

LifeDate

Winter 2007

A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life



In the Hand of God

In the Hand of God
Life Sunday 2008

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Being God's Hands



Lutherans For Life



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Renewal For Life: Responsibility, Relevance, and Resources



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Have you ever heard of the great idol “God But”? “God But” is kind of a penultimate idol, an idol we acknowledge along the way to the ultimate, full-fledged idol worship experience. I’m guessing most of you reading this have professed to believe in “God But” at one time or another. It goes like this, “Well, sure, you know, I believe in God . . .” And then what’s the next word out of our mouths? “But”! “I believe in God, but . . .”

Paul writes to the Romans, **“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind”** (12:2a). Belief in “God But” is a warning sign that we may be conforming to this world. We hear the message of the world over and over again on a particular issue. In our minds it begins to sound reasonable, logical, and good. We know it seems to contradict what God says, but . . .

Take abortion for example. The world says it’s a “right,” a “choice,” “the only way out,” “freedom.” We hear it constantly. We hear it echoed sometimes by religious leaders. We begin to conform. “I believe in God, but . . . what about rape?” “I believe in God, but . . . this baby will have expensive special needs.” “I believe in God, but . . . now it’s *my* daughter who’s pregnant.”

There is a constant need for renewal of our minds. We need to be warned about the “God But” idols and the idol worship they lead to. We need to be constantly pointed to God’s grace and mercy and wisdom in Christ as Paul does for the Romans at the end of chapter 11.

For nearly 30 years Lutherans For Life has sought to renew minds and transform lives by

helping Lutheran congregations connect the biblical truth about life to the life issues. Our approach has been a “bottom up” approach working through dedicated LFLers at the grassroots level. But we want to do more! So we are introducing:

RENEWAL FOR LIFE

Renewal For Life will be a “top down” approach. We will be working through existing Lutheran church structures—denominations, districts, circuits, regions, etc.—to reach pastors and, through them, congregations. We want to help:

Renew Responsibility

The responsibility to address the life issues as they affect God’s people belongs to the Church and her pastors, not Lutherans For Life. We want to help congregations see addressing the life issues as part of the overall ministry of their congregation as they warn people about the “God But” idols and point them instead to Jesus Christ.

Renew Relevancy

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is relevant to the life issues and speaks powerfully to them. We have the most positive and powerful “For Life” message in the universe to apply to these issues. The Gospel is renewing. The Gospel is transforming. The Gospel counters conformity with the world.

Renew Resources

The Church and her pastors cannot effectively do this without help. The life issues are complex and ever-changing. LFL pledges to renew our efforts to more directly provide pastors and congregations with easy-to-use, up-to-date educational resources that will be at their finger tips through an online library.

A pilot project is underway in Iowa. This will be completed in the spring of 2008. After evaluation, we hope to “launch” nationally in the fall of 2008. **Stay tuned!**

Adoption Life Letters

Adoption is in the news, at least on the entertainment page. Two recent movies—*Bella* and *Martian Child*—shine a light on this often overlooked option in our abortion culture.

Since the last issue of *LifeDate*, which focused on *Real World Adoption*, Jean Amundson, president of LFL of Texas, sent the following heartfelt letters to us. She wrote that the first letter is “from a birth mom (my daughter) to the unborn baby girl she placed for adoption; the second letter is to the birth mom from the adoptive mom, and the third is a letter to the birth mom from the baby girl placed for adoption who is now 14 years old. I pray these letters will help you better understand adoption and how adoption fits into God’s plan for LIFE!”

Dear Ariel Kristine,

Hi there, daughter. I’m your birth mom. I hope you don’t hate me for putting you up for adoption . . . I thought you’d be better off with two parents instead of just one. I wanted to keep you so much, Ariel, but I couldn’t afford to keep you. Giving you up was the hardest thing for me ever to do . . . I hope you are happy with the family I chose for you!

I was sixteen years old when I found that I was pregnant with you. I shortly turned seventeen after finding out . . . I had suspected you were inside of me in April of 1993, but I had no way to get a pregnancy test. In the first part of May, I found a friend who would take me to get the pregnancy test. Instead of me crying she was the one crying when I was told I was two months pregnant with you . . . The question I heard most was, “What are you going to do with the baby?” All I could say was, “I don’t know.” The hardest thing at that time was having to tell my mother about you. I told her the week of Mother’s Day. The rough waters weren’t over yet, I still had to tell my brother and father. I told my brother on Mother’s Day and he told my father for me

that same day. My mother took it okay. She told me my options, which were: keeping you or putting you up for adoption. Aborting you was absolutely out of the question. I wasn’t sure whether to keep you or put you up for adoption. I wanted to do what was best for you so I weighed both very carefully. Your father was very happy about you. Finally, I came to my decision to put you up for adoption. Your father had a hard time with that at first, but then he accepted it. Love Always and Forever!!!

