

LifeDate

Fall 2008

A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

God's Word—Life Issues Making the Connection

Why does LFL do what it does?

Check inside to read more from Dr. Lamb, Diane Schroeder, and Karen Frohwein about the Christ-centered, hope-filled message of Lutherans For Life—and for an update on **RENEWAL FOR LIFE!**



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Lutherans For Life



Lutherans For Life's mission is to witness to the sanctity of human life, through education, based on the Word of God.

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Political Diversity and Biblical Unity

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



Politically diverse Christians can share a common biblical uniformity. For example, two Christians may desire peace in the temporal realm based on Paul's admonition in Romans 12:18, **"If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all,"** but may differ on the best way to achieve peace.

Based on Romans 13:4, two Christians may agree that God gives government the authority to administer justice, but they may disagree on the best way for the government to do so.

God gives Christians freedom to deal with the created order and with one another. Indeed, most such dealings do not need to be informed with reference to Scripture. Whether the new highway should be two lanes or four, does not rise from a moral Christian imperative! When there is a moral imperative to help the poor and vulnerable, and to care for "orphans and widows" (James 1:27) for example, freedom still exists as to *how* such a biblical truth should be implemented in the public arena.

No such freedom exists for the issue of abortion. Diverse views on abortion do not represent different ways of applying a biblical truth. No biblical truth exists to justify abortionists murdering unborn children legally, horribly, and with mind-numbing frequency. Such atrocity cannot be condoned in the name of biblical love or compassion or neighborliness. It cannot be sanctioned in the name of Christian freedom or rights or choice. No biblical foundation exists that justifies murdering children to solve a crisis pregnancy or to help women or to deal with fetal abnormalities, rape, or incest.

Favoring abortion is not a view on how to put into practice a biblical truth. Favoring abortion denies a fundamental biblical truth

about the value of human life and insults the One from whom that value comes, the Author and Redeemer of life.

I admit that my heart gets filled sometimes with angry grief and sadness over how Christians can favor abortion or support those who do. How can Christians accept abortion as just another view on an issue like immigration or tax code reform? How can Christians promote our dark enemy death as a solution to problems? How can Christians forget the source of their lives, the hope for all life, and He who is present in their living?

That brings me to the good news, which is, well, the Good News! Christians have been entrusted with the most positive and powerful message of life on the planet. It's a message of new life in Christ. It's a message of love and forgiveness and hope as we live life in Him. The Good News of a crucified and living Savior does not trivialize human struggles—the struggles of women, of problem pregnancies, of difficult situations. It speaks to them! The Good News defeated death and brings real love and compassion and neighborliness to bear in dealing with human struggles in very personal and practical ways. Life, not death, is our source of help and hope.

This Good News also compels us to share it and to uphold the values that flow from it to influence society for good.

Abortion kills children, harms women, degrades humanity, and assaults the Lord of Life. **The Christian cannot view abortion as "just another issue."** It overrides all issues. The value and dignity given human life by God's creating and redeeming hands compels the Christian to take advantage of every opportunity to remind their fellow Christians of this and to take action in the public square to restore our nation once again to a nation that respects the right to life.



Read/order *Is Abortion an Election Issue* at:

www.lutheransforlife.org

Opportunities and Decisions

The November elections are about more than the presidency. Many state initiatives will be calling on voters to make decisions, with long-term consequences on euthanasia, assisted suicide, and marriage. In Colorado, voters will have the opportunity “To see that the Colorado state constitution is amended to include preborn from the moment of fertilization as having their ‘personhood’ clearly established, so that they may enjoy equal protection under the law.”

Voters will also be making choices on who will represent them on everything from school boards to the United States Senate.

The choices can be discouraging, but, as Paul Snamiska, of Christian Life Resources, writes:

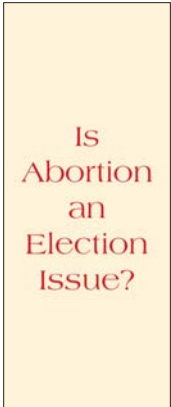
“Opportunities are challenging, because opportunities require that you make decisions. As a Christian, you seek to use your opportunities to do good. (Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5) The Bible gives Christians two commands: **‘love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself’** (Luke 10:27). These principles shape your values, and your values guide your actions when faced with opportunities.

“In the United States we have a form of government in which all people are given the opportunity to play an active role. We elect representatives and help form public policy. This kind of participation means there are opportunities to do good.

“Christians can certainly disagree on many issues, but we don’t have the freedom to support or defend political or legislative actions that are contrary to biblical principles. We can’t maintain strong family values and justify

homosexual marriage. We can’t defend preborn life and use tax dollars to pay for abortions. We are given the responsibility and freedom to speak up on these issues. You can use this opportunity to ensure that your Christian values are known. Now is the time to let your voice be heard. Your values matter.”

Lutherans For Life has a resource to help think through what’s at stake in every national election. **Is Abortion an Election Issue?** says abortion isn’t on the same level as tax cuts and Social Security. “Abortion is a sin. Abortion is a sin against the Author and Giver of Life. That makes abortion a spiritual issue—not just an election issue.”



You can order this full-color brochure directly from LFL. (Item 118T. \$0.25 ea.)

How many abortions are done in the U.S. every day?

Answer: 3,287

Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

Hurting from Abortion?

A Word of Hope can help.

888-217-8679

www.word-of-hope.org

Confidential

Caring

Abortion and the Message of the Church: Sin or Salvation?

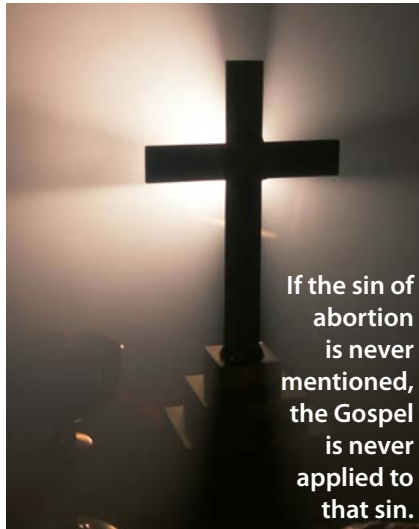


by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

We will call her Sandy. When the pregnancy occurred, she felt she dare not talk to her parents who still considered her a “nice” girl. Her boyfriend insisted on an abortion. Convinced this was the only thing that could save her from a painful future, she consented.

Sandy writes: “I was wheeled into a small O.R., and right before the Valium was put into the I.V., I asked the Lord to forgive me and take me to heaven if I died. You see, my spirit knew I was about to do something sinful, even if my mind denied it. My spirit knew I was committing a grievous sin.”

Was Sandy’s abortion her salvation from a difficult situation or a “grievous sin”? What is the message of the Church?



not murder a child by abortion,” and then connects this with the second great command, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”⁴

The split between East and West did not affect the ecclesiastical teaching on abortion. Both Rome and Constantinople warned against it. Unanimity was also seen following the split caused by the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther wrote, “For those who have no regard for pregnant women and who do not spare the tender fruit are murderers and infanticides.”⁵ Calvin concurred: “If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, because a man’s house is his most secure place of refuge, it ought surely to

be deemed more atrocious to destroy the unborn in the womb before it has come to the light.”⁶

In the 20th century noted leaders in the Church continued their admonition. Deitrich Bonhoeffer: “Destruction in the mother’s womb is a violation of the right to live which God has bestowed upon this nascent life. To raise the question whether we are here concerned already

with a human being or not is merely to confuse the issue. The simple fact is that God certainly intended to create a human being and that this nascent human being has been deliberately deprived of his life. And that is nothing but murder.”⁷

Karl Barth: “The unborn child is from the very first a child. It is still developing and has no independent life. But it is a man and not a thing, nor a mere part of the mother’s body . . . He who destroys germinating life kills a man . . . The fact that a definite NO must be the presupposition of further discussion cannot be contested, least of all today.”⁸

Helmut Thielicke: “The fetus has its

The Message in History ¹

Orthodox scholar Alexander Webster writes, “It [abortion] is one of only several moral issues on which not one dissenting opinion has ever been expressed by the Church Fathers.”² Webster includes Western writers from the time of the Apostolic Fathers up through those in the period of Gregory the Great and the Eastern Fathers during the entire Byzantine millennium (A.D. 330 to 1453). “Even a cursory reading of the patristic literature reveals a relentless campaign against the inhuman sin of abortion.”³

The *Didache* commands, “Thou shalt

own autonomous life, which, despite all its reciprocal relationship to the maternal organism, is more than a mere part of this organism and possesses a certain independence ... These elementary biological facts should be sufficient to establish its status as a human being ... This makes it clear that here it is not a question—as it is in the case of contraception—whether the proffered gift can be responsibly accepted, but rather whether an already bestowed gift can be spurned, whether one dares to brush aside the arm of God after this arm has already been outstretched.”⁹

The Message in God's Word

Over the centuries the Church's message has been clear. It is also clear that the message was derived from God's Word, especially that Word relating to the doctrine of creation. If life is the work of God's creating hands, then life has intrinsic value, and therefore, destroying life, including unborn life, is a sin against God.



