

LifeDate

Winter 2008

A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

Good News FOR Life

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not just Good News.

It's Good News FOR Life!

It's Good News that brings life, speaks of life, speaks to life, and changes life! And we are called to let it "shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life." (Philippians 2:15-16a ESV)



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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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Good News! – Mysterious Baby Born!

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



The baby was a mystery. The baby was a **“mystery that was kept secret for long ages”** (Romans 16:25). Clues pointed to this mysterious, hidden secret—promises (Deuteronomy 18:18), prophecies (Isaiah 9:6), pictures (Genesis 22:1-18).

The reality behind the clues arrived, but mysteriously in a virgin’s womb. Mysteriously hidden in that secret place (Psalm 139:15) growing, taking on flesh, forming hands and feet, a beating heart and blood that flowed. Such would be needed for the mystery to be complete.

But behold, shepherds, Good News! Great joy! The mystery revealed! A baby born! Christ the Lord!

Good News “unto you,” shepherds. Take it personally. Good News “for all the people.” Take it personally all who hear.

Good News, so “fear not.” Fear not the divine glory for He lies among you “wrapped in swaddling cloths” (Luke 2:12).

Good News! The Lord has come to His people. Good News! He comes as Savior!

The Good News of the angel centered in this mysterious baby is Good News *FOR Life!* It is Good News for life eternal. It takes the mystery out of how you get to heaven. This baby, through a cross and an empty tomb, purchased and won and guaranteed a place

there for all who believe. The One who laid aside His glory now prepares a place for you in glory.

The Good News of this mysterious baby is Good News *FOR Life!* It is Good News for life temporal. We are now “hidden.” **“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God”** (Colossians 3:3). Our conception gave us a secret hiding place for nine months where we grew and were carried, protected, nourished. Our baptisms give us a “hiding place” with Christ in God to eternity where we grow and are carried, protected, and nourished.

Imagine yourself a teen facing a multitude of temptations. Imagine yourself a teenage mother or father. Imagine yourself pregnant with a baby who has disabilities. Imagine yourself pregnant from rape. Imagine yourself carrying the guilt of a past abortion. Imagine yourself with a debilitating, chronic disease. Imagine yourself making decisions about life support for a loved one. Imagine yourself on life support. Perhaps

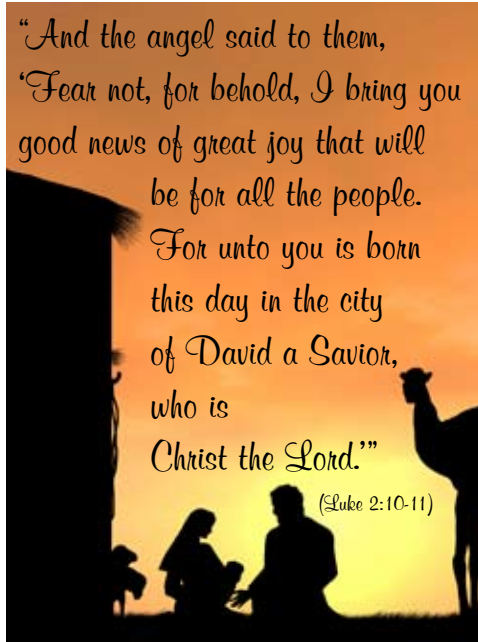
for some of these situations you do not need an imagination. You know the reality.

Could you use some good news? Can you think of any good news better than that brought by an angel revealing to shepherds—revealing to the world—a mysterious baby who was Lord and Savior? This truly is Good News *FOR Life!*

By the way, I can think of no other pro-life organization that focuses on applying this Good News FOR Life to the life issues as does Lutherans For Life. I invite, encourage, and thank you for your support.

“And the angel said to them,
‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you
good news of great joy that will
be for all the people.
For unto you is born
this day in the city
of David a Savior,
who is
Christ the Lord.’”

(Luke 2:10-11)



Election 2008:

Reactions and Reflections

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Losing Ground – Moving Forward:

Respect for the value of human life lost more ground on November 4:

- We elected the most pro-abortion president ever to sit in the White House.
- The State of Washington legalized assisted suicide.
- Michigan legalized unrestricted destruction of human embryos for research purposes.
- California said no to requiring that minors obtain parental consent for an abortion.
- Colorado failed to pass an amendment affirming that life begins at conception.
- South Dakota failed for the second time to ban most abortions in the state.



Yes, respect for the value of human life lost ground, but the value of human life itself cannot be diminished, for it comes from God:

- Every human life is created and gifted by God.
- Every human life is someone for whom Jesus Christ paid the price of His blood.
- God desires to call every human life into His Kingdom according

to His purpose.

- The objective reality of the God-given value of human life increases the travesty of what we did in the election, but what we did does not decrease that reality.

The Good News is that Jesus Christ continues to live and reign to all eternity. God has put all things under His feet. He is in charge of the nations and governments. We trust in Him to use governments according to His will for the sake of His people. But we do not trust in government to restore respect for the value of human life.

That is why Lutherans For Life will continue to assist pastors and congregations

to connect the Word of Life to the life issues so that hearts and lives will be changed. That is needed more than ever.

Many Christians, undoubtedly not understanding the full scope of what they were doing, were part of November's collective

voice that diminished respect for life. Fear of the economy, fear of pain and suffering, fear of embarrassing and difficult situations overrode their fear of God and trust in His love demonstrated in Jesus.

Ground was lost on November 4.

But Lutherans For Life will continue to move forward striving to do all we can to help Lutheran congregations apply the life-changing message of the Gospel to the life issues.

We will continue to seek to restore respect and reverence for the gift of life within the Church so the Church will once again be part of a collective voice that restores this respect in our country.

Col. John A. Eidsmoe, LFL Board Member

Election Reflections:

November 5, 2008.

As I left the house to feed my horse this morning, I noted that the trees were the most brilliant autumn gold I can remember. And I thought to myself, God is still on His throne, and despite the election results, life will go on.

Please don't misunderstand me: The election was a major defeat for the pro-life movement. The new President-elect has the most liberal voting record of anyone in the Senate, especially on sanctity-of-life issues, and we have good reason to believe he harbors an agenda more radical than even his voting record would suggest. And his election is accompanied by substantial Democratic gains in the Senate (though not the 60 senators needed to invoke cloture) and in the House.

This election is a major setback for those who believe in the sanctity of life. *Roe v. Wade* made abortion legal in 1973 by a vote of 7-2. Since then, the pro-life minority on the Supreme Court has grown from 2-7 to 3-6 to 4-5, and the swing Justice, Kennedy, voted with the pro-life bloc to uphold a ban on partial-birth abortion in *Gonzales v. Carhart*. The next President will, in all probability, appoint at least two new Supreme Court justices, possibly more. Many had hoped that President McCain would have made conservative court appointments that would lead to overruling *Roe v. Wade*. President Obama's appointees almost certainly will be pro-abortion (I won't use the word "pro-choice" because the baby doesn't get a choice), and they will probably serve on the Court for many years to come. This is a major disappointment.



The pro-life movement did not fare well in referenda this year [as we read in *Losing Ground – Moving Forward* on page 4].

However, measures that would prohibit same-sex marriage fared better, passing in Florida by 62 percent, in Arizona by 56 percent, and in California by 52 percent. An Arkansas measure that would prohibit same-sex couples from adopting children passed by 57 percent.

When Walter Mondale conceded the 1984 election to Ronald Reagan, he told his supporters not to be discouraged, because "in every defeat are the seeds of victory, and in every victory are the seeds of defeat." What must we do to find and nourish the seeds of victory in this defeat?

