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LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Winter 2026



That They May Have LIFE

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LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

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Excuses

by Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske



After 15 years in the ministry, I've heard nearly every excuse that people have come up with attempting to justify abortion and assisted suicide. Different variations of arguments based on personal autonomy, economics, mercy—I've heard them all. You probably have too.

And, unfortunately, because we are dealing with a world full of corrupt, self-centered sinners, these excuses, while obviously completely wrong, are somewhat to be expected. It's hard to be surprised when you hear a sinful person express the desire to harm another human being for one reason or another because that's precisely what sin has done to us.

However, I am somewhat surprised when I hear people attempt to justify the murder of an innocent human being, especially through abortion, using the Scriptures. Actually, I am more than surprised. I am flabbergasted when people, especially those who claim the name of Christ, argue that God is either silent on these issues and therefore leaves the matter to our discretion, or worse, that He actually supports and approves of abortion and assisted suicide in His Holy Word.

This is, of course, completely absurd. The entire Bible testifies to the fact that God loves the people He's created and despises anything that harms them. In fact, this is the very essence of the Gospel. I could fill this entire journal with verse upon verse that testifies to God's love for life and still have plenty left over. However, we don't really need to look any further than the words of Christ in John 10, the words that form the basis of our **Life Sunday/Life Week 2027** theme:

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

I don't know how much clearer Jesus could get! With just a few words, He reminds us first that death and destruction are the work of the devil, and more importantly, that the whole goal of His incarnation and earthly mission was to give life and to free His creation from the curse of death. Jesus' main desire is to deliver us from death, not give us into it!

It's that simple.

God Himself became man, suffered, died, and rose from the dead to ensure that we would have life. And not just to have life for a time, but forever. Jesus cares about our lives so much that He gave His own so that our lives would last into eternity. What more could He say or do to convince us?



Jesus is the most For Life person that has been and will ever be!

What a blessing it is to know that our Lord came that we might have life!

It's a Wonderful Life

by Diane Albers, President of Lutherans For Life



I don't have to tell you that Christmas is coming, but I guess that I am! One tradition that Mike and I have is to watch *It's a Wonderful Life*. The whole premise of the movie is encapsulated in George Bailey's statement: "I suppose it would have been better if I'd never been born at all!" For the rest of the movie, Clarence—his angel who is trying to help George *and* get his wings—shows George what would have happened if he had not been born.



By the end of the movie, George eventually sees that his life did have meaning and did have an impact on those around him.

What does that have to do with you and Lutherans For Life?

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

I think that we could all agree that Satan is active in our world today, stealing life and killing life from its beginning to its end. How? IVF, abortion, a disregard for people with any disability, assisted suicide, and euthanasia, to name a few.

Now, how does our theme verse and *It's a Wonderful Life* go together? It is in the last part of the verse: **Christ came that we might have life.**

The Bible tells us of God's love for us from Genesis 1. He created us differently from the rest of creation and cares for us despite that first sin in the Garden of Eden. Psalm 139 tells us that He knew us even before our conception and knows the days of our lives. Isaiah 43:1 tells us that we are His, and He calls us by name! There are many more instances that show how much God loves us in the Old Testament, always pointing to the Messiah and the death and resurrection of Jesus.

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1).

Because of Christ's death and resurrection, we have a new birth which changes the believer's life. We do what God asks us to do in His Word. Our worship becomes obedient service to God, involving our heart, mind, and will.* Like George Bailey, your obedient service to God is having an impact. For one thing, the chances of you being a member of Lutherans For Life are high because you are reading *LifeDate* and thereby supporting our life-affirming work by your faithful donations. (And we thank you because we could not do what we do without you!)

Perhaps you have had the opportunity to counsel a woman contemplating abortion, but many of us have not. However, you support your local pregnancy

center and promote foster care and adoption whenever you can. You may not know a lot about IVF, but you know what happens to all the embryos that are not implanted and look for opportunities to let others know about it. You may not have a child with some sort of disability in your life, but maybe you are working to make your church handicap accessible or looking for ways to be more welcoming to children and adults with disabilities. You cannot believe that parts of the medical community will assist someone in dying or outright kill them, so you go to the polls and vote against these propositions and amendments and vote to elect life-affirming government representatives at the federal, state, and local level.

Your obedient service to God *is* having an impact on members of your family, your church, and the community at large! Do you want to make that impact bigger and better? Become a **Life Advocate**. Form a **Life Team**. Ask your pastor to suggest other like-minded people in your congregation. Form a **Life Chapter**, perhaps with several Life Teams from nearby churches. The team at Lutherans For Life is excited to help you! Meanwhile, keep up your obedient life-affirming service to God!

By the end of the movie, George was praying, "Dear God, I want to live!!" May our prayer also be, "Dear God, I want to live—in service to LIFE!!"

*(Footnote, Romans 12:1; *Concordia Self-Study Bible*, Copyright © 1986, Concordia Publishing House).



THREE WAYS TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

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

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

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

lutheransforlife.org/volunteer-relations

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE
Volunteer Relations

... from fertilization to forever

A Renewed Appreciation of Life

by Mandi Wesley



Our lives are full of moments and events that form and affect our views, behaviors, attitudes, and daily living. Many of these events are minor and may simply tweak the way we approach specific situations. Other events are major and leave a lasting impact on us. Tragic accidents, near-death experiences, losing a loved one, or receiving a serious medical diagnosis certainly fall into the "major events" category. Situations such as these have a way of humbling us and giving us a renewed appreciation of the gift of life.

My husband, Ryan, suffered a massive stroke on June 8. After about 36 hours of tests at the hospital and a second, smaller stroke, doctors discovered that Ryan had an infection in his blood, which had created a vegetation on his aortic valve. His heart had started throwing clots up to his brain, causing the strokes. Open-heart surgery was necessary and urgent, as he was at risk for more strokes at any point. When the surgeon told me his valve replacement surgery would be on June 12, I was temporarily relieved … I thought it was good news that they could fix the issue. That relief lasted about five seconds, at which point the surgeon explained that Ryan was at high risk for a brain bleed during the surgery. The surgeon's exact words were, ***"We're damned if we do; damned if we don't … I don't feel good about this, but we don't have a choice. He could very well bleed out on the table."*** I don't think I'll ever forget the hopelessness I felt after that conversation. The fear was paralyzing. I could hardly wrap my mind around the possibility that life as we knew it was over, that Ryan might not make it through the surgery, and that our three young kids might grow up without their dad.

The six hours during Ryan's surgery were long and anxiety-filled. But by the grace of God, the surgery went as well as could be expected, with no complications! I was filled with cautious relief, and the good news continued coming. He got off the ventilator quickly, started talking by the next day, and was walking the day after that. From that point forward, the doctors were amazed by Ryan's progress. His heart and brain were both healing, and he showed no signs of long-term deficiencies from the strokes. He still had a long road to full recovery ahead, but we started to see the light at the end of the tunnel, and those fears of losing him began to dissipate.

Part of me feels guilty for sharing Ryan's story because there are families out there who have gone through similar situations and didn't get to bring their loved one home. Not everybody gets a "happy ending." People die from various medical traumas every day. Thanks to God's guidance and His healing hand, Ryan not only made it through but is expected to make a full recovery. We are no more deserving than anyone else who is undergoing serious health issues, but we are forever grateful and humbled that God carried us through June 2026.