In the beginning, God was the creator of life. **“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”** (Genesis 1:27). “In the image of God” distinguishes this life from, and raises it above, all other life. Even though this image was lost in the Fall, human life maintains its value because of its original lofty position. **“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image”** (Genesis 9:6).

God's role as the author and creator of life continues. **“In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind”** (Job 12:10). **“[H]e himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything”** (Acts 17:25b). **“Know that the LORD, he is**

God! It is he who made us, and we are his” (Psalm 100:3).

God's creating hands are at work from the very beginning. **“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb”** (Psalm 139:13). **“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb”** (Isaiah 44:24a). Therefore, because all life is from His hand, He abhors the shedding of innocent blood. **“You shall not murder”** (Exodus 20:13). He abhors the sacrifice of children. **“[T]hey poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Thus they became unclean by their acts, and played the whore in their deeds. Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against his people, and he abhorred his heritage”** (Psalm 106:38-40).

The Message in the Church Today

The message of the Church in history and the message of Scripture concur, abortion is a sin. Only very recently has the message of the Church been, “abortion is salvation,” an acceptable way out of a difficult situation. That message has been proclaimed loudly by the silent pastorate of the Church. “I don't preach about abortion. It is a political issue.” “I don't preach about abortion. I don't want to offend.” “I don't preach about abortion. I only proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.”

Abortion is never a mere political issue. The destruction of God's gift of life makes it a grave theological issue. Yet, the silence of the Church and its shepherds cries out that it is not. You may recall that God does not take kindly to those shepherds who dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. (Jeremiah 6:14)

Failing to preach about abortion offends women more grievously than preaching about it. If the sin of abortion is never mentioned, then the Gospel—that Gospel pastors have been called to proclaim—is never applied to that sin nor to those caught up in the pain and guilt of an abortion. Instead, Satan whispers through the silence, “This sin is so awful, even Jesus can’t forgive you.” Surveys are showing more and more that many women in abortion clinics really do not want to be there. Not all women see abortion as a choice but rather the result of feeling they have no choice. That’s the way it was for Sandy. She felt all she would get from her parents was condemnation. Her church was silent. She felt trapped and could only see one way out. Consequently, Sandy, and so many like her, are coming away from abortion clinics with a deep sense of guilt and hopelessness. The Church has the message of forgiveness and hope that can bring healing.

Sin or Salvation?

Sandy did not find salvation from her problems through abortion. Rather, she found a “grievous sin.” Abortion is a sin against God, the Author of life. That makes it a necessary part of the Church’s message. There are many Christians who have had, or are contemplating having, an abortion. That makes it part of the Church’s message. There are many Christian women who have had abortions and are burdened with unbearable guilt. That makes it part of the Church’s message, another opportunity to proclaim the hope of the Gospel of Jesus.

¹ The quotes which follow all come from *Not My Own - Abortion and the Marks of the Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), pp. 4-6. Original sources will also be noted.

² “An Orthodox Word on Abortion” (Paper delivered at the Consultation on The Church and Abortion, Princeton, 1992), pp. 8-9.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Michael Gorman, *Abortion and the Early Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982).

⁵ *What Luther Says: An anthology*, compiled by Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), Vol. 2, NO. 2826, p.905.

⁶ *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), pp. 41-42.

⁷ *Ethics*, trans. Neville Horton Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p.131.

⁸ *Church Dogmatics*, trans. G.W. Bromiley and T.E. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & Y. Clark, 1961), 4.3, pp. 415-417.

⁹ *Ethics of Sex* (New York: Harpers, 1964), pp. 227-228.

CLASSIC BROCHURE



Abortion and the Message of the Church: Sin or Salvation?

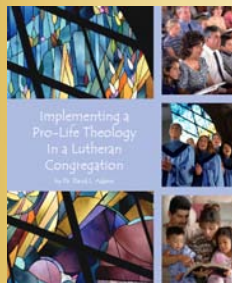
— Dr. James Lamb shows that throughout history the Church has called abortion sin. Only recently have some started calling abortion salvation—a way out of a difficult situation (but it is not a way out). It only creates guilt

and despair to which the Church must apply its most powerful message, the Gospel of Jesus.

Item 205T. \$0.25 ea.

Note: This brochure is also available in Braille free of charge. To order call or e-mail LFL.

HELPFUL BOOKLET



Implementing a Pro-Life Theology in a Lutheran Congregation

helps the local Church put its pro-life convictions into action! Dr. Adams says that unless our

congregations take action that makes those convictions a part of the way we do our ministry work, “we shall cease to be a pro-life church body within a generation.” This booklet offers a three-point plan to teach the faith, care for people in need, and to witness publicly to the teachings of God’s Word.

Item 208B. \$0.75 ea.

Dear Shelby,



by Janette Clausen

This is a letter which was inspired by a prospective adoptive parent after a meeting with a birthmother. It is written to the birthmother.

Dear Shelby,

I wanted to tell you what has been on my mind since the day we met, things I never had anticipated.

First, let me explain by apologizing to you. When arrangements were made to meet you, I intended to convince you we are the most wonderful people in the world to adopt your baby, that adoption was a great plan.

After that day, I started realizing something profound. Shelby, I am so sorry—I confess that before our meeting, I already even felt we *deserved* your baby, I guess because of all the pain, loss, and disappointment we've been through in contrast to your being young, uncommitted, unprepared to parent, even irresponsible. I just wanted to fast forward everything and have that baby in my arms almost instantly—like she was mine just because we had “matched.”

Then I met you—I was so nervous my brain froze. I couldn't think of one thing in the list of everything I wanted to tell you to convince you we were the family for your baby. The next thing I remember was you telling me about yourself. Your eyes locked with mine like you could see my soul, my real thoughts. I wondered why in the world you would be so nervous. After all, we were the ones being interviewed, and we were the ones who had to

“sell” ourselves in some weird sense.

You told us about learning you were pregnant, about how your family reacted. You shared how the father of the baby responded. You explained why you were thinking of adoption, and how your friends didn't get why you would consider adoption.

Somewhere in all of that, I became chilled with the awareness that all this was not about me. What I wanted, thought I deserved, didn't even compare to what courage you would need to do this. I remember wondering how you would ever find such strength to give your baby what you thought was best for her.

I felt numb about how to respond to your pain—being scared to death that you couldn't do the “right thing,” for fear that you couldn't endure the loss, or that your child wouldn't forgive you. The only assurance I had planned to give you was about us. I thought all you would need to know is the perfect life we would give her.

Would your broken heart really heal? The strong feelings against adoption that some people in your life had asserted made sense if they didn't know and trust us. You just met us, how could you know and trust us? How could we know that your child would love you for your adoption choice? Could we raise this child and realize that for us to be joyous about her being our daughter by adoption, she would have a profound loss before she could even remember it? Still, it would be a part of who she is—always.

I was ashamed for thinking how wonderful a baby would be for me with no regard for how deep your pain would have to run to make that happen.

I have never placed a baby for adoption, never had to make the best plan I could without the support and acceptance from the people most important to me. And I never



have had to make a decision so powerful and scary without an assurance there was something good in it for me.

But I do know grief. I know about being beside myself with despair. I know the risk of loving and losing. I know anger. The feelings of being in limbo while we were dealing with infertility, the frustration and anxiety of being powerless, and the anticipation of new grief revisited me. But this time, there was a peace—odd, but distinctly there. I realized I was reliving the feelings, but this time from looking in on your life.

I am sorry for my self obsession—for being prideful enough to think I deserved your baby. I always could sympathize with the birthmother's situation. I just did not know that I would actually feel your feelings. Now I can only assure you that if you find in your heart that you can love your child so much to let her go, I will never be able to compare to your inner strength. I assure you that every single day of our daughter's life I will thank God for you, and ask Him to give you peace and healing. I can assure you that she will know about that day we met, the moment you gave her to us, and how much you love her. I promise I will do everything I can to be the mother God wanted for her. And I promise that you will always be a distinct person in our daughter's life, an honorable woman who gave our daughter strong roots, who brought her life, and whose love is immeasurable.

Thank you for being so gracious through the lessons I had to learn during and after that day. May God bless you with peace and strength through your decision, and throughout every day of your life.

The adoptive mother's transforming journey and promise of prayer for her ultimately enabled Shelby to lovingly place her baby for adoption with this couple.

(Janette Clausen, LBSW, is Director of Pregnancy Counseling and Adoption Services for Lutheran Family Services of Iowa, 800-622-7285, www.lfsiowa.org.)

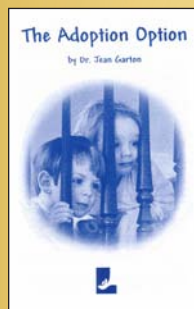
November is National Adoption Month! Check out these LFL resources!

BOOKLETS



Adoption: Finding a Family for a Child explores opportunities including: adopting an older child; internationally; an infant; an embryo, and includes a list of "What Can We Do?" suggestions.

Item 503B. \$0.25 ea.



The Adoption Option – Dr. Jean Garton, president emeritus of Lutherans For Life, explores the often forgotten option of adoption.

Item 500B. \$1.00 ea.

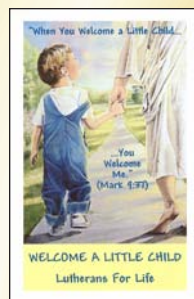
BROCHURE



The Servanthood of Adoption – There is a need to shed some good light on adoption by looking at adoption in the light of biblical servanthood. Item 501T. \$0.25 ea.