First, **we need to understand biblical principles of government.**

A new generation of evangelicals has arisen that does not have the same background of biblical training that was assumed in previous generations. Meanwhile, liberals have decided that they cannot defeat the Christian Right with Secular Humanism,

because Secular Humanism does not satisfy people's deepest needs. Instead, we are now seeing the rise of the so-called Evangelical Left as an alternative to conservatism. We need to carefully teach our young people what the Bible says about the laws of God, the sanctity of life, the sinful nature of man, and the need to limit the power of the State.

Second, **we need to understand the United States Constitution**, our charter of government, and its compatibility with biblical principles of government. We need to build a corps of citizens who understand the Constitution, who know the limits it places upon government power, who will demand that those who seek or hold office honor those

limits, and who will insist that the courts strictly construe the Constitution for what it says rather than treating it as a “living” Constitution (read: “silly putty” Constitution) that can be molded to mean whatever an unelected federal judge wants it to mean.

Third, **we must not overlook the importance of local government.** At this level government most directly interfaces with the people, and at this level potential leaders get the training, experience, and exposure that prepares them for higher office. Don't forget, an Illinois “community organizer” was just elected President, and the mayor of a small Alaska town was almost elected Vice-President.

Fourth, **we must encourage young married couples to take seriously God's command to “be fruitful and multiply”** (Genesis 1:28, 9:1). The single most encouraging trend in the culture war today is that people who hold traditional values, such as

homeschoolers, conservative Protestants, traditional Catholics, and Mormons, are generally having large families, while liberals are practicing zero population growth and aborting their young (unfortunately, they make up for it by illegal immigration). The long-term effect of this trend upon the culture war is self-evident.

Fifth, **we must emphasize, encourage, support, and protect home schools and Christian schools.** Having large families helps us win the culture war, only if we instill our values in our children. I am thankful for Christian teachers and their witness in the public schools, but in general the public schools are teaching ideas, values, and worldviews that are at odds with Christianity.

As Martin Luther said, “But where the Holy Scripture does not rule I certainly advise no one to send his child ... I greatly fear that schools of higher learning are wide gates to hell if they do not diligently teach the Holy Scriptures and impress them on the young folk.” (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 6, Weimar Edition.)

Sixth, **we must support our military forces.** We need to pray for them, encourage them, and help them to understand Christian values and biblical worldview.

Seventh, **we must pray for our nation, our state, our community, and our children as never before.**

As I said at the beginning, the rich golds and reds in the autumn leaves outside my door have never been more brilliant. But as writer

Don Feder suggests, they are also a sign of decay and death. Is America today in the autumn of its life, with winter yet to come? Does the brilliance and splendor of our civilization foreshadow our coming doom?

But just as the brightly-colored leaf piles hide decay and dissolution, so also they form compost for new life in the spring. May it be so for America. And may it be so for us. Therein may we find the seeds of new life, and therein may we nourish them into victory.

Life Issues Institute

New President Most Pro-Abortion in Nation's History

Voters have made this election a first for America by electing the most pro-abortion president in the history of our nation. Senator Barack Obama will assume the power of the presidency, defined as the most powerful position in the world.



During his political career, Barack Obama has consistently voted against innocent preborn children. He has repeatedly voted to deny basic medical care to babies who survive late-term abortions, and voted against efforts to end the gruesome partial-birth abortion procedure. As a candidate for president, Senator Obama had pledged to sign the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) which would override any and all restrictions on abortion throughout nine months of pregnancy. It would also force taxpayers to fund abortion-on-demand.

Bradley Mattes, Executive Director of Life Issues Institute, said, “With federal legislation no longer an option for a minimum of two years, pro-life education is absolutely central and critical to our future efforts of ending abortion. The key to countering this devastating political loss is to change the hearts and minds of Americans on abortion and related life issues. That can only be done through effective pro-life education.”

Mr. Mattes added, “Pro-life education is the foundation on which we must build future political and legislative victories to protect unborn babies. We will not give up and we will not waiver in our resolve and determination to end this modern-day holocaust of abortion.”

In the United States 3,287 unborn babies are killed through abortion every day.

Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

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Where has the Church been?



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.

How can we change things?



Implementing a Pro-Life Theology in a Lutheran Congregation

helps the local Church put its pro-life convictions into action! Dr. David 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.

Good News FOR Life!



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

The Good News of Jesus Christ, the “word of life,” is more than just nice sounding words from a preacher’s lips. This word of life is Good News *for* life because it speaks so powerfully *to* life.

C.F.W. Walther said to his seminary students, “Preachers, as a rule, imagine that they have fully discharged their office, provided what they have preached has been the Word of God. That is about a correct a view as when a ranger imagines he has discharged his office by sallying forth with his loaded gun and discharging it into the forest; ... poor and useless preachers are those who have no plan in mind and take no aim when they are preaching.” (C.F.W. Walther. *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*. 99-100.)



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Good News FOR Life Because of Where You Are

Opportunities abound to take aim and bring Good News to life because we are in the midst of it. We are *in* the world and not all is well. “Crooked and twisted” Paul calls it. Think how crooked and twisted things have gotten just in regard to the sanctity of human life.

We are horrified at the abuse of children and yet we promote and protect the right to kill our children in abortion. We champion

the rights of people with disabilities and yet test our babies before they are born so we can eliminate those with disabilities. “Choose Life” license plates are vehemently opposed by people who believe in the “right to choose.” Sea turtle eggs are protected by federal law; unborn humans are not. Minors need parental consent for an aspirin but not for an abortion. We cringe at the rising rate of suicide and yet pass laws making it legal for a physician to assist in suicide. We strive to cheat aging and death by tucks and lifts and yet turn to death to solve the problems of aging.

You live in the midst of this. You are surrounded by it. It’s hard not to be affected by it. Because of where you are, it’s important to have

Good News FOR Life and to hold fast to this Word of Life. Because of where you are, you can also “take aim” with this Good News and make a difference.

Good News FOR Life Because of What You Are

This Word of Life, then, is Good News FOR Life because of *where* you are. The Word of Life is Good News FOR Life because of *what* you are to be. Our Lord calls us to be different, to do “**all things without grumbling or questioning**” (Philippians 2:14), to lay aside pettiness and selfishness, fears and timidity so we can be what God declares us to be “**blameless and innocent children of God**” (v 15). Jesus calls us to stand out, indeed to shine out!

Scripture gives two basic reasons why it is

so important to “shine as lights.” First, we are to expose the crooked and twisted for what it is. Paul says, **“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them”** (Ephesians 5:11 NIV). This Good News FOR Life is so good, we simply cannot allow it to be ignored as if it doesn’t make a difference or cannot make a difference. We cannot allow it to be compromised so it doesn’t offend. We cannot allow it to be maligned and attacked as if it means nothing to us. When life is attacked and devalued, the Lord of Life is attacked and devalued. When that happens, we are no longer dealing with opinions but with assaults on the truth and the One who is the Truth. Then we are compelled to shine as lights!

Somebody’s got to say, “This world of darkness that turns to death to solve its problems—that’s not the way it’s supposed to be. That’s not the way it has to be. There’s a better way.”

That brings us to the second reason it is so important that we **“shine as lights in the world.”** We do not expose the “crooked and twisted” so we can show others how wrong they are and how right we are or so we can judge and condemn. We shine as lights so people may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16). We shine as **“lights in the world”** so people can see in us THE Light of the World. We shine as lights so that people will see there is a better way to deal with the darkness in our lives than turning to death.