Love,
Your birth mom, Andrea



*“For I know the plans I have for you,”
declares the LORD,
“plans to prosper you
and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.”
Jeremiah 29:11 NIV*

Dear Birth Mother,

I just wanted to tell you what a difference you have made in our lives. My husband and I wanted children so very badly and went through so many medical procedures trying to get pregnant, but nothing worked. We claimed Jeremiah 29:11, knowing God had a plan for our lives . . . We prayed it would be with children. We were pretty frustrated and heartbroken by the time you came into our lives. But we feel you were a gift from God! . . .

. . . I know birthmothers place their babies for adoption for many reasons—maybe they are not ready or able to be parents, maybe they’re too young, maybe they want to finish school before starting a family, maybe their parents made them, maybe they don’t want to be tied to a birthfather for 18 years . . . whatever the reason, it is a wonderful option

... such a loving and unselfish act for you to make!

We love our (yours and our) child so much! This child was instantly a part of our family, a part we cannot imagine being without. You gave “our” child life and we are teaching “our” child how to live it. We’re not perfect parents, but we try our best and we would die for our child. We teach the core values we were all raised with—love and respect God, your parents and those in authority, the importance of honesty and trust . . . Stand up for yourselves and others in what is right. Know how special you are, how truly great you are. Use your talents in a good way, one that you’ll be proud of.

Because of you and the grace of God, we have our child today. She is wonderful and very special. She is cute and smart and fits in her little world. To us, she is fabulous . . . perfect in every way. We would NOT trade kids with anyone! Our child is respectful, charming, a little shy but self-assured . . . She is so fun and happy and silly. She has parents, a brother, and many extended family who simply adore her. She is loved and well cared for. Okay, she borders on spoiled.

I know openness between the birth family and adoptive family is not what either of us signed up for originally, but I’ve always been thankful for it! I was fine with our original agreement of sending letters and pictures, but once again, God had more in store for us! I remember you really wanted to meet us before you had your baby. I was so nervous and changed clothes four times before finding an adequate outfit to wear to meet you for the first time. I thought you were so sweet and very pretty and so mature . . . I knew it would be hard so I also knew how courageous you must be. We sat down at a table in the restaurant with you and your parents and the social worker and when we talked, I felt nervous, but so comfortable . . . like we had known each other all of our lives. It turned out you were nervous too (and also changed

clothes four times)! We had so many things in common, it was amazing. We had some differences too. I believe on paper, we didn’t meet your qualifications for parents for your child, yet when you met us, you saw other things that you may have felt more important . . .

. . . We are so thankful for you. We’re so thankful for your decision to entrust us with your child. We’re so thankful for Christine and who she is and all the joy she has brought to our lives. Thank you. We love you for who you are and what you did!

Marc and Reigh Ellen

Dear Birth mom,

I am so thankful to you. You gave me life and you gave me to a family who loves me so much. You’ve given me a lot of opportunities that I may not have had. I respect the decision you made. I know it must have been a hard decision to make. I appreciate you putting my needs over your needs . . . this year I’m in choir, band, and cheer leading.

I’m already planning for college, I play the flute. You have no idea how grateful I am for you.

I love you,
Christine

LFL has a number of adoption resources, including *Adoption: Finding a Family for a Child*. Call or go to the web site to find out more.

Former LFL President Jean Garton says, “Adoption isn’t easy,” but “adoption can be an enormously unselfish gift to a baby, not only as a way to give a child a secure, loving, stable family but to give that child the most precious gift of all—life.”



The Handiwork of God

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



Wrong Questions

“What will the quality of her life be?” “What real meaning does his life have?” “Would grandma want to be like this?” Such questions center the determining factor of life’s value on ability or lack thereof. The answers become arbitrary and uncertain and cannot provide a foundation for Christian decision-making when facing difficult circumstances.

The Right Question

The Christian can ask a more fundamental and helpful question. “What does God do that gives value to human life?” This question centers the determining factor of life’s value in God. The answer gives Christians a foundation for dealing with life and death decisions that is certain, hope filled, and reassuring. Consider the following answers to this question as three foundation stones upon which we can stand.

God Creates Life with His Hands

“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:13-14a).