BULLETIN INSERT

Welcome a Little Child. Item 500B1. \$0.07 ea.



A Word For Life

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.titus2-4life.org



Once upon a time, there was a young Lutheran woman. We'll call her Linda. She grew up in a Christian home. She was baptized and confirmed. In 1973, her eyes were focused on a husband-to-be. (We'll call him Paul.) Married a year later and bumbling into the adventure of motherhood two years after that, Linda was oblivious to the culture around her.

One day, this young mom was confronted with a terrible idea—abortion. The Supreme Court, in two rulings on the same day, said, in effect, that any mother could abort her preborn child at any time for any reason! Linda went to her husband. They talked, pondered, and prayed.

Never before had Linda joined a “cause.”

This time, *because* she was compelled by something that lived deep inside her, she became involved in the ministry of Lutherans For Life. She and her husband were encouraged by others who were compelled by the Living Spirit to speak up for the precious humans God creates, loves, and redeems.

Linda went out to speak—and listen. Christian men and women took her aside to share how abortion had forever changed their lives. These stories of confusion, heartache, and pain weighed heavy on her heart. Why? Why would a mother or father choose to abort a child? What would have to happen to force them into such a corner of darkness?

Life. Life would have to happen. Life with all of its challenges and temptations. But, God

has a Word for life. It is a Word of purpose and hope. However, when this Word is disregarded, forgotten, or lost it is like a sword lain down in the midst of battle.

Sons and daughters in the church find themselves cornered in darkness every time they lay down the Sword of Truth to seek after their own imaginations. We are such prideful creatures! Every generation sees itself a little more sophisticated than the last.

What happens when we attempt to partner Jesus, the Holy One, with unholy ideas?

Could it be that “church people” have become embarrassed by the simplicity of Truth? Ahhh, but without Truth, we can only answer Satan’s question, “Did God really say?” with a feeble, useless word of our own.

Over the years, Linda realized a rebellious spirit had grown in her. It opposed her own imagination. It trumped her sophistication. Truth (together with the experience of older, wiser Christians) has a way of compelling us to live counter-culture.

To really help others—to really make a positive difference—one needs to get behind the façade of abortion and all other wrong choices to discover what propels any of us to make such decisions.

Paul kept repeating: The church is called to be distinctively different. Is it? Who has more influence on the church: the Word or the world?

Theories of evolution don't mix with the Truth of creation. (Genesis 1:1; 27) Arousing love before its time (Song of Solomon 3:5b) is contrary to love that is patient (1 Corinthians 13:4), pure (1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Timothy 4:12), and procreative. Although Satan wanted woman to be the mother of death, God directed man to name his wife Eve because she would become the mother of all the living,



(Genesis 3:20) Abortion and “mercy killing” are hopeless solutions to human problems in a sinful world, but God has words of hope no matter what the situation: “[C]hoose life, that you and your offspring may live” (Deuteronomy 30:19b). Marriage is not Adam and Steve, but Adam and Eve! (Genesis 2:24) Men are not dolts, idiots, or losers, but defenders of women and children—a son or daughter’s first hero. (3 John 4) A woman’s strength is not her charm or beauty, but her loving reverence for God and belief in His promises. (Proverbs 1:7; 31:30)

Living counter-culture is proclaiming: Here I stand—on Truth! With the Spirit in me, I will not be embarrassed!

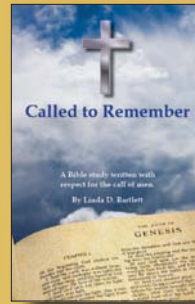
One day, Linda said to Paul, “It seems the whole world is rushing in chaos to jump off the cliff!” But the power of the Word is at work. Jesus stands at the edge of that cliff with His arms outstretched to block the way. Then, with indescribable love, Jesus wraps man, woman, and child into His healing embrace and leads them away from the edge to a new path! A new point of view! A new life!

There is another young woman. We’ll call her Hope. She came into Linda’s life seemingly by surprise, but God knew Hope was in need of a “mom” and older, Christian friend. This young woman had been cornered in darkness. She showed that when re-connected to the Word for Life, frail humans are driven to our knees! We cry! The Law of God’s Word surely reveals how close to the edge we have come!

Hope also showed that the Good News of God’s Word renews our minds! It changes our attitude! It enables us to put worldly thought and behavior behind! It leads us to *put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness!* (Ephesians 4:23-24) In Christ, we become new creations! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Hope challenges Linda to believe that renewal is not only possible, souls long for it. People in dark corners need people who bear the light of changed attitudes!

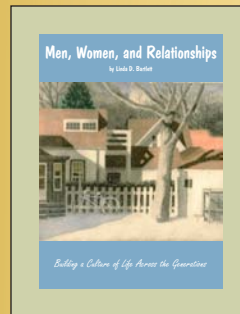
HERE’S MORE FROM LINDA BARTLETT—BIBLE STUDIES AND BOOKLETS:



Called to Remember – When men remember their role in God’s Story as protectors and servant-style leaders, the world becomes a safer place for women and children. **Bible**

study with leader’s guide.

Item 302BS. \$1.50 ea.

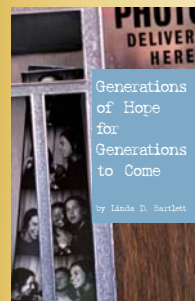


Men, Women, and Relationships (Building a Culture of Life Across the Generations) asks, “How does

God’s view of men, women,

and relationships differ from the world? What are the consequences of our choices? What hope is there in Jesus? **Bible study with 12 lessons, leader’s guide, and reproducible student pages.**

Item 901BS. \$10.00 ea.



Generations of Hope for Generations to Come can serve as a tool to help build a bridge between generations, an encouragement for LFL leaders, a motivation for

parents in a new century, a promise to the faithful, and a reason to take heart!

Booklet. Item 906B. \$2.00 ea.

Walking with Faith and Grace



By Rev. Gib Botten

I had just gotten home from church one Wednesday evening during Lent. I had been teaching a series I called, “Famous walks in the Bible” on how any walk with God requires faith in a God who is always faithful to us. My wife Denise had stayed home that evening. I wasn’t sure why. When I saw her I knew she had been crying and I had a suspicion what it was all about. The doctor had just called to tell her that recent tests had revealed the baby she was carrying was positive for Down syndrome.

This was one of our greatest fears given her age. The doctor tried to lessen the shock by saying that while there was a 60 percent chance the baby would have Down syndrome, there was still a 40 percent chance it would not.

Flipping a coin would give better chances than that! We were shocked. We hoped for the best, but prepared ourselves emotionally for dealing with a baby who had Down syndrome. No, we told the doctor. We wouldn’t have an amniocentesis that was recommended to be sure.

This baby was a gift of God no matter what. And God would give us the grace to deal with whatever would come.

The whole thing wasn’t supposed to have happened anyway. Our two older girls were in high school and middle school. We had been “done” having kids years before. Denise was finishing up her masters degree and preparing to teach full time. Just a few more years, we thought, and the kids will be gone. We’ll have

more freedom. Maybe we could return to the mission field where we served before coming to Kansas.

There were so many possibilities. But now in our mid-forties we were looking at the prospect of doing it all over again: the crying, the sleepless nights, the diapers and baby-proofing the house. We were not looking forward to it. And what would all that mean with a baby who had Down syndrome?

On that particular Wednesday evening I had taught about Abraham’s famous walk with Isaac up the mountain where Abraham had been commanded to sacrifice his only son—the child of the promise who he and Sarah had waited and hoped for so many years. God had been faithful to His promise and had given them a child in their old age (way beyond their 40’s).



Now, however, that same God had commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. It surely would have been a lonely walk, but Abraham walked in faith in a God who he believed would be faithful to His promise.

That night as I spoke about walking in faith, I remember telling about leading the youth in our church on trust walks around the facility. You know how it goes. One kid leads a blindfolded kid simply by giving instructions. Of course I would warn the sighted kids leading the blinded ones that intentionally running someone into a wall would be a sin. And the wages of sin is death. To date no youth has ever led another into the wall in my church. I’m not sure if they get the point of the exercise is to illustrate God’s faithfulness to us, or else they simply fear me. Nevertheless, the point is made: God is faithful and won’t “bonk” us into the wall when we walk with Him in faith. But that’s easier said than done.

Hearing the news that our baby might have Down syndrome, however, felt like a “bonk.” During the six months we waited to find out for sure allowed me a lot of time to think. I thought how easy it would be simply to abort this “accident” in our lives. We could continue on with our plans according to our expectations. No crying, sleepless nights, diapers, and the rest. We could just close our eyes and make it go away.

I didn't think about those things seriously for us. We have stood publicly against abortion for many years. But I thought how those same justifications are used every day in our country—to lethal ends. I have Christian friends who have Down syndrome kids. And they tell me what a blessing they are. Why couldn't this be the same for us? No, not a “bonk,” a blessing.

We knew God would be faithful to us in all circumstances and we would trust him. My wife liked the name “Gabriel” if it was a boy, reminding us of the angel who announced the blessing of a child to both Elizabeth and Mary so long ago. I liked the name “Grace” for a girl because I knew a baby born with Down syndrome would need a lot of it.