Our experience this summer has given our whole family a new appreciation of the gift of life. We have always been very openly pro-life, but there is something about coming so close to losing your husband/best friend/dad that takes that appreciation to another level. When you realize just how quickly life can change and how abruptly a loved one could be taken from you, it forces you to briefly imagine

what life might look like without that person, and it changes the way you look at the precious gift of life. It makes you appreciate every moment you have together. It allows you to empathize with those who are battling terminal illness, caring for the elderly, or raising a child with severe medical needs.

Our experience also helped us realize what an absolutely incredible support system we have. Our family, friends, church, and school communities have lifted us in prayer and showered our family with an overwhelming amount of love, support, and generosity. We have a new appreciation for all the people God has surrounded us with and for the way He used them to carry us through a very difficult time. We are truly blessed.

Seeing the person I love most on this earth come so close to having his life cut short reignites my passion for life ministry. Now more than ever, my heart breaks to see so many in our society devaluing the gift of life. Ten states now allow abortions up to birth. I recently watched a video of people smiling and clapping as the most recent abortion bill was signed, and I'm sure Satan was smiling and clapping along with them. How can people claim to be loving and tolerant and then turn around and celebrate the mass slaughter of the unborn? A life was almost torn from our family this summer, and we would have been absolutely devastated. Those precious unborn lives deserve to be protected and prayed for, too. Their lives are every bit as valuable as Ryan's life, as my life or yours, as the lives of the politicians deciding. their fate. Every abortion is a devastating loss. The unborn child might grow up to be a wonderful father or mother, a doctor who heals, a teacher who shapes little minds and hearts, a pastor who faithfully shepherds his flock, or any number of important things. It is no longer enough to stand idly by and say, "Well, I've never had an abortion." These little human beings need people to boldly stand up and defend them.

Just as many of you passionately prayed for Ryan when his life hung in the balance, I urge you to pray for the unborn. Pray for pregnant women who feel like abortion is their only option. Pray for men to step up and father their children. Pray for and support your local pregnancy center. Pray for our leaders to work to protect ALL lives, not just the convenient ones or the ones that they think will earn them more votes. Pray for all people to recognize that the loss of any life is devastating. Whether we're talking about a husband and father or an unborn child with an entire life full of potential ahead of him, we should care about every single loss.



May we live our lives as precious children of God, defending the gift of life from womb to tomb. May God show us ways to support life and may we rise together in support of the unborn as we seek to treat each fellow human being as a true gift from God.

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

Reflections on the Redeeming Grace Retreat

Due to the sensitive issues covered at the Redeeming Grace Retreat, the author of this article chooses to remain anonymous.

Day 1

With excitement and reservation, I drove down the long driveway of Wildwood Hills Ranch in St. Charles, Iowa, looking for the meeting place to check in for the Redeeming Grace Retreat. I was a bit apprehensive, not knowing what to expect from the weekend, but the warm welcome from staff and other participants quickly lessened my anxiety. As we talked, we filled out forms, received our cabin assignments, and were given a brief overview of what was in our notebook.



We had some time before dinner, so we all headed to our cabins to get settled. What a beautiful place! The water was so calming, and the cabins were comfortable and relaxing. Each participant had a welcome basket waiting for them. It included a *Lutheran Study Bible*, candy, face masks, lotions, lip balm, and other spa-night items.

We started with Opening Worship. Beginning the retreat in God's Word brought peace and comfort, knowing that it would be the foundation for the weekend. After worship, we spent some time talking about the expectations for the weekend. It was reassuring to know that this is a safe space. A place where we can share and know that it won't go beyond the four walls. A place that is judgement-free. A place to hear God's Word and know we can rest in Christ's promised peace.

After each session, we received a handout with a review of the session, journaling prompts, what we need to do to prepare for the next session (Bible study, writing reflections, etc.), Scripture readings, and a closing prayer, which we read together before ending. During the breaks, we had time and space to reflect on the previous session and prepare for the next.

I enjoyed the time working on the handout and relaxing before going to bed. My heart was thankful for a wonderful first day.

"Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

Day 2

What a restful night! I woke ready for the day. Breakfast was at 8:00 a.m., which allowed me time to get ready. A cup of hot coffee while reading Scripture was a lovely way to start the day.

During the first session, we spent time reflecting and talking about the aftermath of abortion and acknowledging the symptoms, which we learned as Post-Abortion Syndrome (PAS). We compared these to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and how these are viewed within the medical world. We reviewed the common PAS symptoms and how they have affected our lives since having an abortion.

There are many ways in which I am reminded of my past sins. We talked through these pains and reminders. I reflected on why I had been avoiding certain things to protect myself and looked at why they bother me. Living in fear is exhausting. How can I move beyond avoidance that keeps me stuck?

During free time before lunch, I took my handout and prepared for the afternoon session on the dock. I soaked up the sun as I worked through the Bible study. I thanked God for the opportunity to be at that place, at that time.

After lunch, we reflected on the situation around the abortion and what may have led to the decision, which was uncomfortable. But we weren't left in our discomfort. We were always given the option to share as much or as little as felt comfortable in these sessions. The Bible study we did was about identity. We looked at what Scripture says about who and whose we are versus what the world may say.



The afternoon activity was horseback riding! Those who wanted to ride enjoyed the sunny weather. The horses were friendly, and the staff at the ranch were helpful. Dinner was followed by a bonfire. The time of fellowship was pleasant, but I was ready for some quiet time to reflect on the day and pray before bed.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Day 3

I started the day drinking coffee on the front porch of the cabin. This was a welcomed time to reflect on yesterday's sessions and prayerfully prepare for the day. We started the day discussing how the body reacts when faced with things that activate painful memories. This helped me notice when those memories arise and to pay attention to how my body reacts.

We were guided through mindfulness walking, and I practiced during the free time before lunch. I felt the sun on my face. My feet were firm in my shoes as I walked the path. I took my time and wasn't rushed (which I usually am!). A few riders were out, and one of the horses came to say hi and receive some scratches from me. Thanksgiving and praise to God for His beautiful creation!

After lunch, we talked through fetal development. We were assured that this wasn't to increase shame or guilt we may be feeling but to diffuse the power Satan has over us. It was a time to reflect on God's creativity and the love He has for His children. When talking about grief and lament, we took time write a poem of lament. It was touching to hear the poems of the women who shared.

There were so many times of fellowship when we laughed, encouraged one another, and just enjoyed the blessing of going through this retreat together. Much of this sharing was done around the table at meals. We also had the opportunity for private confession and absolution. I was a bit apprehensive to partake, but I was so happy I did. Nothing is better than hearing one's name attached to the words "your sins are forgiven."

Dinner was followed by a Bible study about the difference between worldly grief and godly grief. We looked at what God's Word says. We are God's children! Our value and worth are more than anything the world can ever offer. Jesus died on the cross to pay for *all* our sins. What great news!