From the beginning of time, God involved Himself in the creation of life in a very hands-on way. He “formed” Adam from the dust of the ground and breathed into him the “breath of life” (Genesis 2:7). He “made” (literally “built”) Eve from Adam’s rib (Genesis 2:22). Picture the potter forming a lump of clay or the craftsman carefully building a piece of furniture.

God tells these first humans, “Be fruitful and multiply” (Genesis 1:28). He sets into motion a biological process for procreation. But His hands still “shape” and “form” and “make” and “knit” inside the womb.

A yellowed clump of thread rests in a heritage box in our living room. It doesn’t look like much and it certainly is not useful for anything. Close inspection reveals the beginning intricacies of tating. But no one knows what it was going to be. Why then does this clump of thread carry such great value? Grandma started making this just before she died. It was found next to her rocking chair. Thus, its value comes not because of how it looks or from its usefulness. The value comes from who made it.



This is the first foundation stone. The value of human life does not flow from how someone looks or how productive we view them. Their value comes from Who made them. Every human life is the handiwork of God. The child in the womb, grandma in the care center, and uncle Ralph with Alzheimer’s all have a God-given value that transcends our person-centered perceptions.

God Redeemed Life with His Hands

“You were bought with a price”

(1 Corinthians 6:20a).

God loved what He made with His hands so much that when we were lost in sin, He sent His only Son to redeem us, to buy us back with a price. This becomes our second foundation stone.

More than any other verse, Luke 1:31 testifies to the value God bestows on human life from the moment of conception. **“And behold, you will conceive in your womb . . .”** The redeeming process that required God to become flesh began at conception. It was a necessary place to start. Jesus had to be a holy embryo because we were unholy embryos. (Psalm 51:5). Jesus’ divinity at the moment of conception attests to our humanity at that moment. Jesus’ becoming an embryo gives value to all embryos.

The buying back process didn’t stop there.

Jesus' journey in Mary's fallopian tube was the beginning of His journey to the cross. The hands and feet that developed in Mary's womb would one day be pierced with nails. Think of this magnificent mystery! The hands that created the universe and knit you together in the womb, became hands that stretched out on a cross and bled the price of redemption. All humanity bought with a price. What value this bestows.

Many happy memories gather around grandma's old pump organ in our family room. Grandma used to spin us around on the leather-topped stool until we could reach the keyboard. She would pump the pedals as we played the keys.



I was a seminarian with a young family when grandma went to heaven. But I was determined to scrap together enough funds to purchase the organ at grandma's auction. It took \$800.00 for the organ and another \$125.00 for the stool! Where is the value of grandma's organ? It has value because it was grandma's and it has value because we paid dearly to get it back.

Human life has value because God created it, and it has value because He paid dearly to buy it back! It wasn't \$925.00. It wasn't "gold or silver," but His "holy precious blood" and His "innocent suffering and death."

Of course, we do not have a dead Savior. The resurrection and ascension of our Lord assure us of His victory and of the outpouring of His presence as He calls us to live in that victory. That leads us to our final foundation stone.

God Holds Us by the Hand

"I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you" (Isaiah 42: 6a).

The LORD speaks in this verse of the Messiah, but He also gives us a picture of His

relationship with those He calls through His Son in Baptism. **"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life"** (Romans 6:4). In baptism, the "righteousness" of Christ—His perfect holiness—is applied to the imperfect sinner. We are given new life in which to walk.

Jesus sends His Spirit to walk along side us, not as our "buddy," but as our God. It is a very one-sided side walking!

One year, for Christmas, Joey received a coat with deep, fur-lined pockets. He talked his dad into taking him for a walk to see if his hands would stay warm in those pockets. The winter weather cooperated in the experiment with blowing snow and ice-covered walks. "We should hold hands," said Dad. "No," replied Joey, "I want to keep my hands in my pockets." The first patch of ice claimed Joey. As he brushed himself off, he said, "Daddy, maybe I should hold your hand." He reached up able to grasp only a couple of Dad's fingers in his little hand. When the next patch of ice sent his feet dancing, he could not hold on and went down again. Dad said, "Joey, maybe I should hold onto your hand."

We do not hold on to the Father. He holds on to us. What value God gives to those He has called that we should be His children held by His hand!

Asking the Right Questions

Ask the right questions and the answers provide a solid foundation upon which to stand as we deal with decisions about life and death. The value of human life comes from what God has done and continues to do. Life is His *handiwork!* He creates life with His hands. He redeemed life with His hands. He holds His children by the hand. When we understand these answers, then, as we confront difficult issues, some questions won't even need to be asked.