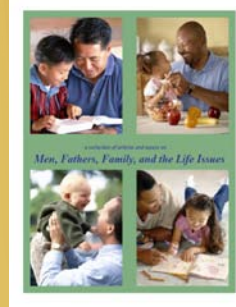
The day came. Grace was born. And within seconds we knew she was in that 40 percent. Still there would be crying and sleepless nights and diapers. And we would still need God's grace through it all. She's almost a year old now and people tell us how beautiful she is. And she is. But she would have been beautiful even if she had Down syndrome.

All babies are beautiful; their beauty derived from being loved by God. Looking at Grace, the thought that millions of beautiful babies have had their lives ended because they are not convenient, makes my heart just ache.

May God give us His grace to do our part so that beautiful babies are given the life that God gave to them.

(Rev. Gib Botten is pastor at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Dodge City, Kansas.)

FATHERHOOD/FAMILY

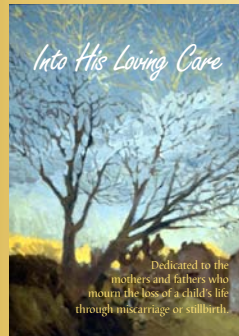


Men, Fathers, Family, and the Life Issues

features excellent articles on fatherhood, families, and marriage by authors Allan Carlson, Ph.D;

William A. Mahlow; Grace Kern; Dr. Jean Garton; Gary Thomas; David R. Carlin; and Rev. Edward Fehskens.
Item 300A. **\$2.50 ea.**

Here's a special devotional booklet to help those struggling because of miscarriage or stillbirth in their family:



Into His Love Care – To help moms and dads who mourn the loss of a child's life through miscarriage or stillbirth, Linda Bartlett wrote this wonderful

devotional booklet. Linda says, “It may seem as if God is far away at such times of sorrow, but He knows every sparrow that falls. How much more He must care for you and me ... and our little ones.”

Into His Loving Care features suggested Scripture readings, prayers, and beautiful artwork.

This unique booklet has been very well received and makes an excellent and thoughtful gift for those who are hurting.
Item 902B. **\$2.00 ea.**

Ancient Pro-Life Document Discovered!

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



Actually, the document has been around for a long time. What needs to be discovered, however, is just how pro-life the *Apostles' Creed* really is. What we profess so often connects so well to the life issues of our day.

What follows are some *For Life* thoughts on the creed and some related Bible passages. Look up the passages and discuss how they relate. Add passages of your own!

“I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.”

Thought:
Everything created *before* the creation of human life was *for* the creation of human life. The setting God created for human life and the way He created human life and the way He continues to create human life, gives human life special value.

Psalm 8; Genesis 1:26, 2:7, 2:22;
Psalm 139:13-14

“And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,”

Thought: The conception of Jesus attests not only to His divinity at that moment but also to our humanity at that moment. Jesus, the embryo, gives value to all embryos.

Psalm 51:5; Hebrews 2:14; Luke 1:30-31

“Born of the virgin Mary,”

Thought: That God would come into this world at all for the likes of us testifies to His great love for life.

John 3:16; 1 John 4:10

“Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.”

Thought: His suffering is the price that gives value to human life; and His suffering gives value to human suffering.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 2:18, 4:15; 2 Corinthians 1:5; Romans 5:2-4, 8:28-39

“He descended into Hell,”

Thought: Satan loses! We can resist his temptations to sin against life.

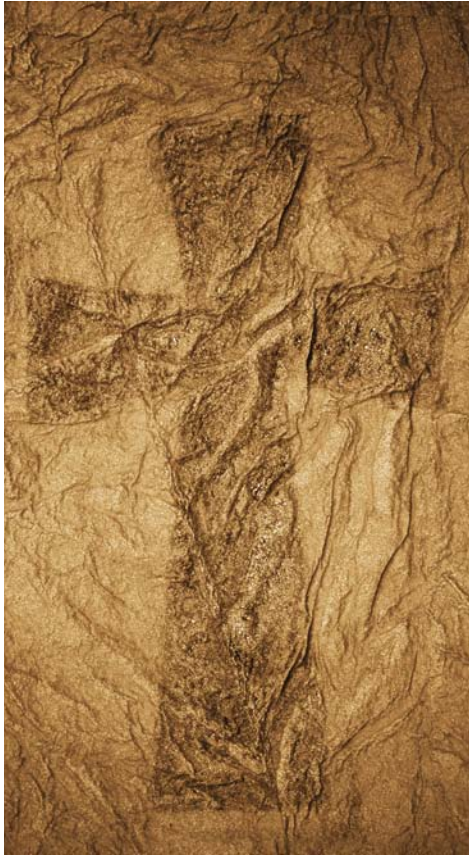
James 4:7; Hebrews 2:14; Ephesians 6:11-17

“The third day He rose again from the dead.”

Thought: Life wins! We do not strive *for* victory in our pro-life work; we strive *in* victory!

1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Romans 8:37; Proverbs 21:31; 2 Chronicles 20:15

“He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”



Thought: Jesus is in control of His people, living and *reigning* to all eternity.

Revelation 5:7-14; Hebrews 2:8;
1 Corinthians 15:25; Ephesians
1:22

“From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.”

Thought: Judgment is coming. We need to reach out to those who sin against life.

Matthew 18: 5-6, 25:41-46, 5:43-45;
1 Timothy 2:4; Luke 15:7

“I believe in the Holy Spirit,”

Thought: God’s Spirit calls us to a life of faith.

Romans 3:21-26; Luke 12:22-31;
Proverbs 3:5-8; 1 Peter 1:6-7

“The holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,”

Thought: We are called into a caring community.

Romans 12:3-13; 2 Corinthians 1:4;
Galatians 6:2; James 1:27

“The forgiveness of sins,”

Thought: There is no message more powerful for those who have sinned against life.

1 John 1:9; John 8:10-11; Romans
8:1

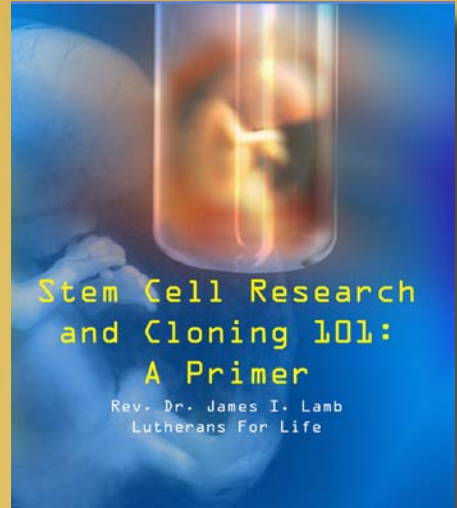
“The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

Thought: The best is yet to come! We live life always in hope.

John 14:1-3; Romans 8:18; 2
Corinthians 5:1-5; Philippians 1:21;
Revelation 21:1-4

DVD on Stem Cell Research!

This DVD has received excellent reviews!



Stem Cell Research and Cloning 101: A Primer

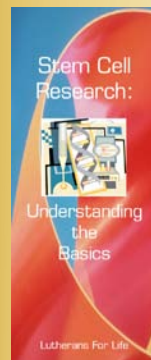
is hosted by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb. He says, “This presentation is not going to be complicated and hard to understand. I will be presenting the basics of stem cell research and cloning . . . Once we understand the basic biology involved, we will be able to apply God’s Word to these technologies—and God’s Word is where we want to begin.” (37 minutes)
Item 1001AV. FREE. (1 DVD per order.)



Free discussion guide
at online catalog:

www.lutheransforlife.org

Best-Selling Brochures . . .



*Understand
the Basics*

Stem Cell
Item 1000T.

Cloning
Item 1001T.

\$0.25 ea.

Teaching



For



Life

Teaching For Life is a unique, all-new, Gospel-centered, positive way to help Lutheran school teachers apply God's Word to the life issues!

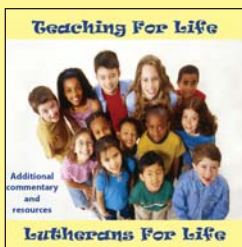
Teaching For Life

teaches nine key pro-life concepts—one for each month of the school year—by giving ideas on how to integrate them into religion, math, social studies, language arts, and more.

The goal of **Teaching For Life** is to make it as easy as possible for the teacher to use!

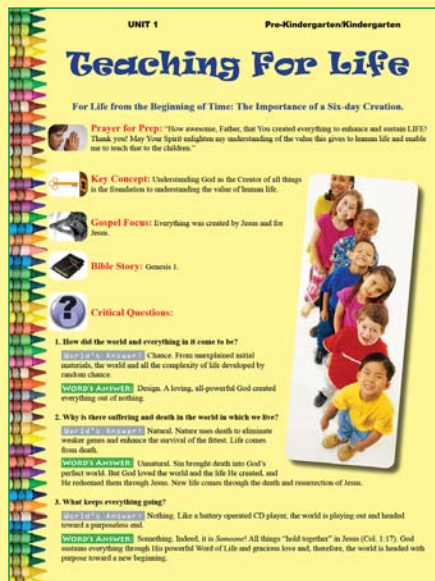
The entire **Teaching For Life** package includes 45 lessons for five grade levels (PK-K, 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8). It comes in a sturdy 8.25" x 11" full color tri-fold format, providing the teacher with all that is needed to teach a key life concept each month in a variety of ways.