"For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

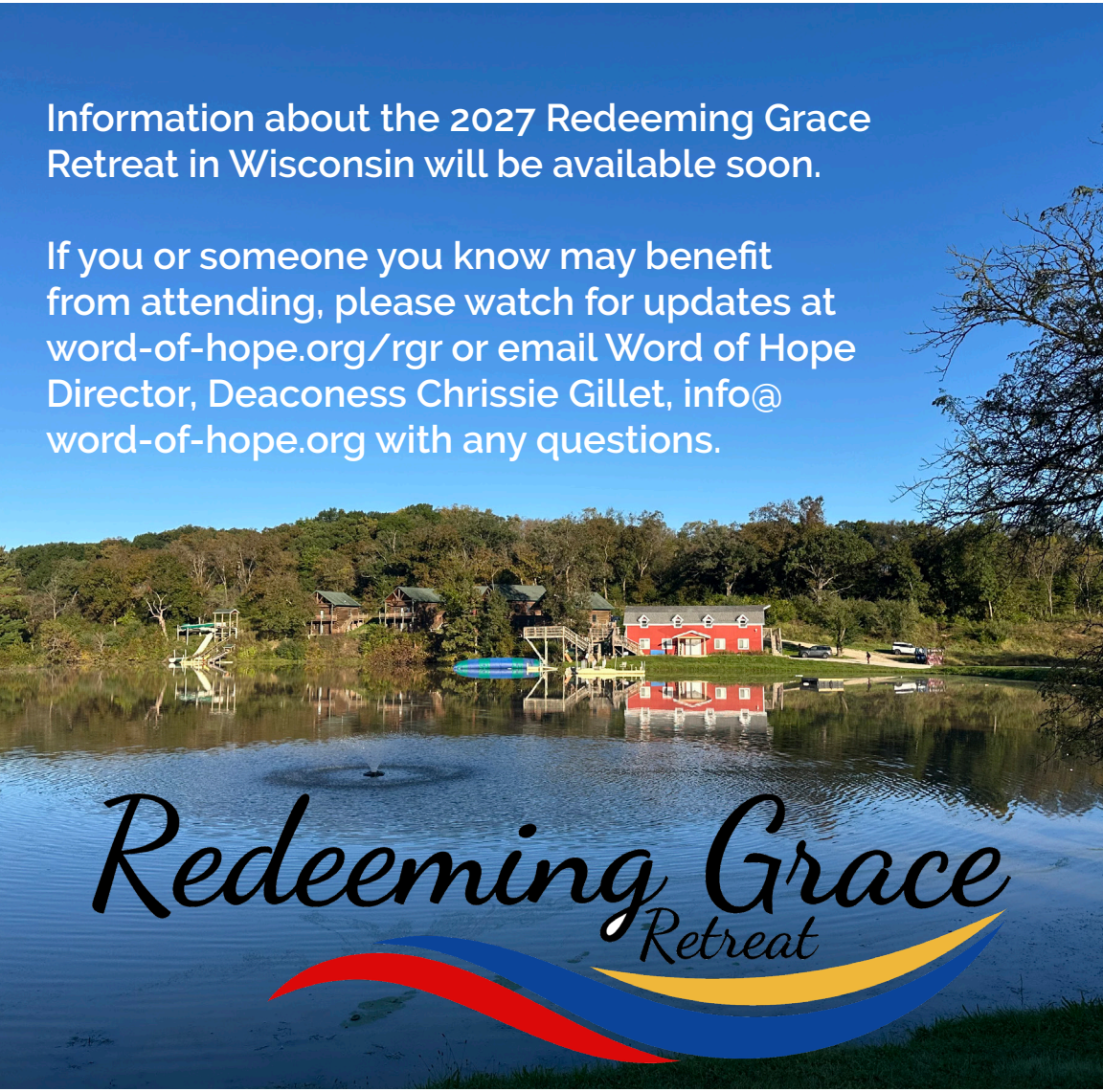


Day 4

Today is the last day! We spent the last session recapping the weekend and reflecting on the feelings that may have come up, how we handled them, and how we may handle them going forward.

God's Law reveals my sin, and sometimes I may feel that I am not sorry enough. But God sent His Son to die on the cross to pay for ALL sin, every thought, word, and deed, both acted on and not acted on. My life has value because of Jesus, my Savior. The children lost through abortion have value. Those suffering with grief and shame have value. I pray that God continues to work in my life.

The retreat ended with Closing Worship. Many hugs and well wishes were exchanged as everyone packed up to part ways. I look forward to using the skills I gained this weekend in my everyday life. I feel refreshed and comforted knowing how much God loves me. I know that my sins are forgiven. I'm so thankful!



Abundant Life – What Does That Mean?

by Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske



Jesus promised that He came so that we **"may have life and have it abundantly."** But what exactly does that mean? What does it mean for us to have life, and furthermore, what does it mean for us to have life abundantly?

Many people think of life in purely scientific, biological terms. At the most basic level, having "life" means having the ability to breathe, grow, metabolize, feel, etc. Jesus certainly does give us this biological life. After all, **"All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made"** (John 1:3), and **"In him we live and move and have our being"** (Acts 17:28). Not only has Jesus created our physical lives, Jesus also became man, suffered, died, and rose again to ensure that we could enjoy these physical lives for the rest of eternity.

But is that it? Is the life that Jesus gives us simply existing (breathing, growing, feeling, etc.)? Certainly not! Jesus said as much.

> **"For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing"** (Luke 12:23).

Jesus didn't create human beings simply to live. He created us to live in communion with Him! This is what separates us from the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth. They were created to have biological life. We were created in the image of God to have a higher life—life in and with the Creator.

As a human being, that is what it means to truly live. True life is to be in communion with God, receiving His love, His provision, and His protection, without fear and anxiety. On the other hand, death is not merely the cessation of biological functions, it is separation from God and His goodness. Thus Adam and Eve died the day they ate the forbidden fruit, not because they stopped breathing, but because they were separated from God and His loving care. This is also why St. Paul said that each one of us was **"dead in [our] trespasses and sins"** (Ephesians 2:1). Even though we were born biologically alive, we were still dead. Why? Because we were born in sin and alienated from God and His goodness (Ephesians 2:12).

> **"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ"** (Ephesians 2:4-5).

This is the life that Christ has come to give us! By His blood, Jesus has reconciled us to the Father in Heaven. In Christ, we don't just have the promise of unending biological life, we have the promise of unending life in and with our God and Lord, just as He intended at the beginning.

Brothers and sisters, this life is the truly abundant life. Even in this world of sin and death, we live with peace and joy, contentment and hope (Romans 15:13) because we live under the care and protection of the Almighty God who lived and died to have us as His own. And, when this phase of our life has ended, and we