Cloned Monkey Embryos Created in Oregon

For the first time, scientists have created a large batch of cloned embryos from the cells of adult primates, a breakthrough being hailed around the world as the next step toward creating cloned human embryos for research and “therapeutic” applications.

The United Kingdom’s *Independent* newspaper reported on November 12 that scientists working in Oregon created embryos using the somatic cell nuclear transfer technique from the ova and skin cells of adult rhesus macaque monkeys. They have even succeeded in turning these stem cells into mature heart cells and brain neurons.

The researchers, led by Shoukhrat Mitalipov, a Russian-born scientist at the Oregon National Primate Research Centre in Beaverton, developed a new technique of handling the ova that does not expose them to ultraviolet light or dyes, techniques that have been found to damage primate ova.

The breakthrough marks the first time that primate embryos have been cloned in large numbers. Most previous attempts at cloning primates, including humans, have failed or the resulting embryos did not live long and many scientists had thought that cloning primates was virtually impossible.

Although Dr. Mitalipov said he could not comment until the publication of the data in the journal, *Nature*, he did tell colleagues at the International Society for Stem Cell Research in Cairns, Queensland, earlier this year that he had obtained stem cells from 20 cloned embryos.

Professor Don Wolf, who led the laboratory at the Oregon National Primate Research Center, said the team created about 100 cloned embryos. These were transferred into around 50 female macaques but none has resulted in a full-term pregnancy.

The media has long touted human embryonic stem cell research, including via cloning, as a promise of cures for some of humanity’s most intractable diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s. Scientists, however, have frequently objected that such claims are more the result of “hype” than actual successful clinical trials.

In theory, a cloned human embryo can produce embryonic stem cells that are genetically matched to a patient. From these,

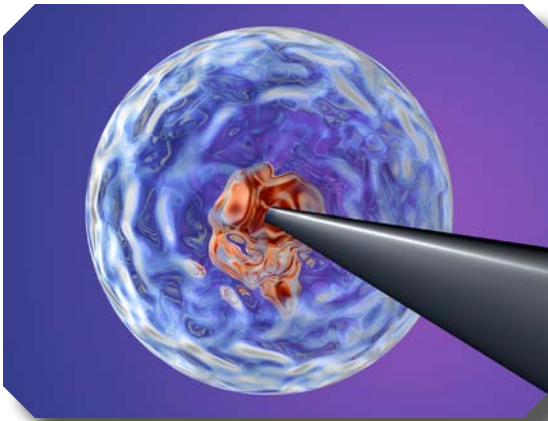
many scientists believe tissues or even whole organs could be produced to replace damaged or diseased tissue in the patient that would not be subject to problems with immune system rejection.

Although frequently referred

to in the press as “genetically identical,” embryos created by cloning are not exactly the same and attempts at therapeutic application of embryonic cells have resulted in no cures for any disease to date. In addition, some experiments with embryo-derived cells have resulted in wild and erratic irreversible side effects, including the development of tumors.

Adult stem cells, those taken directly from sources in the patient’s own body, however, continue to yield positive results including for some of the diseases usually cited as motivation for embryo research.

Other ethicists have pointed out that the wholesale production of clones for



therapeutic applications would require enormous numbers of human ova, numbers far exceeding what can be made safely available. The procedure for ova extraction can be dangerous and involves drugs and a surgical procedure. Some have warned that the demand for ova created by such promises of cures could only be met by economic exploitation of vulnerable women, particularly in the developing world.

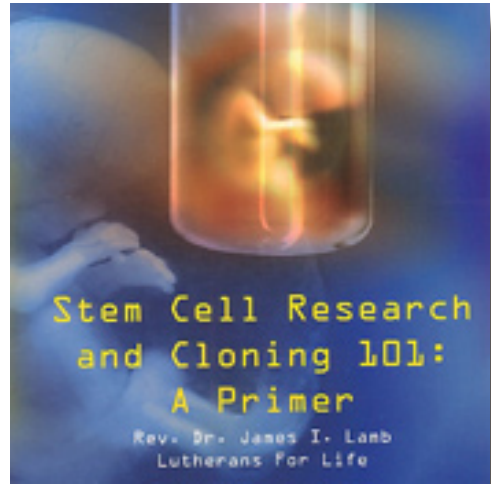
In commenting on the report, noted lawyer and ethicist, Wesley J. Smith said, "Human cloning may or may not work. Also, while there is an abundance of monkey eggs to be had, human eggs remain a rare commodity. But there is no question that this primate breakthrough makes the specter of human cloning closer to fruition."