The choice of life, the choice of parenting, and the choice of adoption offer better ways to deal with a crisis pregnancy than the choice

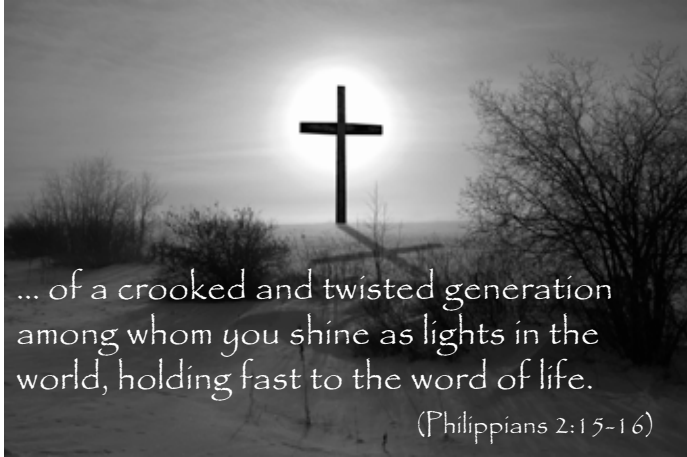
of death. Let your light shine as you support pregnant teens with forgiveness and love, as you volunteer at pregnancy centers, or help fund adoptions.

The choice of chastity and a love that puts others first provide a better way of avoiding a crisis pregnancy than doing what seems right in our own eyes. Let your light shine as you practice and teach sexual purity.

The complete and objective forgiveness given through faith in Jesus Christ freely gives a better way to deal with the guilt and regret of past sins against life than pretending you really shouldn’t feel that way or thinking such sins are too big to be forgiven. Let your light shine so that our churches become places where all

sinner know they are welcomed and forgiven.

Compassionate care, pain management, and the presence of a living God who promises His strength and His good provide better

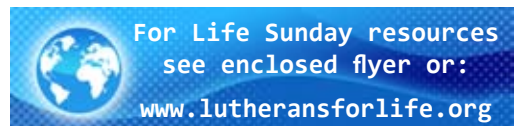


... of a crooked and twisted generation among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.

(Philippians 2:15-16)

ways of dealing with the pain and suffering of life than ending life. Let your light shine as you carry one another’s burdens and point to the certain hope God gives in Christ.

Be what you are! Shine as lights! Expose what is “crooked and twisted” in this dark world. If we do not do it, everyone will think “crooked and twisted” is all right, the way things are supposed to be. Shine as lights! You can point to a better way because you know what it is. You know *who* it is, Jesus Christ the Light of the World.



Honor Marriage

Statistics say that 70 percent of couples today live together before marriage to “try out” their relationship. But statistics also tell us that 67 percent of couples who live together before being married get divorced.

We clearly live in a world where marriage is often scorned. People say: “We don’t need to get married. It’s just a piece of paper.” But the Lord God of heaven declares that marriage is to be kept honorable by all.

How is marriage kept honorable? We keep marriage honorable by defining it as God Himself has in His Word. It is the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:15-25). We keep marriage honorable when we respect it as a God-ordained institution, not a human tradition (“a piece of paper”). We keep marriage honorable when we follow the directives of Scripture within marriage (Ephesians 5:22-33).

How is marriage dishonored? Marriage is dishonored by sexual sin.

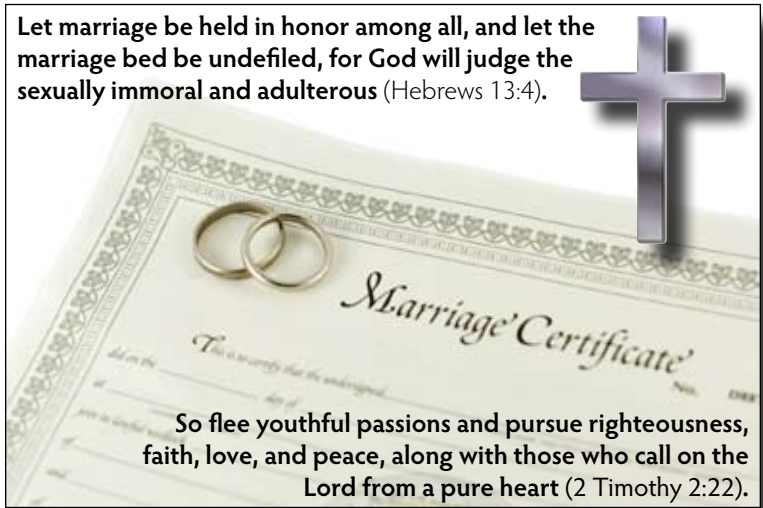
What about living together before marriage? Can’t an unmarried couple who love one another live together and not sin? Is that really the question we should ask? Is it possible for me to throw large shards of glass up in the air and catch them barehanded? I suppose it’s possible, but is it wise? God has created us with natural desires (that doesn’t make it okay to act on them) that it is hardly wise to ignore. Does living together honor marriage? Does it keep the bed undefiled? The answer is simple: NO.

But why bring this up? Why not just let people think that marriage is “just a piece of paper” and that it’s okay to cohabit before marriage? The answer in a word is: LOVE.

Love for souls—the souls of our children and our youth should lead us to speak up and defend the Word. God isn’t mute on this subject! Those who live together before marriage place themselves in the crosshairs of God’s judgment, and are warned: “God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.”

Don’t speak up because of what the statistics reveal. Speak up because those who despise marriage and so sin against God don’t just “live together,” they put themselves in danger of dying together, of being judged by God for their sin. Speak up because Christ died to free us all from sin—once and for all.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous (Hebrews 13:4).



So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2 Timothy 2:22).

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone’ ... So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh”

(Genesis 2:18, 21-24)

(*devotions@redeemercl.org*, 8/20/08)

LFL on Marriage (Excerpts)

Adam and Eve were capable of becoming one flesh and in that relationship could mirror their relationship with their Creator. God brought them together in this relationship called marriage (Genesis 2:24). Marriage was a part of all that was “good” in God’s perfect creation. Marriage was not given as an institution to curb sin. There was no sin. Marriage was given as the foundation for the one-flesh relationship ...

Sin has certainly brought problems to marriage. The reality of problematic marriages, however, does not abdicate the essence of what marriage is. Jesus makes this clear. **“But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one”** (Mark 10:6-8 NIV). What God intended marriage to be in the beginning, He still intends marriage to be ...

Lutherans For Life affirms the great blessing of the institution of marriage as revealed in God’s holy Word. We affirm that marriage is a God-given institution between a man and a woman. We affirm that this one-flesh union reflects our relationship with our Creator and Redeemer. We affirm that it is the means God has chosen for procreation. Based on this, we are compelled to humble ourselves before God and ask His forgiveness for all the times we have dishonored marriage by trivializing its importance, by failing to reflect Christ’s love in our marriages, and by our failure to connect the importance of marriage and our relationship to God ...

We believe, as God says, **“Marriage should be honored by all”** (Hebrews 13:4 NIV). May God give us the faith, wisdom, and courage to bring honor to this great blessing from Him.

Complete statement adopted 2/21/04 and is available from LFL (see next column).



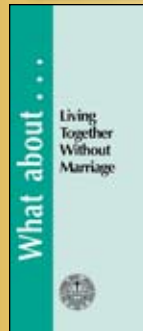
Marriage – A Statement by Lutherans For Life – What God intended marriage to be in the beginning, He still intends marriage to be. **Brochure.**

Item 905T. **\$0.25 ea.**



Why Not Just Live Together? – Linda Bartlett provides guidance in response to popular statements such as “I won’t know if it feels right until we try living together first.” **Brochure.**

Item 607T. **\$0.25 ea.**



What About ... Living Together Without Marriage answers

questions such as: What is Marriage? Why is it wrong for a couple to live together without marriage? Isn’t the Church being “judgmental”?