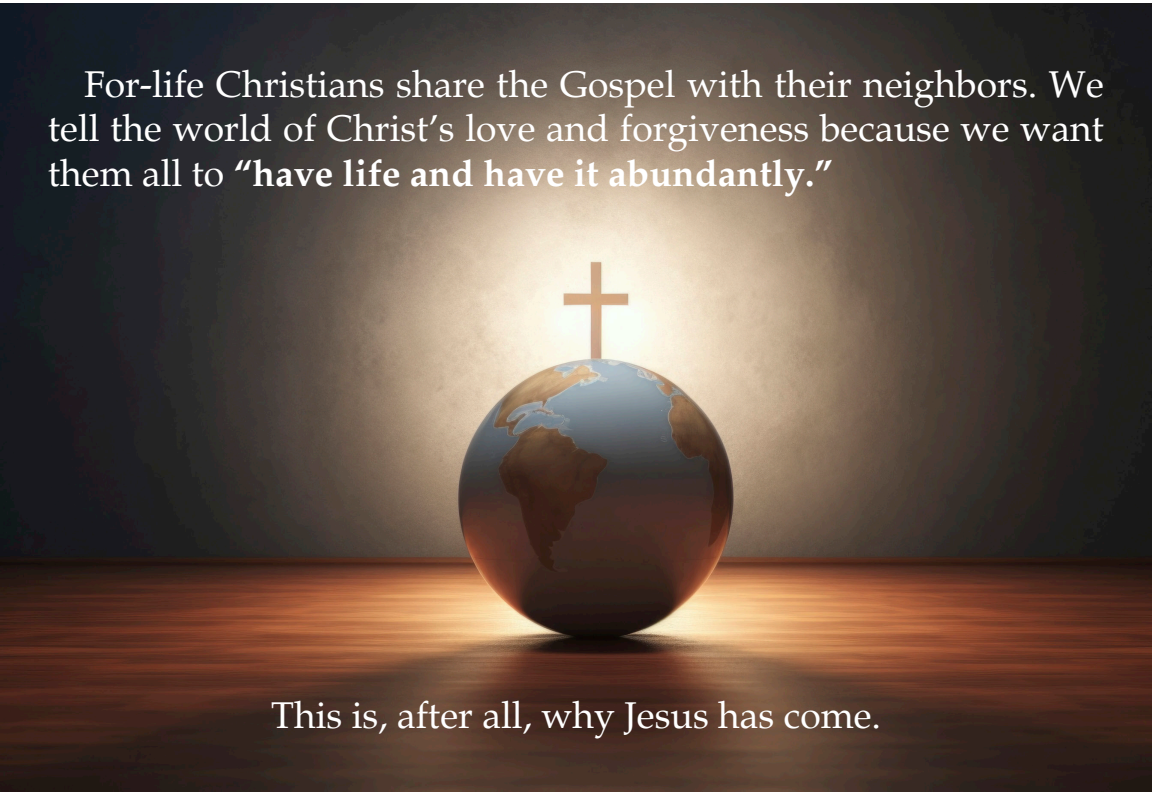
walk with Christ through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4) to our true home at God's side, we will experience an even greater abundance, free from every pain and sorrow, receiving the fullness of God's goodness and blessing (see Isaiah 25:6-8!).

Sadly, the devil, the world, and our own sinful nature are constantly tempting us to try to **"have life and have it abundantly"** apart from Christ. In fact, I would argue that in most, if not all cases, sins against life (abortion, trafficking, assisted suicide, etc.) are the result of people searching for an abundant life of peace, joy, and contentment on their own terms, apart from Christ. Since life apart from God is nothing more than a living death, it should not surprise us that this vain search often leads to physical death.

But it need not be that way! Again, Christ has come for this very purpose: to free people from that emptiness and give them true and abundant life in Himself. Friends, this is the reason we are **"Gospel-motivated** voices For Life." As Christians, we understand that protecting and defending life extends beyond mere physical and biological life. It means desiring that each life that Jesus has created, redeemed, and called finds true life in Christ.

Yes, Jesus certainly cares about our physical lives and wants us to do the same, especially for our most vulnerable neighbors. So we continue to speak out against abortion and assisted suicide and such, and we do what we can to end these evils. At the same time, we care for the physical and emotional needs of mothers, fathers, and children, along with the sick, the disabled, and the dying.

But we don't stop there.



A Joyful Night – The 2026 LFL Fall Gala

by Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske

The **2026 Lutherans For Life Fall Gala** was held on Friday, September 18, at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines, Iowa, bringing together nearly 80 guests for fellowship, inspiring stories, and celebration. The gathering highlighted the God-given value of every human life and the people who are speaking up For Life.

The **Teaching 4 Life Award** was presented to **Chelsea Adams**, a kindergarten teacher at Mount Olive Lutheran School in Des Moines. Chelsea is helping young children learn to recognize and treasure the gift of life God has given them. Her work is a reminder that teaching the value of life can begin at an early age.

The **Dominus Vitae Award** was presented to Dr. Päivi Maria Räsänen, a physician and member of the Finnish Parliament. Dr. Räsänen shared her personal story of standing publicly for her Christian convictions in Finland and the persecution and years of legal proceedings she has experienced because of her faith. Her testimony reminded guests of the courage it takes to remain faithful to God's Word and the hope we have in Christ.

The night concluded with a message from Rev. Dr. James Lamb, who shared the stories and the history of Lutherans For Life, connecting it all with a memorable message about sheep, the Good Shepherd, and the ministry of LFL. His message brought smiles and pointed everyone back to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who knows His sheep, laid down His life for them, and faithfully cares for them.

Following the program, a fundraising appeal helped raise money so Lutherans For Life can continue encouraging people to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. More than $18,000 was grossed from our Fall Gala, and we praise God for the generosity that made this possible.

The night was a joyful celebration of faith, fellowship, and the God-given value of every human life.



That They May Have *Life*

Life Week 2027 • January 17-23

Resources Available for Individuals, Churches & Schools:

- Daily Activity Ideas
- Daily Fact Sheets about Life Issues
- Daily Devotions
- Coloring Pages
- Pre-recorded Presentations
  - Speakers include: Rev. Dr. Lucas Woodford, Deac. Pam Nielsen, Gene Ernst & more!

Scan the QR code for full details and access to resources!



Lutherans For Life will work with you to help meet your needs for a speaker or preacher at a worship service, Bible study, circuit pastors' forum, rally, conference, convention, public or parochial school, college/university, workshop/seminar, or just about any other event at your congregation.

Begin your planning now by contacting Lutherans For Life at info@lutheransforlife.org or 515-382-2077.

BECOME A CONGREGATIONAL HOUSE OF REFUGE

Shine your light internally and externally, sharing how your congregation is a safe place for pregnant mothers. Your support will give them hope to raise their baby. Walk with them should they decide adoption is their choice.

lutheransforlife.org/congregational-house-of-refuge

Find Lutherans For Life on ...

Celebrate the Hope of Christ This Christmas!

by Dave Probst, Director of Development



Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and commitment to LFL.

As Advent approaches, I hope and pray you find comfort and joy in the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, who came to bring you forgiveness, life, and salvation. May this special time bring you and your family moments of peace, joy, and gratitude for the many blessings we share in Christ.

Every day, individuals and families face difficult circumstances surrounding human life. An unexpected pregnancy, a past abortion, a disability diagnosis, questions about sexuality and gender, or concerns about the end of life can leave people feeling afraid, uncertain, or alone.

In these moments, God's Word offers truth, guidance, and comfort. Lutherans For Life helps equip people to meet these challenges with biblical wisdom and Christian compassion, affirming the God-given value of every human life.

Your generosity helps make this ministry possible and allows us to share Christ's love and the truth of God's Word with people across the country.

Through **Word of Hope**, your support provides individuals and families facing difficult circumstances with confidential care and encouragement.

Y4Life and **YA For Life** give teens and young adults opportunities to learn more about God's gift of life and encourage others to value and protect life.

Your giving assists our **Volunteer Relations** department with their mission of equipping local volunteers with the resources they need to serve their churches and communities.

Thank you for your prayers, generosity, and commitment to Lutherans For Life.

May the peace of Christ sustain you throughout Advent, and may the joy of His coming fill your heart in the Christmas season and the New Year.

God's blessings to you and your family, always!

SCAN ME!

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NEW

THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE



"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." *Jesus*

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Life Sunday 2027: That They May Have Life

"That They May Have Life" is Lutherans For Life's theme for **Sanctity of Human Life Sunday**, which is set for **January 17, 2027**. Your congregation can observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on that date or at any time during the year.

Our **Life Sunday 2027** theme is based on John 10:10: **"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."**

Use our **Life Sunday 2027** resources to help unpack this theme and what it means for the For Life movement, both nationally and in your congregation and community. Our prayer is that these materials will provide valuable information and encouragement to you, your community, and the life-affirming work you are engaged in.

Bulletin Inserts • Bible Study • Children's Message
Worship Service • Sermons • Spanish Resources
Custom Video Greeting from Dr. Fenske

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January 17-23, 2027

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Use the Lutherans For Life app to become a Gospel-motivated voice For Life!