Meanwhile, the United Nations has issued a report titled *Is Human Reproductive Cloning Inevitable: Future Options for UN Governance*, that suggests it is only a matter of time until human cloning is achieved. The report says that 50 countries have outlawed human cloning while 140 countries have no ban. These "cloning bans," however, have been heavily criticized by experts who say that the inaccuracies and evasive language used have resulted in few effective prohibitions.

While the report calls for a universal ban on human cloning, it continues the widely discredited claim that "human cloning" means allowing a cloned human embryo to be implanted in the womb and brought to term. The report calls for an immediate ban on the birth of developed cloned babies, usually called "reproductive cloning," but calls for more cloning for "therapeutic" purposes. It suggests that encouraging unethical "therapeutic cloning," is a viable "compromise" option for the international community to adopt.

(*LifeSiteNews.com*, 11/12; *Secondhand Smoke*, www.wesleyjsmith.com/blog/, 11/11)

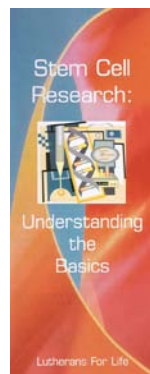
DVD—BACK IN STOCK!



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 . . . I am not a scientist or an expert in these areas so I cannot make it complicated . . . 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. (One DVD per order.)

(A free "Discussion Question Guide for Stem Research and Cloning 101: A Primer" is available through the LFL web site, see "Catalog," then "Bioethics.")

Best-Selling Brochures . . .



Understand the Basics

Stem Cell
Item 1000T.

Cloning
1001T.

\$0.25 ea.

Are We Looking for Hope in All the Wrong Places?

by Rev. Donald Wagner



There are millions of people who have been diagnosed with debilitating diseases, including myself, who are looking for hope. The question is: Are we looking for hope in all the wrong places? The apostle Peter reminds us that we have **“a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”** (1 Peter 1:3b). The hope we have is literally in the hands of our Savior. Job declares this when he says, **“In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind”** (Job 12:10).

We have been led to believe that Embryonic Stem Cell Research (ESCR) is where the future hope for the cure of these devastating diseases lies. Yet, to date, not one substantive breakthrough has come through ESCR. At the same time numerous treatments and advancements have come from Adult Stem Cell Research.

When it comes to finding the cure for incurable diseases we all have a hope that someday it will become a reality. This is especially true for the many that have been diagnosed with diseases for which there may be treatments but not a cure. Like Michael J. Fox, I was at a young age when I was diagnosed with the early onset of Parkinson’s disease. We both have suffered from the debilitating effects of this dreadful disease, and like many who suffer with us we have the hopeful desire for a cure. In fact, through the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research, he has committed himself to doing just that.

This is where our commonalities end. We have differing views on how a cure for Parkinson’s should be sought. Michael has taken a strong stand by publicly supporting Embryonic Stem Cell Research, not to

mention cloning of embryonic stem cells. He publicly interjected himself in the 2006 fall election process in the state of Missouri to do just that. It was after these elections that I became compelled to speak out on this issue. I shared the following words with the members of my two congregations, **“I cannot in conscience avail myself to any treatment or cure that knowingly comes from the willful destruction of life in order to preserve life.”**

In the fall of 2000, my health began to deteriorate. My parishioners and countless others were faithfully praying for an answer to my health problems. Along the way I found out that one of the issues I was facing was a degenerative liver issue, but still had no answer to my other health challenges. I considered going on disability and leaving the ministry due to the loss of focal ability in my close vision, a significant loss in my right side dexterity, balance issues, tremors, rigidity, and other problems.

In the fall of 2003, I received a diagnosis: early onset Parkinson’s disease. In part, the prayers of God’s faithful were answered, because I now knew what my future would hold. I did not respond to the first round of medication. Eventually I was put on Sinemet (a drug that helps relieve some of the symptoms of Parkinson’s disease). I had a positive response physically but the drug did not improve my vision.

I was told in August of 2004 there was nothing they could do for my vision issues and my case was put on the research pile. I asked my specialist how long it would be before I could no longer serve in my vocation. He replied, “Your life will never be the same.”

A few months later, an elder of one of my parishes approached me about a cutting-edge technology in nutrition delivery. I thanked him and told him that I had tried some forms of nutrition but could not tolerate them digestively. He informed me that this new form works at a cellular level without the need

for digestion.