How can a couple living together resolve the situation? What is the ultimate solution to this problem? By Rev. Dr. Alvin L. Barry. **Brochure.**

Item 614T. **\$0.25 ea.**



Second Thoughts about Living Together

– A Q & A format answers questions including: What is Marriage? Who regulates marriage: Church or State? What’s so important

about a piece of paper? Is living together such a great offense? **Booklet.**

Item 619B. **\$1.75 ea.**

Observations From the Pew

by Karen Frohwein
 Director of Development



In this issue of "LifeDate" we are focusing on shining as lights in the world. Here's a reminder of the Source of that light and where we go to receive God's gifts that allow us to "let it shine" as His children.

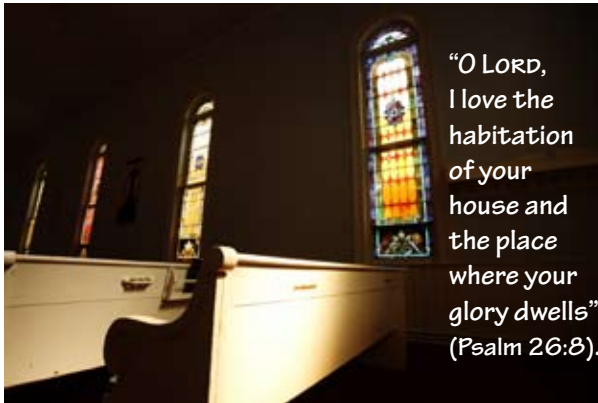
Sitting in my pew one Sunday at church, I was watching the procession of people heading up to the communion rail. (Unless you keep your head down through the whole distribution process, you do tend to people watch.) As I watched my fellow members approach the Lord's Table, I realized I was seeing the true God-given sanctity of human life manifested through the receiving of this precious sacrament.

I watched as a grandmother with a slight limp approached with her autistic grandson at her side. I saw the awe-struck face of a young woman with Down syndrome come forward to receive that mysterious gift of bread and wine and body and blood. I watched the former pastor push his walker forward with the impatience of someone who fully understands his limitations, but desires the body and blood of Christ at every opportunity he is given. One of my favorite sights was 4 year-old Bonnie, pulling her yawning father down the aisle in her excitement to kneel and receive a blessing from the pastor! There were singles and widowers, young and old, canes, eye patches, casts, and oxygen tanks as well as those who carry their burdens on the inside where no one

can see. Everyone of them approaching the front to receive something the world cannot understand.

Can you imagine what the world would think of such a crew?! How would these lives be valued in our culture? What good is the life of a handicapped child, a terminally ill man, a person breathing through a tube in their nose attached to a tank of air? If life is sacred, then why do we suffer? Why is there loneliness and mourning? And, seriously, why do we have to go to church and put up with those noisy kids?!

We can talk about the value of life in worldly terms. But, if you really want to understand the sanctity of life, go to your church. Hear and receive the blessings given



*"O LORD,
 I love the
 habitation
 of your
 house and
 the place
 where your
 glory dwells"
 (Psalm 26:8).*

to you because of the Life given for you. See people just like you, flawed and broken sinners, being made valuable in Christ through the gifts of Word and Sacrament. What a wonderful affirmation of the sanctity of your

life and those who join you in worship. To receive is to understand that your life has value because God gave you value. This is the understanding that changes hearts and minds, through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Next time you worship, don't be afraid to look around you. You may see Jesus in the face of a child, or the smile of a teen, or the tears of a friend. You might understand the value of life through the rhythm of a breathing tube, or the unfolding of a walker, or the chatter of a toddler. Above all, your life will be given value through the means of grace—gifts from the God who created us, redeemed us, and continues to sanctify us. Come to the Source of Light—then go out and let it shine!

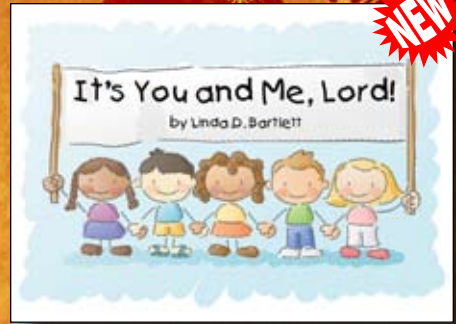
Adoption Survey Includes Men

Results from the first ever adoption survey that included men—issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—have been released. The findings revealed:

- Minority women are currently seeking to adopt children more often than white women.
- Women who have never married adopt children much more often than single men do. But overall, men adopt children at more than twice the rate women do, due largely to men marrying women with children from a previous relationship. Overall, nearly 1.3 million men had adopted a child, compared with an estimated 613,000 women.
- Among singles, an estimated 100,000 women and 73,000 men had adopted.
- Situations in which young pregnant women place their children for adoption are becoming increasingly rare. Before 1973, nearly nine percent of births to never-married women were given up for adoption. By 2002, that statistic had dropped to about one percent.
- The number of children adopted from other countries increased from about 7,000 in 1990 to more than 19,000 in 2001. That means about 16 percent of the 120,000 annual adoptions in the United States in that latest year were of children from other nations.
- About 50,000 children are adopted through foster care annually in the United States. It's hard to predict if that number will go up, experts said. [The Associated Press].

(Excerpts taken from the Pastor's Weekly Briefing, August 15, 2008, Copyright © 2008, Focus on the Family. www.parsonage.org)

Check out these great stocking stuffers for Christmas!



It's You and Me Lord! is a wonderful booklet, by Linda Bartlett, that helps children understand “what a wonderful thing it is to be alive—to be God's child—to know His everlasting love!”

Item 730B. **\$2.00 ea.**



Maker's Markers are full-color bookmarks with encouraging messages and Scripture quotes. Great for kids! Messages and Scripture include:

“I am a miracle of God's love!”

Psalm 139:13-16

“We are all the work of God's hand.”

Isaiah 46:3-4

“He has called me by name. I am His!”

Isaiah 43:1

“Jesus loves me just as I am!”

1 John 3:1

Item 700BM. **\$0.15/set of 4**

Fully Human From Conception

by Pastor John D. Juhl



This article is an adaptation of commentaries prepared by Pastor Juhl (Lutheran Brethren Fellowship Church, Williston, North Dakota). The commentaries are designed for use with the Watch Me Grow posters available on page 15. For more info and to download the full commentaries go to “Fetal Development” in our online catalog.

Month 0

At the moment of conception a unique human being begins his or her earthly existence. Only one cell, yet fully human, with a unique set of DNA. This is how our Lord Jesus Christ came into the world.

While His conception was unique from all other humans, Jesus was fully human, beginning as one cell, just like each of us. He found His first earthly home in the safety of Mary’s womb for about nine months.

See Matthew 1:18.

Month 1

During this first amazing month of human life, Jesus grew to 10,000 times His size at conception. He was totally dependent upon His mother, just as every other human being at this stage of life. By week three, the Savior’s heart had begun to pump the blood which would one day be shed for the sins of the world.

See Matthew 1:20b, 21.

Months 2 and 3

Now a “fetus” (Latin for “little one”), the rapidly developing body of Jesus has teeth, fingers, toes and a functioning central nervous system. His ears, lips, and tongue can be clearly seen. By eight weeks all body systems are present.

See John 1:14 and John 20:26b, 27.



