value for every age, even these present days. If we "empower motherhood" let it be with the power of love, grace, and steady faith!
—LL

The Gift of Family

Focus on the Family Magazine's June/July issue this year had a lot of thoughts on America's 250th birthday. Among other things, they included prayer cards to pray for our nation. What better birthday gift could we give our dear, divided motherland than to pray for her?

Here is an example, the "Pray for Families" card"

"We thank you for our Families.

We pray for strong marriages and
Wisdom in training up our children.

Bring healing to hurting families and
Restore unity in fragmented marriage

relationships. We pray for harmony
And love, along with a spirit of
Obedience in our children. May
We continually seek forgiveness
From You and in our relationships
With family members.

I Corinthians 13: 4-8"

You can find out more about Focus on the Family and their magazine at their [website](#). They offer a lot of practical help for building strong families.

Not just on the 4th of July, but daily, the family in our day needs our prayer. Many have trouble even defining

"family" because of the challenges of our times! This very basic unit of society is a gift from God....According to Proverbs 19: 14, a prudent wife is from the Lord and according to Psalm 127:3 says children are a gift from the Lord. And 1 Corinthians 7:6 reminds us that singleness and marriage are both gifts!

Let's pray for families across our land, for those struggling to keep it together, for those longing for family, for those considering exiting family, those celebrating years of family life, and for those just beginning the adventure of marriage and family. May the grace and love of Jesus fill each of their situations! May the family be a safe haven for all its members!

Mis-representing Motherhood

You may know the name Abby Johnson from the book or movie, "Unplanned" in which she chronicled her journey from Planned Parenthood to Life Advocacy. Or you may be familiar with her organization, "And Then There Were None, which is dedicated to helping abortion workers leave the industry. Abby was recently interviewed on "Issues Etc.", a Lutheran Public Radio program. In this discussion, she shared her thoughts about how the sexual revolution and

feminism movement has contributed to the downfall of our view of motherhood. She describes the journey from Hollywood stars that everyone wanted to emulate being beautiful, feminine "moms" to burning bras and actually opposing the feminine model of womanhood. She described some of the cultural shift fall out, surrogacy and abortion "because I don't want to wreck my body with stretch marks!"

Part of the conversation that has stuck with me personally addressed the ques-

tion, "What are we telling our children?" Wow! Is that food for thought! If you've read or heard of the rise in depression among middle school and high school students, have you ever considered that as a society we've told them repeatedly they are burdens? No wonder they don't feel good about themselves!

You can listen to the interview at: [Issues, Etc.](#) It takes about 12 minutes.

Let's thank God for parenthood and pray that we might honor parents!

Eyes, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

Part of the wonder of a baby are those big, beautiful eyes. Did you know, every baby is born with full-sized eyes? It is one part of the human body that never grows after birth! Ears, on the other hand, keep growing our whole life long. The why of these differences will have to wait for a lengthy discussion with the Creator, but it is fun to contemplate.

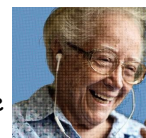
I remember my senior English instructor pointing out that babies'



eyes were sparkling, compared to those of older people. Part of a discussion of Sarah Teasdale's lovely poem, "Barter", he posited that our eyes were dulled as we saw more of the brokenness of the world around us and we began to be less filled with wonder. This in reference to the line, "children's faces looking up, holding wonder like a cup".

I'd like to think that there are those individuals who continue to be inspired by the wonder of creation and that it's more a matter of fac-

es that have not only grown into their eyes, but have developed some lines and wrinkles along the way...Let's call them "crinkly" eyes. And yes, they sparkle, too! The wonder of God's creative work is there to ring the joy bells and elicit praise at every age. "I will praise You for I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" —LL



Pray we never lose sight of the wonder of God's creation in every single human life!

Empowering Motherhood with a Place of Refuge

Lutherans For Life has begun a new program with the hope of making every Lutheran Church in America a House of Refuge for those facing a surprise pregnancy. When I explained to one pastor that the idea was to make our congregations a safe place for such a mother to go for help in her time of need, his response was, "Of course! What else should the church be, but a safe place for sinners to find grace?"

Unfortunately, over the years the church has acquired a reputation for being judgmental to the point that it is not the first place a person facing a surprise pregnancy considers turning for help in navigating their challenging circumstances.

The House of Refuge program is designed to help remedy that situation. As churches commit to serving families facing this need, they are recommended to area pregnancy resource centers

and added to an online directory so that moms in need can find them. Not only can this empower parents to continue pregnancies they were not expecting to deal with, but it can empower the church to be the hands and feet of Jesus as they minister to their communities.

For more information and to get your church started on the path to becoming a House of Refuge, contact Lutherans For Life: [on the web](#) or call 888.364.LIFE (5433)

—LL

THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE

A Summer Life Gathering, Of Lutherans For Life of Illinois

At Cross Lutheran Church,
8609 State Route 47, Yorkville, Illinois 60560

August 29, 2026
8:30 AM—2:00 PM

LUNCH
INCLUDED
WITH REGISTRATION
(\$25.00)

**Keynote: Human Trafficking,
The Pandemic
Hidden in Plain Sight
Chris Baker, Ink 180**

John 10:10
"I came that they may
have life and have it
abundantly."