Each **Teaching For Life** package includes a CD which provides additional resources, commentary, and teaching tools.



Preview samples of **Teaching For Life** were shared at the 2008 Lutheran Education Association Conference. The response from teachers was overwhelmingly positive!

TEACHING FOR LIFE



Lesson Plans and CD

Grades PK-K. *Item 720C. \$49.99 ea.*

Grades 1-2. *Item 721C. \$49.99 ea.*

Grades 3-4. *Item 723C. \$49.99 ea.*

Grades 5-6. *Item 725C. \$49.99 ea.*

Grades 7-8. *Item 727C. \$49.99 ea.*

Complete **Teaching For Life** package of 45 lesson plans and CD for all grade levels: *Item 729C. \$199.99 ea.*

TFL Themes by Unit (Nine Units/Grade Level):

Unit 1: For Life from the Beginning of Time: The Importance of a Six-Day Creation.

Unit 2: For Life Because God Is—The Trinitarian Value of Human Life.

Unit 3: For Life from the Very Beginning of Life.

Unit 4: For Life in the Womb.

Unit 5: For Chaste and Decent Lives.

Unit 6: For Life and Loving them Both.

Unit 7: For Life and Healing Broken Hearts.

Unit 8: For Life When Life Isn't Good.

Unit 9: For Life at Life's End.

Encouraging Death

by Ken Connor



Even the most despicable ideas can be made palatable when euphemisms are used to spin them. That's why abortion advocates call themselves "pro-choice" rather than "pro-abortion." It's also why they talk about "terminating a pregnancy" rather than "killing a baby."

Controlling the language not only controls the argument, it often determines the outcome of the argument.

Proponents of euthanasia understand the power of language in shaping debate. Therefore, instead of using the term "physician-assisted suicide" to describe the practice they advocate, they use euphemisms like "death with dignity" and "end of life choices" to sugar coat the reality of the killings they have in view.

They know the term "physician-assisted suicide" does not poll well, so they try to disguise the real nature of what it is they are championing. Since people are inherently uncomfortable with the notion that those trained in the healing arts would aid and abet the killing of their patients, euphemisms are used to conceal the true nature of what's involved.

Everyone wants to die with dignity. Thus, like abortion, killing oneself with a doctor's assistance becomes just another "choice."

Many in the medical community are complicit in this deception, and, although doctors were once trained to "do no harm,"

they are now fostering it through the deceptive use of rhetoric.

A recent *New York Times* article, written by Jane Gross, describes one such deception. The article explains that a new practice called "slow medicine" has gained support in medical communities in recent years. The goal of slow medicine is to encourage "physicians to put on the brakes when considering care that may have high risks and limited rewards for the elderly, and it educates patients and families how to push back against emergency room trips and hospitalizations designed for those with treatable illnesses ..."

Thus, slow medicine seeks to aid doctors, families, and patients in resisting medical efforts to cure treatable illnesses.

When first confronted with the slow medicine approach, patients understandably find it offensive.

The *New York Times* article reports that Kendal at Hanover, a retirement community which encourages the slow medicine approach, "begins by asking newcomers whether they

want to be resuscitated or go to the hospital and under what circumstances."

Brenda Jordan, a nurse practitioner at Kendal, explains, "They give me an amazingly puzzled look, like, 'Why wouldn't I?'"

This reaction is completely natural and in keeping with any patient who values their own life. Even Dr. Tom Rosenthal, UCLA's chief medical officer and a believer in slow medicine, admits, "The culture has a built-in bias that everything that can be done will be done."

To overcome that instinctive cultural bias, the Kendal staff steps in to explain things to its patients. While the explanation is couched in quality of life terms and foreboding statistics,



underneath lies a utilitarian concern never overtly addressed.

In her article, Gross explains, “The costliest patients—the elderly with chronic illnesses—are the only group with universal health coverage under Medicare, leading to huge federal expenditures that experts agree are unsustainable as boomers age.” Thus, there are financial benefits that flow from every elderly person’s decision to “die with dignity.”

Recent experience in the Netherlands illustrates where deceptive language about euthanasia can lead.

When the Netherlands first legalized euthanasia, it was only allowed in rare cases of “intolerable suffering.” “The guidelines were designed specifically to keep assisted suicide occurrences few and far between by establishing demanding conditions that had to be met, at the risk of criminal prosecution.”

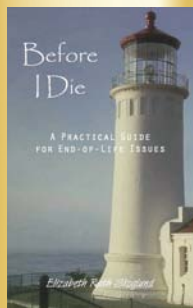
Yet doctors soon began interpreting these guidelines broadly, and the government and the courts did almost nothing to prevent it. Now the Netherlands, under its euthanasia law, allows the killing of infants with non-life threatening birth defects.

Additionally, Dutch doctors are euthanizing patients without their permission. Repeated studies have demonstrated that 900-1000 patients experience “termination without request or consent” every year. The Dutch government usually turns a blind eye to this illegal practice as well.

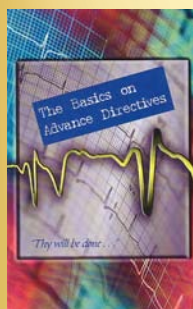
If the Netherlands is any indication, the citizens of the United States ought to guard aggressively against the rhetorical gyrations of euthanasia’s proponents. No matter how flowery their language is, they promote the killing of human beings. They propose a “right to die” but, in actuality, they want the right to kill.

(Ken Connor is the chairman of the Center for a Just Society in Washington and a leading pro-life attorney who helped Terri Schiavo’s family try to save her life. He is a former president of the Family Research Council. www.centerforajustsociety.org, 5/10/08)

These two booklets are very helpful in dealing with end-of-life issues:

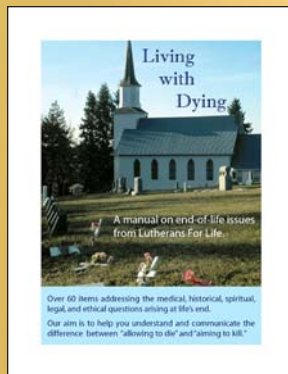


Before I Die - A Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues by Elizabeth Skoglund, shares principles for the Christian at life’s end along with words of encouragement.
Item 809B. **\$2.00 ea.**



The Basics on Advance Directives: “Thy Will Be Done” by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb has basic information about Living Wills and other advance directives.
Item 807B. **\$0.25 ea.**

In-depth Manual (an excellent resource for pastors, counselors, and interested laypeople):



Living with Dying – A 3-ring binder with over 60 items addressing medical, historical, spiritual, legal, and ethical questions

arising at life’s end. This resource is aimed at helping you to understand—and communicate—the crucial distinction between “allowing to die” and “aiming to kill.”

Item 802R. **\$20.00 ea.**

Sex-selective abortion is widely practiced in India with ultrasound scans routinely used to determine the sex of the child. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health stated there were an estimated 35 million missing girls in India. On average there are just 800 girls for every 1000 boys, with the number as low as 300 in Punjab. (*ActionAid, 6/20; SPUC, 6/24*)

An obstetrician in Britain is calling for elimination of medical justification for abortions but also a reduction in abortion threshold. Professor Stuart Campbell describes the children he scans at between 20 and 24 weeks as “baby-like” and too developed to be aborted. He wants to see an end to the need for two doctors’ consent for abortion and writes: “... today, when 99 percent of abortions are carried out for social reasons and only one per cent because of fetal abnormalities, [medical consent] has become something of a farce.” (*Telegraph, SPUC, 5/11*)

A child in Australia has been born at 38 weeks after implanting in her mother’s ovary. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said the case of Durga Thangaraja was one in a million since survival is so rare. The ectopic nature of the pregnancy was not detected until late on. The doctor who delivered the child said that, had he known, he would have advised abortion. (*Mail on Sunday, 6/1; SPUC, 6/2*)

A child whom his parents reportedly wanted to abort at eight weeks’ gestation has survived. A scan on Finley Crampton suggested that he had inherited the multicystic dysplastic kidney gene from Jodie Percival, his mother, of Nottinghamshire, England. She had an abortion which failed to kill the child who was born three weeks premature with minor kidney problems. (*Daily Mail, 6/4; SPUC, 6/5*)



A baby who was aborted in New Zealand having been diagnosed *in utero* with tuberculosis proved not to have the condition. Health authorities in Auckland have apologized after samples from the mother were contaminated. (*Radio New Zealand, 7/14; SPUC, 7/16*)

Twins were born earlier this year after *in utero* surgery at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, Ireland. An otherwise fatal condition meant that one baby deprived the other of blood. Lasers were used to repair blood vessels. (*Irish Independent, 7/7; SPUC, 7/8*)

A Catholic priest has compared abortion with the mass killings of Jews by the Nazis. Father Mark Hackeson of Poringland, England, said in a parish newsletter distributed to local homes: “Since the legalizing of abortion in this country, over six million lives have been destroyed—on a par with the Jewish Holocaust. The social convenience of an adult will be often judged as of more value than the infant life that is destroyed.” (*Evening Echo, 7/20; SPUC, 7/21*)

A first-year medical student in England performed a 14,000 feet skydive in June to raise awareness of the pressure on medical staff to take part in abortion against their consciences. Siobhan Fearon, 19, of Hull York Medical School said: “I think it is vital that society understands and appreciates the sanctity of every human life whether it is a developing child in the womb or somebody approaching the end of their life. When I graduate and become a doctor I am hoping to be able to use my skills to help save lives. I think abortion is never the answer and hope that one day, as a doctor, I will be able to help women to make the right decision.” (*SPUC, 6/30, 7/1*)

World News summaries are from the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) based in London, England: www.spuc.org.uk.