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Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? Fill out the form at the link below, and the Miami Valley Life Chapter will send a blanket made with love directly to this expectant mother in the United States (as well as Puerto Rico, and APO and FPO addresses). No strings attached! **lutheransforlife.org/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets**



LFL

Buying or selling a home or commercial property? Support Lutherans For Life at the same time! Call 877.543.3871 or email proliferealestate@yahoo.com for more information. **realestateforlife.org**
lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life

REAL ESTATE FOR LIFE

Frontline Call – For all LFL Frontline volunteers! Monday, January 11, 2027 – 7:00 p.m. CDT/8:00 p.m. EDT. There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, guest speakers, and Q & A. **For topics, speakers, and Zoom links, go to the LFL homepage calendar.**

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE Volunteer Relations

WORD of HOPE

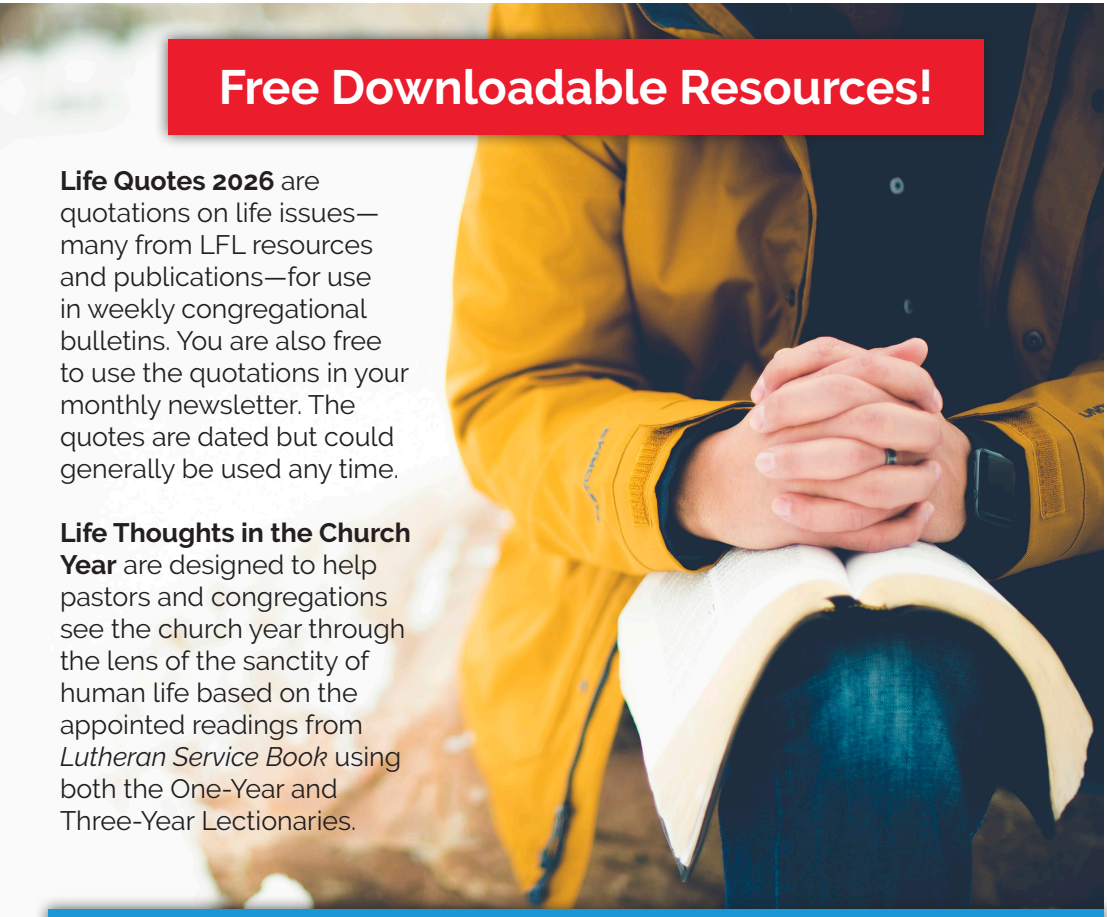
For those who have had an abortion, a Word of Hope … 888.217.8679
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info@word-of-hope.org



And remember … Every time you shop at any of the 1,800+ online stores in the **iGive** network, a portion of the money you spend benefits LFL. It's a free service, and in fact, smart shoppers will enjoy **iGive**'s coupons, free shipping deals, and sales. Start iGiving at: **www.iGive.com/LFL**.

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Life Quotes 2026 are quotations on life issues—many from LFL resources and publications—for use in weekly congregational bulletins. You are also free to use the quotations in your monthly newsletter. The quotes are dated but could generally be used any time.

Life Thoughts in the Church Year are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book* using both the One-Year and Three-Year Lectionaries.

lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes

lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts

Verba Vitae – A Serious Christian Journal of Life and Its Significance – *Verba Vitae* is committed to bringing the classical Christian tradition into conversation with life issues now confronting us. Modeling the reasoned logos of the theological tradition, *Verba Vitae* explores the truth-claims made by thinkers and examines the grounds upon which these assertions are made.

Lutherans For Life is proud and honored to be involved in the *Verba Vitae* project in fellowship and collaboration with the **Institute of Lutheran Theology**. We are especially delighted to bring the Church and the world the fine scholarship its contributors and their reflections represent.

VERBA VITAE

lutheransforlife.org/verba-vitae

Abundant Life … Is It Possible?

by Barbara Lane Geistfeld, DVM



I am a new widow. I *hate* being a widow. I hate the *word* widow. My beloved husband of 53 years, Jim, suddenly died thirteen months ago, and I am still feeling torn in half. One moment we were eating breakfast and reading our *Portals of Prayer* devotions, and ten minutes later he was gone. I know he is now with his Lord Jesus, but, quite frankly, that does *not* help me in my grief. I am still the one who is left behind. The **abundant life** that we shared is gone.

For the last thirteen months, my life has been a roller coaster. I have dear friends who have lost their spouses, and they have been a comfort to me. But I am not feeling an abundance of life. I am feeling an abundance of pain and loneliness and indecision.

Sin and death come from Satan, the thief. He thinks he has won, and sometimes it feels like he *has* won. But the Holy Spirit calls to me in God's Word and has started to bring me comfort. My Lord Jesus speaks to me in His Word: **"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly"** (John 10:10).

I long for this abundant life to be manifested in me again. Slowly, I am healing. My Lord has come to me in many ways this past year. One obvious way was through His Word. For many months I could not even open my Bible or my *Portals of Prayer*. It was too painful. Then I found I could read it aloud, as Jim and I used to do, a few times a week, but I cried through the entire devotion. I can now (mostly!) read my devotions and find the true joy and peace that comes only in a close relationship with Jesus.

