The Mission, Message, and Manner of



LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

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

Our Vision …
Every Lutheran, both individually and in community, upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same

lutheransforlife.org

"Lutherans For Life? Sure, I've heard of them. They are that anti-abortion group in the church."

"Lutherans For Life? Sure, I've heard of them. By the way, do they sell health insurance, too?"

"Lutherans For Life? I agree. I think all Lutherans should be Lutherans for the rest of their lives."

These are a few of the misconceptions about Lutherans For Life that have been heard, and these come from fellow Lutherans!

How about you? Do you ***really*** understand what LFL is all about?

This booklet is designed to help people understand the unique role LFL has as a life-affirming ministry. So please consider the three Ms of Lutherans For Life:

Mission, Message, and Manner

Mission

The mission of Lutherans For Life is to equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. This makes us different from other for-life groups.

- We want to equip Lutherans to be positive, life-affirming voices that uphold the truth of the God-given value of human life, both in local congregations and in society.
- We strive to affirm that each human life is created and gifted by God, that each human life is someone for whom Jesus Christ died, and that each human life is someone the Holy Spirit desires to call into an eternal relationship with Him.

Therefore, our mission is not to change laws, although we hope that our mission will lead to laws being changed.

Our mission is not to elect pro-life candidates to office, although we hope that our mission will lead Lutherans to vote for pro-life candidates.

Our mission is not to start pregnancy centers, although we hope our mission will lead Lutherans to support and volunteer at such centers.

Our mission is to equip Lutherans so that they understand that the life issues of our time are much more than controversial political issues. They are grave spiritual issues, for they assault the Creator of Life and insult the Lord of Life.

In short, our mission is to change hearts. Those with changed hearts will change society. Only God, working through the power of His Gospel, can change hearts. That is why the Gospel motivates all that we do. That leads us to our **Message**.

Message

The message of Lutherans For Life is the heart-changing truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our primary message is not so much: "Here's what we should do." Rather it is: "Here is what God has done that gives value and dignity to all human life."

This is what makes our message unique. This is what makes our message powerful and effective. God's Word does things! It is a **"living"** Word. It is an **"active"** Word and **"sharper than any two-edged sword"** (Hebrews 4:12). It never returns without accomplishing God's purpose.

Gospel Preparation

Preparatory for the Gospel, of course, is the truth of God's Word of Law. In an age of relative truth, someone needs to take a stand and say that there is a truth. In an age of moral pluralism, someone needs to stand up and say that some things are morally wrong. In an age where abortion is called a "right" and a "choice," where assisted suicide and euthanasia are called "compassion," where sex outside of marriage is called "natural" and "safe," someone needs to be bold and call them wrong.

The Law, however, must not be used to drive people to despair but to lead them to Christ and what God has done in Him to forgive the wrong choices and bad decisions people make in their lives.

The sorrowful pregnant teen needs to hear that she is loved by God as that love is shared and shown through the Body of Christ. She needs the support of God's people to help her in any way they are able.

Women and men who are filled with sorrow and regret over an abortion decision need to hear about the forgiveness, hope, and healing that are found in Jesus. The depth of the sorrow over this sin is so deep that only the Gospel of Jesus can lift them up out of the darkness.

Families who realize that they have made wrong decisions about end-of-life issues need to hear that they live under grace and that God will never leave them or forsake them.

Gospel Motivation
The Gospel is not just something that happens to us. It is something that lives within us. The Gospel, not the "shoulds" and the "should nots" of the Law, is to be our motivation for making good decisions.

Christian teenagers, for example, need to be reminded of whose they are. They have better motivation for making good decisions than the fear of horrible diseases happening to their bodies. They have a Savior who loves them and lives in their bodies as His temple.

The message of the Gospel enables us to live lives acceptable and pleasing to God.

Gospel Transformation
The message of the Gospel transforms us to live and think differently in the face of problems and afflictions in our lives. Things are never hopeless,

and we do not have to turn to death as the solution to the problems of life.

The message of the Gospel assures us that nothing can ever separate us from God's love.

The message of the Gospel assures us that just as God was at work in the suffering of His Son on the cross, so He is at work in the suffering of His people, even bringing good from it.

The message of the Gospel assures us that there is a glory waiting for us that cannot compare at all with the sufferings of this present time.

Gospel Proclamation
The life issues provide tremendous opportunity to proclaim this wonderful message. The primary reason Lutherans For Life wants to raise awareness of the life issues among pastors and congregations is so that more will realize that we have the message that so many people need to hear applied to their sin and their lives.

We have the greatest message in the world, and we run the risk of causing offense to God's people when we fail to apply it to their struggles. Of course, even the greatest message in the world is not always presented in a great way. That leads us to our final "M" – **Manner**.

Manner

Lutherans For Life desires to pattern its manner after Paul and **"speak the truth in love."** Admittedly, that is not always easy.

Pro-lifers can become frustrated when our biblical, reasonable, logical, and loving message is twisted and turned until we are compared to the Taliban!

Pro-lifers can become angry at the deafening silence of so many in the church when 3,200 of God's children are killed

every day through abortion and in terribly cruel ways. This is a righteous anger. We should be angry! But we should not sin in our anger. Our anger should not lead us to violence or abrasiveness or arrogant insult. We should not return evil with evil. To do so only raises barriers and defenses that are often impenetrable.

This does not mean we cower in the face of opposition or give up in the face of persecution. We are to be courageous in our conviction to our mission and bold in the proclamation of our message.

The truth we proclaim is not to be proclaimed timidly or ashamedly, but it is to be proclaimed in love. Love confronts people with their sins, but love does not condemn people because of their sins.

Paul reminds us of the way of love.

> **"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth"** (1 Corinthians 13:4-6).

So, about those misconceptions Lutherans have about the mission, message, and manner of Lutherans For Life:

"Lutherans For Life is that anti-abortion group in the church." **No, we are a For Life group because God, in His Word, is For Life.**

"Do you sell health insurance, too?" **No, we offer life assurance in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

"I think all Lutherans should be Lutherans for the rest of their lives." **That would be nice, but we do invite all Lutherans to be part of Lutherans For Life and our Mission, Message, and Manner.**

Be a Gospel-motivated Voice For Life!



You can help share the life-giving message of Lutherans For Life by becoming an annual or monthly sponsor member or through a one-time contribution.

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Go to the "DONATE" page at lutheransforlife.org to find out more or call 888.364.LIFE (5433) or email info@lutheransforlife.org.



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