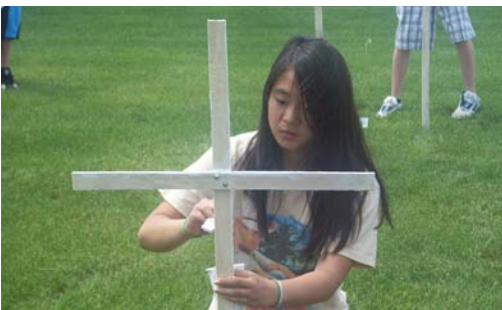
A Good Problem

It was one of those good problems to have. What do you do with 37 seventh and eighth grade confirmation students who show up in a bus at the National Life Center? The group, with six adult counselors, was from Christ Lutheran Church, Norfolk, Nebraska. Pastor Leon Rosenthal organized and coordinated the trip. Every year confirmation students from Christ Lutheran travel to visit and learn about a particular ministry in the Church.

So what did we do with them for five hours? We taught them about Lutherans For Life and what we do. We taught them about God's wonderful gift of life. Then we put them to work helping us do what we do to teach others about life! We had fun!



We pass this along as an idea for others to consider. Make it a day (or two) out For Life! Give us a call at 888-364-LIFE!



Good News about a Grant and a New *Life Resource Catalog*!

Last year, the Texas LWML accepted a proposal from LFL for a Lutheran Women's Missionary League Mission grant to help us translate, produce, market, and distribute our materials in Spanish to reach the growing Hispanic and Latino communities with God's Word of Life.

In June, we were informed that the Pro-Life Brochures in Spanish project was approved as one of the 2008-2010 mission grants of the Texas District LWML! Thanks be to God for this gracious gift and partnership!

Over the next three years, more Spanish materials will be available from Lutherans For Life because of this grant.

There are many special LFL projects waiting for funding. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Karen Frohwein!

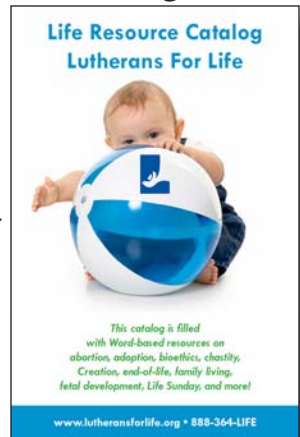
The *Life Resource Catalog* is here!

The new full-color catalog is filled with Word-based, Christ-centered resources on a wide range of life issues!

Each catalog section begins with a quote to help explain why it is so

important speak up and connect God's Word to the life issues.

LFL members will receive the new catalog in September. You can also order a catalog online or by contacting LFL at 888-364-LIFE or orders@lutheransforlife.org.



LFL—Forward to the Future



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

There is no fabled “summer slowdown” here at LFL’s national Life Center. Much of our work is focused on the future. So read on and join in our eager expectation.

1979-2009

Thirty Years FOR LIFE!

2009 will mark the 30th anniversary of the incorporation of Lutherans For Life. Much change took place over those years. The ministry has grown in size. The national office has moved. Good leaders have given way to more good leaders! The life issues are more diverse and complex. Technology provides new, fast, and exciting ways to communicate God’s message of Life. Receptivity to the For Life message and connecting the Word of Life to the life issues increased among pastors and congregations.

Some things did not and will not change. LFL remains solidly grounded in God’s Word. We continue to be Gospel focused and present a positive For Life message that changes hearts, minds, and lives. Our commitment remains to equip Christ’s pastors and people to be enthusiastic voices For Life.

Look forward with us celebrating what God continues to do in and though Lutherans For Life.

2009 National Conference Celebrating the Abundant Life

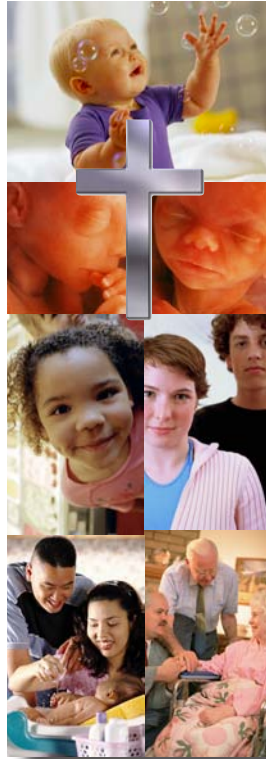
The 2009 National Conference will be in St. Louis, Missouri, July 24-25, at the Doubletree

Westport. Our theme is *Celebrating the Abundant Life* based on LFL’s theme verse, John 10:10. The conference will be part of our 30th anniversary celebration.

Bobby Schindler, brother of Terri Schindler Schiavo, is scheduled to be our keynote speaker! Bobby works full-time for “Terri’s Foundation” as an advocate for persons in danger of being killed because they have been deemed “unworthy of life.” The foundation embraces the true meaning of compassion by opposing the practice of euthanasia.

The conference agenda has been shortened a little from previous years. We will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, July 24th with pre-conference leadership training for our grassroots leaders. The conference will officially begin at 4:00 p.m. with an intergenerational, celebratory, fun-for-life event. That will be followed by an opening worship service, banquet, and keynote address. Saturday will include a prayer breakfast, plenary session, and workshops. We’ll conclude at 4:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us in **Celebrating the Abundant Life**.



RENEWAL FOR LIFE Update

Many hours are being spent getting ready to move into a more active phase of **RENEWAL FOR LIFE** (RFL). This initiative seeks to equip pastors and congregations to be Christ-centered, enthusiastic, ongoing “Voices For Life.”

June was spent introducing RFL at the conventions of the Association of Free Lutheran Churches, the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, and the Association of American Lutheran Churches. In September

a presentation will be given to the Council of Presidents of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

As we move into the winter months, we will be presenting at circuit and regional meetings introducing RFL directly to pastors and inviting their participation. Participating congregations will establish a Life Advocate and gain access to our RFL online library. Our goal is to have 1,000 congregations participating in the next two years!

Remember, **RENEWAL FOR LIFE** is about renewing the three R's:

Responsibility – The responsibility to address the life issues as they affect God's people belongs to the Church and her pastors.

Relevancy – The Church and her pastors have what it takes to address these issues—the very relevant Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Resources – The Church and her pastors cannot assume this responsibility effectively and efficiently without help. LFL pledges to renew the resources we offer and the means we use to deliver them.

2008 State Conferences

With no national LFL conference in 2008, you are encouraged to attend local and state LFL conferences:

South Wisconsin LFL Conference

9/27, Concordia University, Mequon
\$10 per person, which includes lunch.

For more information:

www.lfl-wi.org, e-mail diane.chadwick@fbfcwi.com, or call 920-474-7143.

LFL of Missouri State Conference

10/18, Christ Memorial LC, St. Louis.

Dr. Jean Garton will speak at the evening Dessert Social. For more information go to:

www.lfiofmo.org, e-mail lfiofmo@yahoo.com, or call 314-631-9240.

Lutherans For Life “On Display”

LFL was on the road and on display this summer at nine national gatherings including those of the American



Association of Lutheran Churches, Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America, Higher Things, International Lutheran Laymen's League, LCMS Black Family Convocation, LCMS Children's Ministry, National Lutheran Youth Workers, and National Right to Life.

Dr. Lamb reported from the road on “how well LFL is received by the pastors and laity of the AFLC. It's not just positive, it is overwhelmingly so. Our materials are greatly appreciated and are being used in many, many congregations.” A similar response was found at the CLBA convention.

On attending the National Right to Life Convention, Hank and Shirley Scheuermann of Cleveland, Ohio said, “It was important that we were there. Many people, including some Lutherans, did not know there was a Lutherans For Life group. They were all glad that we were there ... Everyone who stopped by our table was impressed with the quality and content of our brochures. They said these were the best ... they had seen.”

At the LCMS National Youth Workers Conference, Karen Frohwein said, “There were many comments on LFL resources and their usefulness for Bible study and discussion with youth groups. Knowing there are Bible-based resources that touch on current issues for teens is important. *GOD'S WORD For Life* was also well received. People were again thankful for this resource that connects God's Word to today's life issues.

What's the Use of God's Word?

by Karen Frohwein
Director of Development



“What does Lutherans For Life do?”
“What will my gift to Lutherans For Life do?”

These are probably the two most asked questions I receive as the director of development of Lutherans For Life. My answer always starts with LFL's mission statement. We witness to the sanctity of human life, through education, based on the Word of God.

Sometimes that statement is followed by a positive response, but more often there is a pause, as if the person is waiting for more. God's Word is a great thing, but what do we do? One tends to get a little restless waiting for God's Word to bring down the ills in our pro-death world.