The Lord sent me sermons that touched me and helped heal my heart. One recent sermon was based on the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). The pastor explained that this parable was not at all about the stewardship of money. It was not about doubling God's "investment" in me. It was to encourage me to ask myself what I was doing with *all* the gifts God had given me, starting with being God's child in the body of Christ. It was to get me to ask myself how I was using these gifts, freely given, while the Master was away. The servants who did their best to wisely use the talents given them received a loving response from the master on his return: **"His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant'"** (Matthew 25:21a). The Holy Spirit used that to completely reverse my thinking. An instant 180-degree turn! He told me to stop focusing on my very real loss. I was continually saying, "My life as I know it is finished. I will never have this back again." Instead, He encouraged me to say, *"Lord, thank you for my life. How do you want me to use it for Your kingdom in the time I have left?"*

A second sermon came the very next week. The pastor asked the question, "Do you *really* trust God in *everything*?" I think we all know the answer to that—not always. He told the story of Martin Luther and the bubonic plague. When asked why he did not flee to save his own life but instead opened his home as a hospital, Luther replied, "… by God's decree the enemy has sent us poison and deadly offal. Therefore, *I shall ask God mercifully to protect us*. Then I shall fumigate, help

purify the air, administer medicine, and take it."* He prayed first for guidance and protection; *then he did what he had to do*. That is what I needed to hear. Always pray first, ask for strength and guidance, and move out in trust. It sounds so easy, but it is difficult to do.

God used my adult children and grandchildren to keep me grounded. They offered sound advice, unconditional love, and lots of hugs. I was extremely down one day, in tears, and feeling sorry for myself. I called my daughter and said in a pathetic voice, "I am so tired of being a fat, ugly, wrinkled widow." She said, "Ma. Just a short while ago you were a fat, ugly, wrinkled wife. There is only a one-word difference." Needless to say, I immediately burst out laughing, and that was that. Instant joy and true peace. My pity party was over!

Jesus has promised to be with me always. He has promised peace and joy. He has promised He will never leave me. These are the things to which I must cling. This is the source of abundant life. In John 16:33 Jesus said, **"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."**

In Luke 6:38 our Lord gives all believers another promise: **" … give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."** That sounds like an abundant life to me!

His last words to His disciples, and to *us* two thousand years later, solidify every promise He ever made: In Matthew 28:20b He says, **"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."** Abundant life is His gift to all believers. Let us claim it and rejoice in it until we see Him face to face.





I heard a new—to me—song following the "trust in the Lord" sermon. I think its truth is the answer to this article's title question: "Abundant Life … Is it Possible?"

"He's faithful through generations. So why would He fail now. He won't, He won't."
Cody Carnes – Firm Foundation (He Won't)
You can find all the wonderful lyrics at this link: youtube.com/watch?v=x9ndiD0_qNk&t=42s

(*christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/plague-advice-from-luther | Christian History Issue #135.0 in 2020)

Dr. Barb Geistfeld is a former Volunteer Relations Associate for Lutherans For Life.

God's Blessings through Loss

by Dr. Ryan MacPherson



Sometimes Loss Is Exactly Where God Intends to Bless You

Loss can be devastating. Unexpected loss. Monumental loss. Deep betrayal. Lonely embarrassment. All plans suddenly reversed. Nothing stable. Hope vanishing. Loss.

Many losses can be handled by pious Christians who remember verses such as Romans 8:28:

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."

But some losses are so big, so sudden, so disruptive that even a sanctified lifelong believer feels overwhelmed.

It's one thing when our Plan A doesn't work out. We often have a Plan B anyway. But what happens when Plans A and B both get derailed? What happens when, after some prayerful meditation on Romans 8:28, we get used to Plan C, and then suddenly find ourselves with Plan D instead? And then even Plan D gets taken from us?

And what if our closest Christian friends and several pastors who previously have served us through difficult times now all agree that Plans A and B were good and true and beautiful in light of God's Word? What if not one of us understands why God would allow those plans to fail? And now, even the "stop-gap" Plans C and D have not been protected or preserved by God?

What if in the place of such plans, we see evil arising—objective evil, what Holy Scripture calls evil? What if we've searched the Scriptures, examined our consciences, poured our hearts out to God, and concluded that something wonderful has been taken from us never to return again? What if we all are wide-eyed and aware that the worldly notion of so-called "loss" is the child of selfishness and discontentment, but that there also is a true loss, and in God's holy name we confess with all confidence that our loss is true and deep and painful, and having examined all things through the lens of Holy Scripture we foresee that we have not yet seen the end of the long-lasting repercussions of this loss? Broken and tearful, we drop on our knees and plead before God's throne of mercy, begging to know: Why would a loving God allow Godly plans to vanish, and good back-up plans also to pass away, and evil to triumph in their place?

In this depth of woe, well-catechized Christians know to turn toward more than just Romans 8:28. The entire Book of Job speaks to this question. As Job learned, so we also learn, that not all of the answers are forthcoming. God's ways remain mysterious. But God's ways remain good. He is the author of every good, but He is not the author of any evil. Whatever evil He permits to come near us He will turn to His good purpose in His good way and in His good time—all on account of His grace.

When God allows otherwise good plans to fall apart, when God allows evil to surround His children, He nevertheless has not withheld His blessings, but rather has allowed His children to be exactly where He intends to bless them. For a soldier, this may be on the horrifying front lines. For a mother, this may be cradling her stillborn child. For a grandfather, this may be in a wheelchair with failing faculties of hearing, sight, and memory. But the words and promises of Christ never fail.

For all people who endure suffering, unspeakable suffering—for all of them together and for each of them individually—God's promise remains sure:

"I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

The preceding verse echoes three similar verses in Deuteronomy 31 and paraphrases several others throughout the Old and New Testaments. God knows we need the repetition! Time and again, God shows us that no matter how quickly our losses add up, His blessings multiply even faster.

"My grace is sufficient for you," whispers the calming voice of the Holy Spirit, **"for my power is made perfect in weakness"** (2 Corinthians 12:9).



Whenever and wherever and whatever the thief may steal or kill or destroy, God comes that we may have life and have it abundantly! (John 10:10) God may come to us with or without, through or despite, our own plans and expectations. Our sure hope is this: that God comes to us through Word and Sacrament—just as the Word created out of nothing in the beginning and just as He who is both Host and Meal multiplied loaves faster than hunger could add up, God comes to us that we may have His gift of life and have it abundantly. He is the One who fills the emptiness left by loss, who heals the soul sickened by sin, who stomps down Satan under our feet, and who will come again soon to take us from this world of sorrow to the New Heaven and New Earth, where …

"He will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

Dr. Ryan MacPherson, author of "The Culture of Life" and co-author of "Teaching Your Children Chastity for Life: Talking Points for Christian Parents" (LFL731B at cph.org), offers online homeschool enrichment and adult mentoring classes through Lifelong Lyceum (lifelong-lyceum.com) while serving as scholar in residence at Zion Lutheran Church in Wausau, Wisconsin.

Pain and Joy All in the Same Week

by Deaconess Janet Nicol, Word of Hope



This past summer, my husband's dear mother, at the age of 94 and battling kidney disease, had decided it was best not to pursue dialysis because it would most likely exhaust her rather than make her feel better, or improve things much, as she had hoped. Her doctor of many years did tell her that if she was not going to do dialysis, she should go on hospice. *(I believe he genuinely cared for her.)*

It was hard not to care for Mom. She loved life, people, and especially her family. She delighted in keeping track of all birthdays and anniversaries. Each of us was assigned a number upon entering the family, whether by marriage or birth, starting with her beloved husband and herself as 1 and 2. When I married into the family, I became Number 18. My husband was Number 5, since he was the third-born of the original nuclear family of 7. We have all received adorable Christmas ornaments with our numbers on them, along with many other gifts, because Mom was a generous soul.

Mom had been the youngest of six siblings in her family. She was a farm daughter, a farm wife, and a faithful member of St. Paul Lutheran Church. The extended family was close-knit and attended the same church for many years, until grandchildren grew up and left for other places, other churches, or no churches at all. Such is the fate for many families, large and small. But Mom never stopped loving every one of her family connections regardless of where they landed, even after divorce or death.