Months 4 and 5

Jesus’ brain has begun maturing—a process that will continue until He is about 14 years old. REMs (rapid eye movements) have begun—a sign of dreaming. Fine hair has begun to grow on His head along with eyebrows and eyelashes. Nutrients consumed by His mother, Mary, are passed on to nourish Jesus’ body within an hour or two. Three hundred quarts (75 gallons) of fluid a day are sent through His umbilical cord.

See John 4:13,14 and Luke 2:41, 42, 44.

Months 6 and 7

Oil and sweat glands are functioning; these help regulate body temperature. Baby Jesus can now respond to sound. His lungs are fairly well developed. Babies born at this stage of development today are often able to survive.

See Luke 1:35-37 and Luke 1:46, 47,50.

Month 8

Baby Jesus is developing a layer of fat that will keep Him warm after He is born. In the ninth month He will shift to a head-down position, preparing for birth.

His lungs are now fully developed and capable of making the transition to breathing air. After birth, Jesus will continue the human growth process for many years to come.

See Luke 2:4-5.

Month 9

“And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:10-12).

Windows to the Womb

Here's a quick overview of life in the womb.

(All photos © Life Issues Institute.)



Seven weeks from conception.



Eleven weeks



Fourteen weeks



Twenty weeks from conception.

WATCH ME GROW POSTERS

These beautifully illustrated posters document the growth stages of a baby for nine months in the womb. These posters are an excellent teaching tool for schools, hospitals, caring pregnancy centers, or doctors' offices. Display them individually on a monthly basis or as a set.



Watch Me Grow Composite 24" x 30" Poster. All nine months are illustrated on one poster. *Item 101P. \$35.00 ea.*

Watch Me Grow 16" x 20" Posters (Ten Piece Set). *Item 100P. \$35.00 per set.*

Watch Me Grow 16" x 20" Posters (Eleven Piece Set). Includes Ten 16" x 20" posters and 24" x 30" composite poster. A \$70 value! *Item 102P. \$50.00 per set.*

Also available:

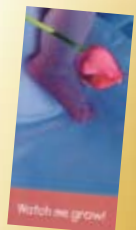
Watch Me Grow brochures!

English:

Item 125T. \$0.50 ea.

Spanish:

Item 125T-S. \$0.50 ea.



Christmas Bulletin Inserts!

“The fact that Jesus’ human life began when He was ‘conceived by the Holy Spirit’ affirms that human life is present at the moment of conception.

“Elizabeth and her unborn son, John, acknowledge Jesus as already existing within Mary (Luke 1:39-45). Since Mary left to visit Elizabeth immediately after the message from the angel, Jesus may not even have been implanted in her uterus when this encounter took place!

“To accomplish our salvation, Jesus shared in our humanity (Hebrews 2:14). He became like us in every respect except He was without sin (Hebrews 4:15).

“Since we are sinful from the moment of conception (Psalm 51:5), we are human beings in need of salvation from the moment of conception. Jesus had to begin as we did.”

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



A Savior lying in a manger is a Savior for all—born and unborn, healthy and frail. *Item 1105Bl. \$0.07 ea.*



Remember, Jesus spent nine months in the womb before He was “asleep on the hay.” *Item 1005Bl. \$0.07 ea.*

For more on these Christ-centered bulletin inserts go to the Lutherans For Life web site!

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!



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.

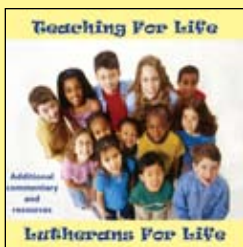
Unit 5: For Chaste and Decent Lives.

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.



Demented Idea – Human Dignity on the Sceptred Isle



by Chuck Colson

The Brits may be losing their marbles. The distinguished Baroness Warnock, labeled by the Daily Telegraph as Britain's leading moral philosopher, ought to be ashamed of herself.

You see, Lady Warnock once chaired a government committee that helped legalize embryonic research. She's known for supporting assisted suicide for people who don't want to burden their caregivers.

But now Lady Warnock has gone a step further. She says elderly people who suffer from dementia are "wasting people's lives"—that is, the lives of those who care for them—and ought to choose to die even if they're not suffering.

And even if they aren't a burden on their families, they ought to "off" themselves anyway, as she puts it, because they're a burden on the public, which, under British national health care, pays for their treatment. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, Warnock hopes people will soon be "licensed to put others down."

Putting others down? That's the kind of euphemism we use when talking about injured horses or sick dogs. It's not how we talk about human beings—or at least, it's not how we used to talk about them.

At age 84, Lady Warnock is old enough to remember Hitler's Final Solution—and the thinking that drove the slaughter, not only of the Jews, but also of the handicapped, gypsies, and others the Nazis considered

"defective" or "useless."

But even though Lady Warnock should remember World War II, she evidently has forgotten its terrible lessons. Given her despicable recommendation for the elderly, she ought to hope that her memory issues aren't related to dementia.

Thankfully, at least a few Brits are outraged by Warnock's comments, calling them—in typical British understatement—both callous and deeply ignorant. Neil Hunt, a spokesman for the British Alzheimer's Society, says to suggest that people with dementia "have some sort of duty to kill themselves is nothing short of barbaric."

More ominously, a spokesman for a British

right to life group said Warnock's views "are an illustration that while euthanasia is promoted as a right to choose, it pretty rapidly becomes an obligation to die."

This tale out of England is also a dire warning about what happens when countries nationalize



health care. There's never enough money to go around—and some bureaucrat at the top is always going to start making choices about who gets to live and who's going to die. If those targeted for death don't go willingly, well, they will need to be encouraged to die—or they might get a visit from someone "licensed to put others down."

Has the Western world truly sunk this low? Do we ever need a more vivid reminder of the tremendous importance of worldview?

Either all human life—from unborn children to demented mothers and fathers—is created in the image of God and therefore infinitely precious, or humans are nothing but the result of mere chance, indistinguishable

morally from a sand flea. The choice society makes will determine whether the most vulnerable among us will be respected and protected ... or whether we will “put them down” when they become a burden.

We Christians must speak out as others—especially those in authority—move us closer and closer to compulsory killing.

If we do nothing, it’s evidence that perhaps we’ve all lost our marbles.

(From BreakPoint, October 23, 2008, reprinted with permission of Prison Fellowship, www.breakpoint.org.)

God Is There When You're Growing Old

I was visiting a convalescent home once, a place, as they say, “for the aging.” It struck me that there is a whole list of adjectives that nobody uses any more: “aged,” “elderly,” and especially “old.” America apparently has no more old people.

But, you know, it’s OK to be old. That doesn’t mean that you’re washed up and useless. If you’re a Christian, what it really means is that you’re just very, very close to seeing Jesus in person in heaven. In words especially dear to all the “aging,” Jesus said in John chapter 14, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled ... In my Father’s house are many rooms. I am going there to prepare a place for you.” You might call it homecoming.