The people in Malachi's day put it this way: **“It is vain to serve God. What is the profit of our keeping his charge or of walking as in mourning before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the arrogant blessed. Evildoers not only prosper but they put God to the test and they escape”** (Malachi 3:14-15).

Every day, babies are murdered before they are born. Every day, people facing disease wait for a cure through research that uses the tiniest human life as a product for cell harvesting. Every day someone is labeled a “vegetable” and their life is no longer valued. Planned Parenthood continues to put up clinics and laws continue to stand or be created that devalue life.

What good is it to focus on God's Word when there are so many things to do in the pro-life world? What about changing laws? What about starting caring pregnancy centers or hotlines? What about getting ultrasound machines into every pregnancy center? What about pain management for the terminally ill? What about curing diseases or infertility? The people of Malachi's day were not the last ones to ask, “What's the use of God's Word?”

Let's apply that age-old question to some practical examples. What if that pregnant teen is your next door neighbor? God's Word will guide you to speak the truth in love! What if that post-abortive woman is sitting next to you in your weekly Bible study? God's Word will lead you to remind her of forgiveness in Christ! What if that infertile couple is your son and daughter-in-law, or that unborn child who may have Down syndrome is your grandchild? God's Word will give you an understanding of the sanctity of life and a hope for

the future! What if that dying person in the nursing home is your mother or father? God's Word will give your family peace in those final days and hours! What if that cancer patient is looking back at you in the mirror every morning? God's Word will give you strength to face another day!

God's Word can “do” something—it does every day! And more than that, through the Cross, God **DID** something to cure the ills of our world. What can be more exciting than being involved in an organization that bases their work on God's Word? What can be bigger than the Gospel?

Back to the book of Malachi for a moment. Not everyone wondered about what God was

or wasn't doing. It is important to note that **"... those who feared the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord paid attention and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and esteemed his name"** (v 16) and also **"... once more you shall see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve him"** (v 18).

Lutherans For Life exists to assist God's people in speaking with one another. We exist to equip the church and her members to speak to others about God's powerful gift of hope and forgiveness through Christ. We exist to remind Christians that God is at work and the battle over the wicked has already been won! What Jesus DID for us guides and supports what we DO, as individuals and as an organization.

But what does my gift to LFL really do?

In our human nature, this valid question remains. As stewards of God's treasures, we are accountable for how we manage them. One of the best ways to learn what LFL is doing is through this issue of *LifeDate*. Check out *GOD'S WORD For Life* (pages 26-27), *Teaching For Life* (pages 16-17), **RENEWAL FOR LIFE** (pages 22-23), and the development of more Spanish For Life materials (page 21). These things happen because of donors just like you! Our national staff, board, and state presidents are listed on pages 2 and 31.

Your gifts support national, state, and local people witnessing about God's message of Life. I hope you will call us for a copy of our new *Life Resource Catalog*. It will give you the big picture of what Lutherans For Life can provide because of your support.

If you would like to learn more about how your gifts can really **DO** something, please give me a call. The opportunities to use God's treasures to witness to the sanctity of human life, through education, based on the Word of God are endless! All glory be to the Lord of Life!

Help Others, Yourself, and LFL!



Lutherans For Life is a pan-Lutheran organization and does not receive support from any church body. Your individual gifts provide for the annual and long-term needs of Lutherans For Life.

Give Online!

– You can join LFL or give contributions online through the secure Click and Pledge™ link.



Automatic Bank Drafts – Never write another donation check! Many banks offer electronic funds transfer from your checking or savings accounts. Check with your bank to see if you can set up this convenient way to give gifts to LFL.

Matching Gifts – Your gift can go twice as far! Does your employer have a matching gift program? Ask them to include LFL as a qualified charity! (Note: Lutherans For Life is not allowed to receive gifts through the Thrivent's GivingPlus® program—more info is available on the LFL web site.)

LFL Endowment Fund – The fund receives gifts and bequests and uses the interest accrued from them for the mission and ministry of LFL.

Planned Gifts – LFL can provide free, no-obligation information on how you can accomplish your personal and family goals through trusts, annuities, and other plans. Have you included LFL in your will or estate plans?

Online Shopping Rebate Program – Check out iGive.com at the LFL web site.

Internet Search Engine Rebate Program – Raise money for Lutherans For Life just by searching the Internet with GoodSearch: www.goodsearch.com.

Sharing *GOD'S WORD* for Life



By Ellie Menz

What is Life?

That question was posed to a twenty-eight member IOWAY mission team to contemplate for a day. What is IOWAY? **I**ndividual **O**utreach **W**ith **A**dults and **Y**outh. It is an amazing Iowa District West (LCMS) mission outreach. As the IOWAY director for the past seven years, I have the privilege of organizing mission trips and events for youth and adults. One yearly trip is a two week mission trip to work with Pastor Arthur Porter and the Nehemiah Project in the inner city of Los Angeles. This summer, our IOWAY team worked with eight of the eleven Nehemiah churches from July 8-21.

The first few days were spent planning the following week's VBS and canvassing the church neighborhoods to invite children to VBS. They also used their Midwest muscles as they scraped, painted, pulled weeds, landscaped, and cleaned the property of some of the churches.

On Friday afternoon, the caravan of five minivans headed south to the Mexican border. What excitement and anticipation as they headed across the border on foot carrying much needed dental and school supplies to children at two Lutheran missions in Tijuana on Saturday and Sunday! We joined Melissa Salomon, with Lutheran Hour Ministries, to share the love of Jesus with children and adults

through the nativity story (in costume), crafts, and activities. We provided funding for a new outdoor worship area and a stone oven. They treated us with yummy goodies baked in the stone oven. It will be used to bake bread for sale to provide funds for the church while it provides bread for the community.

On Sunday, we were privileged to be part of the procession with an amazing congregation who has worked for 15 years to build a new church. What an exciting day! It did not matter that we did not understand the two hour service in Spanish. We understood their joy!

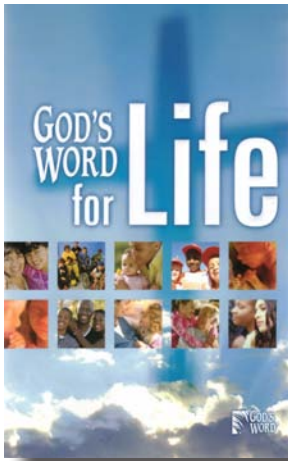
Then back to the inner city of Los Angeles for a week of VBS in six Lutheran churches. God worked in amazing ways to reach the hearts of the Iowans and Californians.

Before heading out on this mission trip, the parents and youth attended training meetings. At the meeting, the parents met privately and I presented the Bible, *GOD'S WORD for Life*, from Lutherans

For Life, for them to give to their child. I asked them to mark their favorite verses and to write a statement of faith and words of encouragement to their child. The parents were to then secretly have family, friends, pastor, sponsor, neighbors, and anyone important in their life to also write in the Bible. The Bible was then presented to their youth before leaving on the mission trip. Many parents found that it was very meaningful and challenging to express their faith to their youth.



I first saw *GOD'S WORD for Life* at a Lutherans For Life display by Pastor Ed and Eileen Brandt. I appreciate the Topical Index with reference to many topics as abortion, adoption, biotechnology,



Christian responsibility, value of human life, end of life issues, and much more. I believe we in the Church need to address these issues. If not the Church, then who will present the truth according to God's Word?

On the first day of the trip, I challenged the group to answer the question, "What is Life?" That was the topic and theme of our twice-daily devotional time. Topics covered were abortion, abstinence, dating, making choices, when life begins, partial birth abortion, goals in life, and end-of-life issues.

Our theme song was *God Knew Your Name* by James Likens, which is a beautiful and powerful message: "God knew your name before the light of day shined on your little face." (Song available on the *Just Imagine* CD from LFL. Item 1507. \$8.00 ea.)

On the last day before returning to Iowa, we released butterflies to their new life. As they were released, the team was reminded that through Christ they also are released to a newness of life. They are free to make different choices in their lives. 2 Corinthians 5:17 reminds us "**Whoever is a believer in Christ is a new creation. The old way of living has disappeared. A new way of living has come into existence**" (*GOD'S WORD*).



Lutherans For Life has received approval to participate in this year's **Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)**, the annual fundraising program through which federal employees and military personnel can donate funds to the ministry by payroll deduction.

LFL's name will appear in the 2008 listing of "National/International Organizations," published in each local campaign brochure.

Each year, federal employees and military personnel are given the opportunity to contribute to participating nonprofit charities and ministries by payroll deduction through the CFC program.

If you are a federal employee or member of the US military (or have family or friends who are) and would like to support LFL's mission to "witness to the sanctity of human life, through education, based on the Word of God," please consider designating "Lutherans For Life" when making your pledge—and let others know about this unique opportunity!

The CFC identification number for LFL is 11508.

Participation in the Combined Federal Campaign is just one of the many opportunities you have to help support Lutherans For Life!

To find out more, contact Karen Frohwein via e-mail or by phone at 888-364-LIFE.



Life Thoughts in the Church Year are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life. **Life Thoughts** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book* (using the English Standard Version).