Illinois Life Ministries Participating
Breakfast With Baby: Our Savior, Carol Stream
Redeeming Life Outreach Ministry Maternity Home, East Dundee
Caring Network Diaper Banks, Itaska
We Are Called to Care Foster Care Ministry, Yorkville
Coalition Life, Flossmoor, Carbondale, St. Louis
Lutherans For Life of Illinois Panel Discussion
Concordia University Chicago Life Team
Illinois Youth Essay Presentation

INGATHERING
FOR
Breakfast With Baby
Called to Care,
Caring Network
RLOM Maternity Home

SILENT AUCTION
To benefit
Lutherans For Life,
National

Registration is Now Open!

THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE OF ILLINOIS

SUMMER LIFE GATHERING

Registration (\$25, includes lunch)

NAME _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Organization (Team, Chapter, Church, Self) _____

Home Church/Town _____

Dietary Restrictions _____

Translation Assistance Required?

ASL ☐

Spanish ☐

To help us with planning, please send in your registration form and payment (checks payable to Lutherans for Life of Illinois) by August 22, to: Alice Steljes, 1011 Jefferson Street, Pawnee, IL 62558

ITEMS FOR INGATHERING

Caring Network

Diapers, All sizes

Baby wipes

Baby formula

Baby shampoo

Baby lotion

We Are Called to Care

Gift Cards (\$10 McDonalds for teen care packages, \$25

Pizza for foster family packages, \$10 Starbucks for foster mom packages)

Baby supplies (bottles, bibs, towel/washcloth sets, etc.)

RLOM Maternity Home

Detergent, All Free & Clear

Insert Bags, Diaper Genie (unscented)

swaddles, lightweight (sizes

0-3, 3-6, and 6-9 months)

Nursing bras (all sizes):

Glass bottles, Dr. Brown's (4 oz or 8 oz, all nipple sizes)

Breakfast with Baby

Diapers large sizes

Baby clothing up to size 4T

Baby hygiene products (unopened baby bath wash & shampoo, baby oil, powder,

diaper rash ointment, wipes, etc.)

Infant and toddler toys (wooden puzzles, board books, story books, small toys, stuffed animals etc.)

Feeding Items (Enfamil formula, Avent or Dr. Brown bottles, baby plates, sippy cups, utensils, unopened baby food, etc.)

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 for all that delights Him!

- ◆ Father, we pray today for those held in bondage to traffickers. You have created these people and love them dearly. Grant us courage to lend help and walk with them into freedom even if it isn't an easy journey! Thank you Jesus, for coming to set us all free from the bondage to sin!



"the prayer of the upright is His delight. ." —Proverbs 15:8b

- ◆ We pray for the clients served by Caris Pregnancy & Counseling Services of Chicago and for all visitors to pregnancy resource centers. "Pray for peace in hard seasons and uncertain moments, for strength in each decision, and for hope for the future ahead. Pray that they would experience God's nearness and provision in every season."
- ◆ We pray for our leaders at the state and national levels. May God help those who represent us to do so with integrity and honor. May they remember that we are a nation "under God" and seek just, life-affirming, and righteous solutions to our state and national problems, as those accountable to Him and to the people they represent.
- ◆ We pray for all expectant mothers...Grant health, wisdom, peace, and strength throughout pregnancy. May they experience the abundant life found in Jesus.

- ◆ Thank you Father for the gift of parenthood! Thank you that you have chosen it as a picture of your relationship with us! Help all parents to reflect your love for their children and to lavish on them the grace you have given each of us through Jesus!
- ◆ Thank you Father for blessing our nation these past 250 years! You have given us prosperity beyond anything we deserve, a unique form of government in which we have a say, and the rule of law, as opposed to the whims of a ruler. For all these blessings we thank you! Now, Lord as our country goes forward, please bless us with hearts that seek your will and your honor above our own! and that seek to be faithful stewards of your many gifts.
- ◆ We pray for those in foster

families this day, Oh Lord. Please provide for them in every way. As foster parents seek to nurture and guide the young lives entrusted to them, give them the love, the patience, the steadiness and the gentle grace they need to bless those youngsters. Grant the children the loving care and healing they need as they navigate life with early losses and trauma. Encourage and uphold caseworkers, family courts, lawyers, and officials involved in foster care that each might see the lives of these children as valuable and worthy of the effort needed to advocate for them.

- ◆ Let's pray for those who are currently challenging Illinois' Assisted Suicide Bill in Court. They have filed suit because of the law's discrimination against those with long term illness or disability. May God help their legal teams to overturn this threat to the lives of vulnerable people.
- ◆ Dear Lord, our Good Shepherd, thank you for bringing your flock into fellowship around your Word in congregations! Please continue to bless your church with effective preaching of the Word, faithful prayers of your people, and loving service to our communities! May we go forth with joy, sharing the truth in love. May you delight in us as the shepherd delights in His lambs!