By Pastor Mark Jeske, www.timeofgrace.org, 7/16/08



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

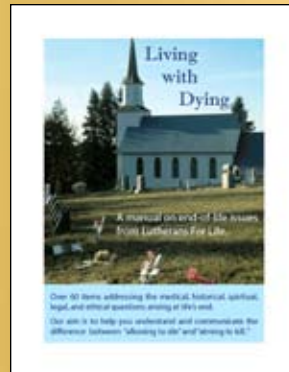


Before I Die – A Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues
by Elizabeth Skoglund, shares principles for the Christian at life’s end along with words of encouragement.
Item 809B. **\$2.00 ea.**



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.**

Coronary patients' own bone marrow cells could help repair their hearts after an attack. University College London is trying the technique on patients after experiments on animals suggested that it reduced damage to the heart. (*Irish Times, SPUC, 10/28*)

The first government licenses to clone humans in Australia have been issued. Sydney IVF Ltd will be allowed to use somatic cell nuclear transfer to make embryos from which to take stem cells. Note: There is often a false distinction made between therapeutic and reproductive cloning. All successful human cloning produces a new human person, whether or not he or she is allowed to be born or is killed for research. (*National Health and Medical Research Council, 9/16; SPUC, 9/18*)

A woman has described her depression after abortion in a British magazine article. Bethan Cole writes that the depression was “a direct consequence of the abortion, almost like some kind of bizarre post-natal depression for a baby that hadn't been born.” The mental problem was treated with drugs, though when she remembers the abortion, one of her feelings is “a deep longing to have had the baby.” She also writes: “The abortion has left scar tissue in my emotional memory. Time has lessened the pain, yet I still carry it with me—a dark secret locked in my heart.” (*Daily Mail, SPUC, 9/19*)

The practice of euthanasia would undermine patients' trust in those treating them, according to a British expert on end-of-life care. Dr. David Jeffrey, former chairman of the Association for Palliative Medicine's ethics committee, says terminal patients need encouragement and that people who feel they are a burden need legal protection. Baroness Warnock, the British philosopher, recently suggested that people with dementia had a duty to die. (See story on page 18.) (*Christian Institute, 10/14; SPUC, 10/5*)



Most organ donors are still alive when their body parts are removed, according to a pediatrician writing in the *Journal of Law and Medicine*. Dr. James Tibballs of Melbourne, Australia, claims that doctors in his country customarily wait just two minutes after the heart has stopped. The law forbids harvesting while there is still brain and circulatory activity, yet two minutes is too soon, Dr. Tibballs says, to be certain that circulation cannot be resumed. (*LifeSiteNews, 10/21; SPUC, 10/22*)

A woman in Britain postponed chemotherapy for her unborn child's sake. Janine Long, who has had three types of cancer, said: “[W]hen you are given a choice of your child's life or your own life, your child comes first. Motherly instincts are the most powerful thing in the whole world. I couldn't have given [her son Logan's] life up for [any] reason.” (*Eastern Daily Press, 9/30; SPUC, 9/30*)

Human beings are being treated as things, according to an MP who spoke during an October debate on the British government's Human Fertilization and Embryology Bill. Edward Leigh, Conservative member for Gainsborough, told the House of Commons: “I believe that human embryos are emphatically not just blobs of cells; they have the entire genetic make-up of a human being. I believe not that they are potential human beings, but that they are human beings with potential . . . There is something very dangerous in what we will undoubtedly do today. We are making ourselves less than human, in a sense, by viewing one part of human creation as a thing, a spare part, which I believe is extraordinarily dangerous.” (*Official Report, 10/22; Financial Times, SPUC, 10/23*)

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

The Flow of Influence



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

“Homosexuality is an acceptable life style.” “Marriage can be other than between a man and woman.” “Abortion can be a morally responsible choice.” “Assisted suicide and euthanasia are compassionate ways to deal with pain and suffering.” “Destroying little boys and girls at the embryonic stage is the best way to cure chronic disease.”

The above quotes do not just reflect the voice of a decadent society; they can also be heard from various corners of Christendom.

Martin Luther greatly influenced society, but that influence began with reformation in the Church. He restored the basic truths about grace and faith and Scripture.

A great need exists in Christianity today to restore the basic biblical truths

about sexuality, marriage, the value of life, and a compassion for others that flows from Christ and His cross.

One of the reasons such issues have been swept aside in the current election rhetoric is that so many of Christ's people look and sound and behave just like the people of this world.

The economy takes precedence over morality. “Choice” takes precedence over life. Killing takes precedence over caring. The flow of influence has reversed.

No longer does the Church influence society, rather society influences the Church and it is no longer a simple matter to discern

one from another.

But do not despair! The power of the Gospel cannot be diminished! In October, we rejoiced on Reformation Day for the influence Luther had upon the Church and society.

Right now, let's pray that the fundamental truths he restored will continue to reform the Church. Pray that the Church will once again influence society through people transformed by the Gospel. Pray for and support Lutherans For Life as we strive to do our part to help and equip congregations to make a difference in people's lives and reverse the flow of influence.



LFL offers a free Bible study, *Martin Luther: An Example for Christians Who Want to Change Their Culture*, that you can download from our web site [see below]. This study, by Linda Bartlett, will help you become more familiar, not just with the man

Martin Luther, but with the ways he helped change western civilization through the use of God's Word. Because Luther was moved by the Holy Spirit to take a stand on the Word of God, western civilization was never the same. With the Sword of the Spirit, Luther's reforms affected church, state, education, and home. We, too, are called like Luther to use God's Word to live distinctively different from the world. Go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/PDF_Files/Martin_Luther_Example.pdf.



RENEWAL FOR LIFE Begins

RENEWAL FOR LIFE (RFL), LFL's initiative to impact Lutheran pastors and congregations to be Christ-centered, enthusiastic, and ongoing voices For Life, officially started in September.

The initiative was presented to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod council of presidents at their September meeting.

LFL asked these leaders to send a letter to their circuit counselors encouraging them to invite LFL to present the new initiative at circuit meetings. We are starting to receive those invitations.



As of this writing, in the past two weeks we have presented at four circuits representing 39 congregations. The reaction of pastors is very positive. They are looking for help in applying the Gospel to the life issues.

That is what RFL is all about. We seek to renew the three R's:

- **Responsibility**
- **Relevancy**
- **Resources**

The **Responsibility** to address the life issues belongs to pastors and congregations. They have what it takes to do so—the **Relevancy** of the Gospel which speaks so powerfully to the life issues. LFL pledges to help by organizing our **Resources** and delivering them in a way that is “user friendly” via an on-line library. Another key component in RFL is the congregational Life Advocate, someone within the structure of the congregation who acts as a “life assistant” to the pastor and is a direct contact with LFL's Life Center.

LFL's existing structure of state affiliates and chapters stands ready to assist. Many of them are trained as presenters to facilitate circuit meetings across the country. They will be there to provide encouragement, energy, and mentoring to congregations involved in RFL.

We are just beginning and learning something new every day. But it is a beginning and we hope to have 1,000 congregations participating by the end of 2009! A lofty goal, but one well worth striving for. Keep this initiative in your prayers.




Mark your calendars!
2009 LFL
National Conference
July 24-25, 2009
St. Louis, Missouri

Keynote speaker:
Bobby Schindler, brother of
Terri Schindler Schiavo

Our New Life Resource Catalog!

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the most positive and powerful For Life message in the universe!

With the resources you'll find in this catalog, Lutherans For Life desires to help congregations see how relevant this message is, and to help them connect this message to these issues that God's people often face.



We want people to be led to turn to the Lord of Life, not the god of death, for help and hope. We also want to encourage and help pastors and congregations understand the relevancy and power of the Gospel in addressing these issues.

Lutheran pastors and congregations already have what it takes to confront issues of life and death—the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Order a catalog online, by contacting LFL at 888-364-LIFE or by e-mail. Order extra copies to share with your pastor, Sunday school and day school teachers, and with those who home school!

Tax Free IRA Gift Opportunity!

Faithful donors often tell us they wish they could make a difference "For Life" by giving a significant gift—the gift of a lifetime—but feel their dream is out of reach. The Individual Retirement Account (IRA) Rollover Law may help you make a significant gift to Lutherans For Life in 2008 and 2009.