The truth is that the large family environment was sometimes overwhelming for me. I came from a family of six, the youngest of four daughters, and I was blessed with loving parents who stayed married their whole lives. But I didn't have the experience of a great extended family as my husband did. I had cousins, but we never spent much time with them. I'm not even sure how many I have. I allowed this to make me feel intimidated by Mom's family. I struggled to feel a part of things. I thought, This is THE perfect family, and I just don't belong here.

I tried to fit in. I thought I had to do things a certain way or be a certain person, which sometimes caused me to feel bitter and resentful that I couldn't just be accepted as myself. Me, the weirdo who didn't actually enjoy having hordes of people over for a meal and cake for each kid's birthday every year, as I imagined everyone else in the family did. All in a large farmhouse, which I had inherited by marriage, so I thought it had to be spotless. A bit hard to do with four children. Looking back, I chuckle at myself and my insecurities. In reality, no one was forcing me to do anything. It was all me trying to meet expectations that may have been there a little but didn't loom as large as I imagined.

It took time, but I grew into my spot. I ended up living in that old farmhouse longer than Mom did, and I'm certain now that she wasn't as concerned as I thought about what I did to it, any changes I made, or how clean it was. I'm in the position now of seeing my own son and daughter-in-law living in it with children of their own. It's amazing what that house has been through for the past 120 years.

Back to this past summer … After a 42-year relationship with my mother-in-law, full of joys and struggles to find the love and acceptance that was always there in

the first place, losing her affected me in ways I never expected. This grief is different. My own father and mother have been gone many years already. I actually knew and interacted with my mother-in-law as an adult longer than I ever did with my own mother. We were both farm wives (my dear father-in-law passed away in 2008); we were both members of the same church and were hugely active in it for 42 years. We were in choir together; we both played the piano—and a little organ, too. Since we lived close, my own children enjoyed a great relationship with her.

So, the time spent this past summer visiting her at the assisted living facility she had recently moved to went by very quickly. She had some moments of confusion, and some days were not the best, but her clarity was remarkable right up to her blessed end on a balmy September Sunday morning.

During this same summer, my youngest daughter and her husband were expecting the birth of their second son. Their son was born on Tuesday, September 8. I had the privilege of being in the room during his birth. Seeing him enter the world, being placed on his mother's chest where he immediately calmed down and knew where he was, filled me with a wonder that is too hard to describe. Three days later, my newest grandson's parents took him to see his great-grandma because, when she heard of his arrival, she longed to hold him.



So, on a Friday afternoon, Number 2 held Number 84 and declared it was the most blessed thing to do before leaving this world.

That same evening, I told her I thought she was the best mother-in-law ever. We all knew her death was very close, and when my husband mentioned he planned to be back to see her in the morning, she commented that she had plans. I asked her what they were, and she looked me straight in the eye and said, "I plan to see Him." I had no doubt she meant her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On Sunday morning, September 13, Mom went to be with her Jesus. For years I have worked with grieving people and shared the idea that God has numbered our days and knows our beginning and end before we were even born (Psalm 139:16). Now I have seen this absolute truth with my own eyes, in my own family. Who else but the Almighty could have orchestrated this beautiful symphony of life and death, joy and pain, all in the same week?

I knew I had to share this marvelous summer story with others. No family is perfect. But when the love that surpasses all understanding exists in the eyes of all who believe in Jesus as their Savior, love covers a multitude of imperfections (1 Peter 4:8). When I give in to my insecurities, doubts, and fears, that is the work of the thief who comes to steal and kill and destroy. He tries his best to destroy my joy of being part of a family. But thanks be to Jesus, who came to give life and give it abundantly (John 10:10)! Now I, Number 18, am free to be loved and to love in return. Blessed be the LORD, my rock and my Redeemer (Psalm 18:46, 19:14).

Cowardice or Courage?

by Rev. Paul Clark, Lutherans For Life of Michigan



"Cowardice." The word conjures up contempt and shame. In battle, bold and daring leaders inspire men to follow them. Nobody follows a coward. The Roman poet Virgil says, "Let us not speak of them." An old Spanish proverb says, "Of the coward, nothing is written." Even the word origin for coward comes from the Latin *cauda*, meaning "tail." A cowardly creature "turns tail" or "puts its tail between its legs" to flee or escape danger. We use those expressions to designate fear or weakness, a surrendering or bowing down in submission.

We have many cowards in the Church today!

Some are in the pulpits:

- They love to preach about God's universal love, but they steer clear of speaking of the need for repentance and of the fast-approaching Day of Judgment.
- They do not dare to speak the word "abortion," lest they risk offending someone.
- They embrace whatever the latest cultural models may be—proudly displaying a welcoming rainbow sign outside the church and then, with a smile that Satan himself would be proud of, proclaiming from the pulpit, "God made you just the way you are."

Basically, they are encouraging people to celebrate their sin.

Cowards, one and all.

It is cowardly to stand by comfortably and not warn the sheep of danger. A true shepherd does not do that. In fact, he defends the sheep against wolves, if necessary, with his life. What he will not do is cheerfully proclaim the virtues and benefits of the wolves.

Shepherds who are unwilling to defend the flock of God against the false teachers and enemies of His Church, unless they repent, may one day find themselves in hell's squalid lobby.

The English author Thomas Hardy wrote:

> "If an offense comes out of the truth, better is it that the offense come than that the truth be concealed."

If the Lord's Church is to be faithful, there *will be* offenses. The Word of the Lord offends because the Law of God points out our sin in a way that confronts us with truth—truth that we often try to hide or angrily deny. It is not that we seek to be offensive. Scripture tells us to be gentle and winsome in speaking to others about the faith. But if the Word is spoken without compromise, the Word in and of itself will offend. Yet that offense is necessary for a sinner to repent and believe in Jesus and be saved.

As I write this, the Detroit Lions have had a pretty decent offense over the last couple of weeks. There were several good passes by Jared Goff, solid running back

yardage from Jahmyr Gibbs, and well-placed field goals by Jake Bates. But their defense left much to be desired. *(But I'm optimistic! Like fine cheese, they'll improve with time.)*

For the Christian Church to be solid and faithful in doctrine and practice, it must have both a robust offense and defense.

We are not called to be cowards with the Word of Christ.

Quite the opposite is true.

We are called to proclaim the faith and defend it.

"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a DEFENSE to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15).

The Greek word for "defense" is *apologia*. It does not mean what it sounds like in English; it does not mean apology. Quite the opposite! In the courts of ancient Athens, the word referred to the legal defense or refutation against accusations during a trial. In our use, it means a defense of the one true faith, of the doctrines of Holy Scripture, those under attack by the devil, the world, and even our old nature from Adam.

If the Detroit Lions first need to have a solid defense, as well as go on the offense, how much more so the Church of Christ! Martin Luther and the Reformers knew that, and so under Phillip Melanchthon's pen they wrote the *Augsburg Confession*—and then what came next? *The Apology to the Augsburg Confession!*

As previously stated, "apology" does not mean apologizing or backing down. It means **DEFENSE**. They wrote the Defense of the Augsburg Confession, a confession of God's truth, for which they were willing to die.

These men were ***NOT*** cowards. **WHERE ARE SUCH MEN TODAY?**



The pulpits of America are overflowing with cowards. Those who are more than willing to compromise the truth to be popular. Those who will never speak or preach about the sin of abortion because it may offend. Those who will not speak the truth about "controversial issues" because, after all, they say, "we can't have politics in the Church!" *(When I hear pastors who spew those lame excuses, it makes me want to spew as well—in quite a different way.)*

Study our history.