October 5 – 21st Sunday after Pentecost – The thought is tangent to the text, but one does wonder how many of God’s servants that He would send into His vineyard today are killed through abortion. To uphold the value and God-given *purpose* of every life is a worthy fruit of Christ’s kingdom today.

October 12 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost – “He will swallow up death forever.” (Isaiah 25:8a) This prophecy found fulfillment in Christ. Death is a defeated enemy, not a friend we turn to for help. Our help comes from the Conqueror, not the conquered.

October 19 – 23rd Sunday after Pentecost – Today’s Gospel reminds us that we live in two kingdoms—God’s and “Caesar’s.” (Matthew 22:15-22) Christians relate to “Caesar” based on their relationship to God in Christ. We live as *Christian* citizens subject to “Caesar’s” authority for it is from God. We vote as *Christian* citizens subject to Christ’s authority reflecting our faith in the decisions we make.

October 26 – 24th Sunday after Pentecost – Those who see abortion as just “another issue” and would support or encourage a woman to make such a choice, fail to understand the Scriptural concept of “neighbor” and have a false sense of what it means to love. Those who see both mother and unborn child as “neighbor” and take action to bring help and hope, fulfill the second greatest

commandment in the Law and reflect the love of Christ. (Matthew 22:34-40)

November 2 – 25th Sunday after Pentecost – “I have a right to control my own body!” Paul associates control of your body with abstaining from sexual immorality. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4) Pregnancy resulting from sexual immorality means you lost control of your body and that another body is now present. Forgiveness, strength, and hope come from Him who gave His body to purchase our bodies. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

November 8 – 26th Sunday after Pentecost – In the face of death, we have hope in Jesus who “died and rose again.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14) We do not grieve as does a hopeless world. We face death in the same hope. We do not use death as our hope as does a hopeless world.

November 16 – 27th Sunday after Pentecost – “The day of the LORD is near” (Zephaniah 1:7). I suppose this could be used to rail against the faithless who will “get what’s coming to them.” But perhaps a better focus is to celebrate those “good and faithful servant[s]” (Matthew 25:14-23) who do not fear being known as the Master’s servants and get what is not coming to them.

November 23 – Last Sunday of the Church Year – The most vulnerable among us are Christ. (Matthew 25:45) Embryos, the unborn, pregnant teens, post-abortive women and men, the sick and dying—all these give us opportunity to serve Christ.

November 30 – 1st Sunday in Advent – We all deserve to “melt in the hand of our iniquities” (Isaiah 64:7b). But we are the work of God’s hands. (64:8b) His hands shaped us in the



womb, and He entered a womb so He could have hands to stretch out on a cross on our behalf. Because of Christ, we need not quake in the presence of God. Because of Christ, we call Him Father. (64:8a)

December 7 – 2nd Sunday in Advent – “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem” (Isaiah 40:2a) literally reads, “Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.” The message directed to sin-burdened hearts comforts as no other. “Her warfare is ended ... her iniquity is pardoned” (40:2b). All sinners receive comfort from this message. Those who have sinned against life particularly need it spoken to their hearts and applied to their sin. Such preaching does not offend; it frees.

December 14 – 3rd Sunday in Advent – In such a dark wilderness of a world, the voice of the Church has constant opportunity to witness to the Light. Wrong things need to be called wrong. John the Baptist boldly proclaimed the truth and called for repentance. He also humbly prepared the way for The Truth and pointed to Jesus as Savior.

December 21 – 4th Sunday in Advent – “And behold you will conceive in your womb ...” (Luke 1:31). What an opportunity to point out during Advent that the coming of our Savior and His journey to the cross did not begin in a manger, but in a womb! What an opportunity to point out the value that gives to all who reside there.

December 28 – The Holy Innocents, Martyrs – Matthew 2:13-18 appropriately provides an opportunity to address the issue of abortion. Often overlooked, however, is “Rachel weeping” and the depth of those Bethlehem mothers’ grief. (2:18) Modern day “Rachels”—mothers of aborted children—sink to even greater grief. They participate in the choice that kills their child. But the Child who escaped Herod’s wrath brings hope to weeping hearts. (See Jeremiah 31:16-17.) This text provides opportunity to proclaim such hope.

Lutherans For Life seeks a Director of Operations. Duties include supervising staff, developing programs to enhance LFL’s efficiency, working with LFL’s Director of Development to implement fundraising activities, and, in collaboration with the Executive Director, developing action plans to implement LFL’s strategic plan.

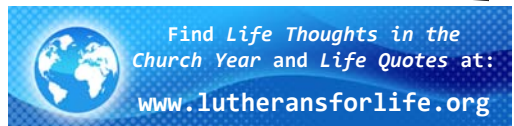
Requirements: A member in good standing of a Lutheran congregation, a minimum of a bachelors degree and/or business or project management experience, solid experience in administration, personnel management, marketing, and development. We are seeking someone who has the skills necessary to keep LFL growing as an effective organization and at the same time desires to serve the Lord of Life in a vitally important pro-life ministry that equips Lutheran pastors and congregations to share a Gospel-centered, “For Life” message. Relocation to central Iowa required.

Send resume to: Lutherans For Life, 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada, IA 50201-2774; 888-364-5433; FAX: 515-382-3020; info@lutheransforlife.org.



Life News bulletin inserts help keep your congregation informed on life issues every month!

To subscribe call 888-364-LIFE. \$5.00 per 100 copies/per month.



What's Wrong? What's Right?

by Diane E. Schroeder



It is no secret that our culture denies authoritative truth and promotes moral relativism. What's true for me is not necessarily true for you. Who can say what is wrong or right? Albert Mohler, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary sums it up like this:

“Moral relativism has so shaped the culture that the vast majority of Americans now see themselves as their own moral arbiter. Truth has been internalized, privatized, and subjectivized. Absolute or objective truth is denied outright. Research indicates that most Americans believe that truth is internal and relative. No one, the culture shouts, has a right to impose truth, morality, or cultural standards.”

As Lutherans, we know that this world is filled with sin and is in rebellion against God. But what about the church?

A recent devotion from *Our Daily Bread* put it this way:

“Randall Peterson, a retired autoworker, thinks there could be an interest for a new kind of Bible. He sarcastically says that a publisher ought to create an electronic Bible that would allow for editing from the pew. That way individuals and churches could make the Bible say what they want it to say. He says it could be called the “LAME” Bible: “Locally Adaptive Multifaith Edition” and “could be sold to any church regardless of what it believes.”

Many in the church have been so influenced by the culture that they deny the Word of God

as absolute truth and authoritative. Moral relativism has crept into the Church. We are no longer willing to speak about sin because that might offend someone. The church has gutted the power of the Gospel by refusing to recognize the need for a Savior.

What does all of this have to do with Lutherans For Life? We are a counter-cultural educational movement both within society and our Lutheran church that witnesses to what God has to say through his Word to life issues. Look at our five core values:

- God's Word informs and God's Spirit empowers our work and witness.
- Faithfulness to biblical truth and integrity of witness are more valuable than politic expediency.
- Response to life issues is with the mind of Christ; prayerfully with humility, compassion, selflessness, speaking the truth in love.
- Education remains our focus, trusting the Holy Spirit to change hearts and minds.
- We uphold the sanctity of human life because all people are created by God whose intent for them is to bear His image for time and for eternity.

Lutherans For Life knows that only God gives value to life—created and redeemed. Only the truth of the Gospel sets us free—called, forgiven, and transformed.

This message is what makes Lutherans For Life unique. We are not about changing laws or the one-on-one care offered by crisis pregnancy centers. Lutherans For Life is about changing hearts and minds through the power of the Gospel. We want to produce a spiritual transformation that changes behavior. We know that God's Word has power and when hearts and minds are changed, different

choices are made. We want to reach the pregnant teen before she goes to a crisis pregnancy center. We want her to know that God's Word speaks to her about the value of her child and the options she can choose to deal with her unplanned pregnancy. We want to reach families dealing with the crushing news of a life-changing prenatal condition or an Alzheimer diagnosis with the good news that God is still in control of the situation and He is at work, bringing good out of apparent evil.

What a message we have—one of trust, hope, and peace. Here are a few “front line” stories of lives saved and changed through the power of God's Word.

“A woman who thought she was calling an abortion clinic, got our CPC's number instead. She came in to talk with our counselors and after hearing what God's Word had to say about life from LFL's *GOD'S WORD for Life* Bible she decided not to abort.”

“Please put me on the list to receive your quarterly journal. Our 20-year-old daughter is unwed and pregnant. Our pastor gave us the *LifeDate* issue which highlights adoption. She decided to make an adoption plan for her unborn daughter.”

“I had an abortion 20 years ago. I've heard many life sermons over the years. They always made me feel guilty. Yours was the first to make me feel okay and forgiven. I called because I wanted you to know that my life and my husband's life have been changed.”

It is a joy for me to partner with you, my fellow LFLers. What a blessing to be used by God to proclaim His life changing message. May God continue to empower us to proclaim His truth to a dying and lost world!



Our Mission . . . To witness to the sanctity of human life, through education, based on the Word of God. LFL has 13 state federations, 150 local chapters, and 189 Life Ministry Coordinators in the United States.

Our Vision . . . To be a powerful, biblical, pro-life voice and resource to Lutherans and, through them, transform society.

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 witness, from a biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

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