The Pension Protection Act exempts from taxable income any funds transferred (rolled over) from an IRA to a charitable organization with these limitations:

- The donor must be age 70½ or older.
- The cap on annual IRA rollovers is \$100,000.
- The contribution must be a direct gift to a charity (no planned gifts).

To complete a charitable IRA rollover gift, you must have your IRA provider issue a check directly to Lutherans For Life, 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada IA 50201-2774, tax ID #41-1374293. If the check is issued to you first, you will be liable for the income tax, so please make sure your IRA provider understands this is a rollover gift.

If you wish to discuss the IRA charitable rollover at greater length, please contact Karen Frohwein at 888-364-LIFE.

You can make the difference of a lifetime—"For Life"—today!

White Crosses

by Dan Elliot



My boy and I were riding our bikes early one morning and came across a local church that is standing up in Brandon, displaying old whitewashed wooden crosses (supplied by Lutherans For Life of South Dakota) in memory of the 748 South Dakotan children who were aborted in 2006. Just across a very narrow stretch of road on the other side of the display is a cemetery, filled not with wooden crosses, but crosses made of stone. Most are inscribed with the date that someone came into this world, then a dash that somehow represents an entire lifetime, and finally a date that they passed on. Most are decorated and adorned with flowers, frequented stops along life's busy highway for those left behind who choose to remember and celebrate a life once lived.

There's no real difference between the wooden crosses here or the stone crosses there, except that on one side of the road, those crosses are recognized to represent people, human beings who once lived. And on the other side of the road—they aren't. One side was granted the right to life, the other wasn't. Nothing separates them or makes



them any less human.

In fact these crosses on this side of the road are an offense to some people.

There are no flowers, no mourner to lovingly care for their upkeep. They are so abhorred that in recent years these little crosses have been yanked out of the ground in the night and thrown in the river. Do you wonder why it is they strike such a tender chord, why some are so unable to stand for what those crosses stand for, why they are more inclined to tear them down and throw them away rather than see them for what they represent?

So what if we could give each whitewashed cross a face? What if we could see the child behind the symbol? Would we be so quick to dismiss them then, to throw them away if we could look into their eyes? If we could hear just one of them speak, just one audible giggle, would we stand up for them?



What if on this busy stretch of road as we zoomed to work we looked over to our amazement at 748 toddlers, two-year-olds, unsupervised, unchaperoned, with no teacher or guardian in sight? Only inches from the street, would we be concerned for their safety? Would any of us stop to make sure one of them, so young and innocent, didn't wander into the



oncoming traffic?

In 2003, the year my daughter was born, there were 819 abortions in South Dakota.

Today, she is five years old. She smiles, she cries, she laughs, she loves, she mothers over her new puppy, and she is an amazing speller. She eats up attention and she's an expert at Eskimo kisses. Today she's very excited because she gets to paint her toy horse in rainbow colors.



So today we see these crosses, and hundreds of choices that were made to end the life of a child, and one child who was given another choice, a right to life, just like you. In the image below, what do you see? Do you see one child or two?

Of course you see that beautiful little American girl with rights. But do you see the little boy or girl she's holding onto? That child that wasn't given the choice.



(danelliottphotography.blogspot.com/2008/09/white-crosses.html. Text and photos used by permission.)

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 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 for the mission and ministry of Lutherans For Life.

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.

Rejoicing Always—No Matter What

by Karen Frohwein
Director of Development



“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:4-7)

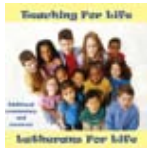
As we look at the last few months of 2008, we may be wondering about the condition of the world in which we live. The news of the nation and the world is not good. It becomes difficult to “rejoice in the Lord” when we hear of doom and despair in every newscast.

We face the same struggle at Lutherans For Life this time of the year. I could fill this page with words of worry and, yes, even despair regarding the effects of national and world events on the ministry (and finances) of Lutherans For Life. Anxious thoughts always seem to abound. I could go on and on—but I won't.

Why? Because I'd rather tune my thoughts in to God's Word! **“Rejoice in the Lord always ... Let your reasonableness be known to everyone ... do not be anxious about anything ... ”** What a wonderful message as we face the end of this year and the beginning of another. We have Good News For Life in which to place our focus and trust.

Let me tell you some good things that are happening at LFL because of that Good News!

Teaching For Life is complete and ready for delivery to schools across the country! And it's not just for Lutheran Schools—listen to this testimonial from a home-schooling mom:



As a Lutheran parent who home schools our 4th and 6th graders, *Teaching For Life* easily fit into the curriculum we are already using. I like the fact that the one unit for each month integrates Life concepts from a Lutheran perspective. The tri-fold is so colorful and well done that when we opened up the first unit we wanted to do everything in one day!



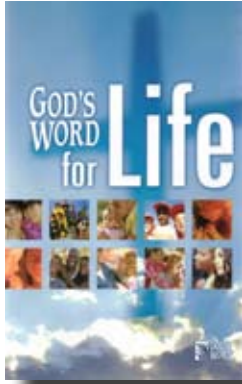
RENEWAL FOR LIFE has been launched! We have received our first invitations to present the Renewal For Life program to pastors! Dr. Lamb was able to speak on the Renewal For Life initiative to several Lutheran church bodies this summer and deliver a written presentation to the LCMS District presidents. Response to this message has been overwhelmingly positive!



Find Life Thoughts in the Church Year and Life Quotes at:
www.lutheransforlife.org

GOD'S WORD For Life, LFL's pro-life Bible, continues to be used in many different settings. Here is the latest story of how God's Word is changing lives in an unexpected place:

John Rushton is holding Bible studies with students at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at RIT. This is proving to be a worthwhile mission in support of our Lutherans for Life goals and the God's Word for Life Bible is in strong demand from the deaf students, men and women both. NTID is the largest deaf school in America.



Life Sunday Resources for 2009 are ready to be delivered to your church! This year's theme, "Good News FOR Life," based on Philippians 2:15-16a, reminds us that while there is bad news in life, we can shine God's Good News FOR Life!

These are just a sampling of the good news we see happening at Lutherans For Life. How do these things happen? Let's look at God's Word again: **"but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."** It would be so easy to join the world and worry and complain. But, we have a different source of

news, an active source who says to come to Him with our requests. I can tell you that we are raising a lot of prayers and supplications to the Lord from the Life Center these days. But, we are also raising them with thanksgiving, for the wonders of God's mercy are always around us.

This is the news we want to share with you because you are a part of this story. In Philippians 4, Paul thanks the Philippians for sharing in his trouble. They had sent a gift to him in prison. They had sent him help for his needs more than once. Paul's thankfulness was not for the earthly comforts those gifts brought. Note verse 17: **"I seek the fruit that increases to your credit."** This is also our desire at LFL. Yes, your gifts help us meet our financial needs here, but that is not the reason for our partnership. Your gifts and prayers make us partners in sharing the Good News For Life. Yes, your gifts make *Teaching For Life*, *RENEWAL FOR LIFE*, *GOD'S WORD For Life*, 2009 Life Sunday materials, and a host of other projects possible. But, more importantly, your gifts are changing hearts and lives—For Life.

I ask that you continue to join with us in prayer and supplication to the Lord of Life. More and more we need to shine the **Good News FOR Life** in the world around us. If you are able, I also ask you to consider a gift to Lutherans For Life as part of your year-end plans. 2009 marks the 30th anniversary of the ministry of LFL. We will be doing a lot of rejoicing in the Lord for 30 years of blessings. God has big plans for the future! As we continue to join together to shine the Good News For Life on the life issues, keep Paul and the Philippians in mind. Rejoice! And remember:

"My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (v 19).