This great nation was founded by men of principle who did not cower in the dismal darkness of fear. Men such as George Washington and John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were no cowards. Neither were women like Martha Washington and Abigail Adams, or Molly Pitcher, who at the Battle of Monmouth, brought life-saving water to the soldiers on the battlefield, risking her own life, and even fired at the British after her own husband was wounded.

And then there were the preachers.

This nation had a brazen backbone of vigorous preachers who spoke truth from the pulpits, including what many today may well dismiss as "political speech." But when cultural issues affected morality or the very lives of the people, and their faithfulness to the Word of God, such men spoke, and they spoke loudly. The only thing lacking in those days was pastors who were cowards. Thanks be to God!

Nobody follows a coward. But people do follow those who stand for their principles and beliefs, who boldly engage in the fight against evil. **There is no room for cowards in the Church, much less in the pulpit.** You, dear Christian, are called to **"be strong and courageous, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"** (Joshua 1:9).

I am thankful for the faithful everyday pastors who love their flock and know what they need to hear—both Law and Gospel. Those who do not seclude themselves from the world around them but boldly speak the totality of God's Word, including the Sanctity of Human Life, fearlessly addressing abortion, physician-assisted suicide, the truth of biblical marriage, gender as male and female, and other life issues.

And I am thankful for you, dear brother or sister in Christ. You who receive the words of your pastors with joy and conviction, who hold fast to the true doctrines of Scripture in your heart, who faithfully teach them to your children, and who, with the help of the Holy Spirit, act upon them in the way you live. You who uphold the dignity and the sanctity of all human life. You are a treasure beyond measure.

Remain faithful. Don't "turn tail" and flee in the face of bullying or intimidation for your faith. Don't back down before those who mock the faith or try to silence your voice. Jesus died for you. There is nothing more important in this entire world than Jesus and the faith He has delivered through the Gospel. Many who have gone before you were martyred to preserve this faith. Stand upright, be prepared to make a defense for the faith, yet do so with gentleness and respect.

Above all, **be BOLD, be COURAGEOUS in Christ!**

NO COWARDS.

Y4LIFE & YA FOR LIFE

in Washington, D.C.

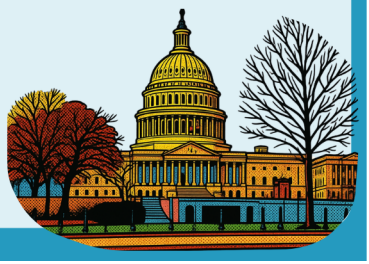
THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE

January 21-23, 2027

Join us for the FREE Y4Life and YA For Life Conference and March for Life this year in Washington, D.C. Meet other life leaders from across the nation at this mountaintop event! Not only will participants learn more about life issues and take part in the March, but by registering through Lutherans For Life, leaders also receive a discount on hotel rooms and guided opportunities at the March. Questions? Email Cori Meier at cori@y4life.org.

Register for the conference at y4life.org/events, yaforlife.org/events, or by scanning the QR code below. Registration closes December 15, 2026. Space is limited!

Double queen rooms cost $139 per night; single king rooms cost $124 per night. Reserve rooms through Y4Life.



The Lutherans For Life Council of Federation Presidents sponsors an essay contest each year for students in two grade categories: 6-8 and 9-12.



Our 2027 Contest Theme: **Be Bold For Life**

Our theme verse: **"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!"** (Psalm 31:24).

Find contest rules and guidelines at the link below. We look forward to students across the nation participating in our contest and letting their voices be heard through their life-affirming essays!

Questions? Please contact Michele at mhartshorn@lutheransforlife.org.

lutheransforlife.org/2027-lfl-essay-contest

SAVE THE DATE!

2027 Lutherans For Life National Conference | July 22-23
Immanuel Lutheran Church • St. Charles, Missouri

2027 Lutherans For Life Summer Gala | July 22

A Sculpture Celebrating God's Gift of Adoption

by Rev. Dr. Aric Fenske



Several years ago, Lutherans For Life shared the story of Rev. Leon and Terri Rosenthal, who commissioned a sculpture to celebrate God's gift of adoption, and more specifically, the adoption of their two children (lutheransforlife.org/article/our-adoption-sculpture).

The sculpture, which was artfully crafted by another Lutheran pastor, Rev. Adrian Hanft, was designed to portray the blessings of adoption. On one side of this rotating sculpture, one can see the umbilical cord still attached to the baby, symbolizing the child's connection to its biological parents, whom God used to create the life of this child. On the other side, we see the same child now without the cord attached, still safely encased in the love of God, symbolizing the act of adoption, which God uses to care for the lives of many of His beloved children.

In each instance of adoption, we give thanks to God both for the gift of life that has been given and for the parents who chose to affirm that life instead of destroying it through abortion.

As a whole, the sculpture reminds us of the love that God has for each one of us. Not only has He "fearfully and wonderfully" created every person in His image, but He has even more wonderfully redeemed us and adopted us as His children through our Baptisms into Christ's death and resurrection.

I share all of this with you now because last month, a new chapter was added to the story of this sculpture. After prayerful consideration, Rev. and Mrs. Rosenthal, with the help of Rev. Hanft, decided that they wanted to share this beautiful piece of art with the world. Being long-time supporters of Lutherans For Life, they came to the consensus that they would donate the sculpture to us!

So, on Thursday October 1, my wife, Marie, and I, along with several LFL staff members, met Rev. and Mrs. Hanft and Rev. and Mrs. Rosenthal at our Nevada, Iowa, national office to receive the sculpture. With much help, we were able to move the sculpture and its stand into the office, where it is now permanently displayed in front of the main window to be shared with the world.



We are grateful to Rev. and Mrs. Rosenthal for their generosity and to Rev. Hanft for his artistry. Most especially, we are grateful that they continue to be strong Gospel-motivated voices For Life. May God use this precious gift as a lasting testimonial of His love for every person created, redeemed, and called by Him.

Lutherans For Life ...

- **Applies God's Word**, both His Law and His Gospel, to all the life issues—abortion, assisted suicide and euthanasia, sexual purity and bio-technology.
- **Assists For Life Christians** in offering the hope and help of the Good News of Jesus Christ to all, whatever their circumstances.
- **Believes God gives the gift of life to all people**—from the moment of conception until natural death.
- **Needs your support to continue to encourage, educate, and uplift with a Gospel-centered, Word-based message of hope, forgiveness, and new life!**
- **Witnesses** to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God.
- **Serves** through individuals who volunteer at pregnancy care centers, with hospice, through prayer, and in a wide variety of caring activities.
- **Educates and encourages** through conferences and presentations, printed resources, Life Sunday materials, Bible studies, curricula, audio and video, and through lutheransforlife.org.
- **Equips** local congregations to speak out on life issues in their communities through Life Chapters and Life Teams, or as a Life Advocate. LFL State Federations, Life Chapters, and Life Teams also support a variety of compassionate, caring pregnancy and post-abortion ministries (including our own Word of Hope) that offer pre- and post-natal counseling, parenting skills workshops, and lifestyle counsel.
- Is a **Recognized Service Organization** (RSO) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
- Is a **ministry partner** of the North American Lutheran Church.
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- Is supported entirely by individual donations and grants.

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices 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

Our Philosophy – Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give a Gospel-motivated witness to the Church and society on these and other related issues, such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living. We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult situations.

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