Again, I say, "Rejoice!"

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).

January 4 – Second Sunday after Christmas

– That special star pointed the wise men to Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12). The light of holy Scripture points Christians today to Jesus and the salvation He came to bring. It points to His love, forgiveness, strength, and hope. It points to our heavenly home which He purchased. It points to His will for the choices we make in our lives along the way.

January 11 – The Baptism of Our Lord

– Romans 6:1-11 pictures us being united with Christ through Baptism. We often picture this as being “born again.” But you can also picture it as conception and pregnancy! Our new life begins in Christ. We live because we are in Christ. He carries us. He protects us. He purifies us richly and daily. He nourishes us. In Him we grow toward a brand-new kind of existence in the heavenly realms.

January 18 – The Second Sunday after the Epiphany

– Many churches will observe Sanctity of Human Life Sunday today. The Epistle, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, provides a good foundation for discussing the value of human life, “bought with a price,” and its implications, “So glorify God in your body” (20). Life Sunday materials under the theme of “Good News For Life” are also available from Lutherans For Life.

January 25 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany

– A nation that sanctions killing

over 3,000 of its children every day must certainly rival Nineveh for its great evil (Jonah 1:2). A prophet who runs away when called to be God’s voice against evil must certainly parallel the church that avoids the topic of abortion (1:3). A God who works His will in spite of us, who calls to repentance and forgives the repentant in Christ, has no rivals and is unparalleled (3:10).

February 1 – Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

– The authority and power of the Word of Jesus confronts and defeats great evil (Mark 1:21-28). That authority prevails undiminished. We must not be discouraged from confronting the evil of abortion with the Word of Life. We must not cease from sharing the power of its cleansing with those who succumb to this evil.

February 8 – Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

– I suppose it could be called, “The Day Jesus Refused to Heal” (Mark 1:37-38). Jesus gave priority to preaching the Good News. Nevertheless, He still continued to share the power of His healing (39). Proclaiming the Gospel continues to be the priority

for Christ’s Church as well as connecting that life-changing message to the lives of His people.

February 15 – Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

– Naaman was an enemy who worshiped false gods. But the true God remained in charge—“by him the LORD had given victory to Syria” (2 Kings 5:1). Despite human reasoning to the contrary, God remains in control of the nations and of our lives. He sent Jesus to bring healing from the leprosy of sin. He can be trusted!



February 22 – The Transfiguration of Our Lord – In Christ, we see the glory of God, the very image of God (2 Corinthians 4:4). In Christ, we “are being transformed into the same image” (3:18). What great value this gives to life! What great hope it brings to our living!

March 1 – First Sunday in Lent – After His baptism, the beloved Son of God overcame Satan’s temptations (Mark 1:9-12). United with Him in our baptisms, the dread enemy has no power over us. We need not give in to choices that lead to death (James 1:13-15). When we do, our unity with Jesus is not severed and its cleansing power is not diminished.

March 8 – Second Sunday in Lent – Are we ashamed of Jesus and His word (Mark 8:38) when we cower from addressing the life issues in our congregations? This “adulterous and sinful generation” speaks loudly when it comes to setting our minds on “the things of man” (v 33). Congregations need to powerfully proclaim Jesus as the Christ and point to “the things of God.”

March 15 – Third Sunday in Lent – God gives the commandments to people already redeemed from slavery (Exodus 20:1-2).

They are not the way out of slavery but the way former slaves are to live. The Gospel transforms us as people free to live according to God’s will.

March 22 – Fourth Sunday in Lent or The Annunciation of our Lord. (See below.) – John 3:16 is said to be “the Gospel in a nutshell.” A seminary professor commented, “How does anyone think the Gospel could ever possibly be contained in a nutshell?” True, the Gospel is too wide and high and deep to be contained. Yet, it is also a simple message. So, daring to summarize the summary of John 3:16, “God loves life”!

March 25 – The Annunciation of Our Lord – This is always a grand opportunity to proclaim God’s great love for life. The road to the cross did not begin on a donkey coming into Jerusalem, and it did not begin in a manger in Bethlehem. It began in a womb. Jesus’ conception gives value to all life from that very moment.

March 29 – Fifth Sunday in Lent or The Annunciation of our Lord. (See above.) – The child in the womb, people severely disabled—Jesus calls us to serve them. It is a call to greatness! (Mark 10:43-45)



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.**

Freedom of Choice?

Abortion offers neither freedom or choice

by Diane E. Schroeder



“Be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life.”

Philippians 2:15-16a

Christians today live in a post-truth era. There are no longer falsehoods—or what we used to call lies—only “misspeaks” or “strategic misrepresentations.”

Absolute truth is unknowable and irrelevant (so they say) and truth is a personal matter and morals based on truth are not to be imposed on anyone. Surely we live in the midst of a “crooked and twisted generation.” Words and phrases completely misrepresent reality. For example, the euphemism for abortion, “Freedom of Choice” has nothing to do

with freedom *or* choice. Rather, the phrase is used to sugar coat what most people find unacceptable: the killing of an unborn baby. The feminist movement touts “Freedom of Choice” as women’s liberation. Freedom from child bearing, freedom from motherhood! But abortion (provided by Planned Parenthood and hundreds of other “clinics”) gives women neither freedom *nor* choice.

I was young when I became pregnant. All I could think about is how much of a burden I would be to everyone around me, so I decided on abortion. Knowing what I know now, a question

screams out in my brain! “Why did all the people in the process of my abortion not give me all the facts to make ‘my’ decision properly?” I went through the pitiful counseling at the Women’s Clinic. I was told how easy the procedure would be and that it would all be “over” within that day. Their words were lies. I was led to another room by a nurse who gave me a sonogram which was shielded from my view. I was not told many things: that my baby was already a boy or girl, had fingers and toes and could feel pain. I was not told there were people who truly wanted to help me with other options and that

they could be easily contacted. At many points in my abortion process I could have been given education and the ability to make a better decision. It was withheld because of someone else’s ideology that women should have a choice. There is no ‘Choice’ for women if they are not given the proper tools to make an informed

decision. It has been 18 years since my abortion, and I am only just beginning to heal.”

“Freedom of Choice” left this woman free to experience manipulation, coercion, grief, and despair. What are Christians to do?

We must “shine as lights” and expose the deeds of darkness by applying the TRUTH of God’s Word to abortion and other life issues.

Christians must proclaim that:

- Abortion destroys an unborn child who has value through being



created by God and a person for whom Christ died.

- Abortion is an act that God forbids.
- Abortion is a spiritual issue and, like all sin, separates people from their God.
- Abortion hurts women, men, grandparents, and everyone affected by that decision.

Christians must reach out to the casualties of our culture that bought the lies of perverted truth. We must reach out to:

- Women in unplanned pregnancies with compassion rather than judgment; encouraging them with truth and practical help.
- Women and men who participated in an abortion with the Good News that God forgives all confessed sin, even the sin of abortion.

As fellow Lutherans For Lifers, I know you understand the urgency I feel. Abortion kills and maims more than 3000 times a day in our country. God has given Lutherans For Life an important assignment: To proclaim God's truth with compassion and mercy to a society and Church that really does not want to listen. But we know that God's Word is powerful, so let us continue to proclaim God's TRUTH to this "crooked and twisted generation," trusting in Him to change hearts and minds and save lives.



Hurting from Abortion?

A Word of Hope can help.

888-217-8679

www.word-of-hope.org

Confidential Caring



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 191 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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