On March 2, 2005, he took me to a Regenerative Health 101 seminar where I learned about this new technology. With some guidance, I began a comprehensive nutritional intervention program. Little did I know how God would fully answer the prayers of His faithful on my behalf. Within one week, my vision went back to normal and has remained stable ever since (ironically, on the Church Year calendar, the Sunday before is known as Occuli, vision Sunday). Within a month my liver issues normalized. At the end of March, my neurological evaluation showed significant improvements and my medications were cut in half.

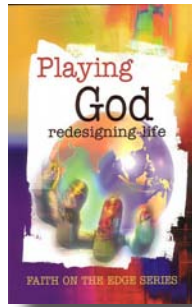
On May 9, 2005, I went off all medication with no significant symptom issues.

As of the fall of 2006, I was released from my specialist's care.

Although I am not cured, my life and health is better than it has been in years. My eldest daughter no longer has worries of whether or not her dad will be able to walk her down the aisle on her wedding day. I enjoy watching and playing tennis with my younger daughter. I now can golf with my eldest son and play catch with my younger son. As my wife so simply puts it, "My husband now dreams again." I now have plans, hope, and a future (Jeremiah 29:11).

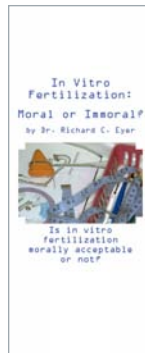
Because God's hand of grace and healing has touched my life, I firmly believe it is God's plan for me to make the most of every opportunity to speak out on life issues. It is my fervent prayer that we continue to give witness to the God of life by supporting research efforts, including adult stem cells, that would bring about a cure for Parkinson's and other diseases without the willful taking of life.

(Rev. Donald Wagner is a 1985 graduate of Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota; a 1990 graduate of Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis; and pastor of Christ and Zion Lutheran Churches in Elbow Lake and Hoffman, Minnesota. He and his wife, Jolene, have four children.)



Playing God – Redesigning Life,

by Rev. Dr. Robert W. Weise, explores the ethics of DNA manipulation, stem cell research, cloning, and more! As you progress through this 6-session study, you will learn how these scientific "advances" hold up in light of God's Word. You'll discover that God has designs for every life. *Book.* Item 1000BS. **\$6.50 ea.**



In Vitro Fertilization: Moral or Immoral?

"Is in vitro fertilization morally acceptable or not?" In this brochure, Dr. Richard C. Eyer identifies the separate issues and their moral standing to help readers evaluate in vitro's acceptability or unacceptability. *Brochure.* Item 1002T. **\$0.25 ea.**



Emergency Contraception

– When it comes to understanding "emergency contraception" (EC) or the "morning after pill," the meaning of words is crucially important. Find out what is really involved! *Brochure.* Item 1003T. **\$0.25 ea.**



The Christian and Birth Control

is a 34 page booklet—with updated addendum—providing practical information on the topic of birth control and family planning—using the light of God's Word. Written by Pastor Robert Fleischmann of Christian Life Resources. *Item 1000B.* **\$2.50 ea.**

Can a Christian be a Good Scientist?

*By Pastor Robert Hein
Good Shepherd Lutheran
Church, West Bend, Wisconsin*



Can a Christian who accepts the Bible as literal truth also be a good scientist? Many secular scientists insist that is not possible. Christians receive insults to their scientific intelligence all the time. Consider this statement from Jude Dougherty, dean of the School of Philosophy at the Catholic University of America, “I don’t think anyone who is at least minimally scientifically literate doubts that the theory of evolution is correct.” The conclusion? If you don’t accept the theory of evolution as scientific fact, you are not worthy to be called a scientist.

And so Christians studying and preparing for careers in the scientific world often feel the pressure to compromise or reject what the Bible teaches in order to gain acceptance from the scientific community.

But is that really necessary? Can a Bible-believing Christian also be a good scientist? It depends on which kind of science you are talking about. It is useful to make a distinction between “operational science” and “origins science.” Operational science is based on the laws of physics, chemistry, biology, etc. that God established when He created the world. The discoveries and applications of observational science are based on the scientific method of observation and experimentation. We use observational science to understand how a computer works, how to send a spaceship to the moon and back, how plants and animals reproduce after their kind, how medicines fight disease, and how gravity affects our world. While Christians humbly admit there is still much we do not understand of how God governs this universe, we really have no conflict with the findings of operational science. In fact, we expect the

world to follow the rules of operational science since an orderly God established them in the beginning, and keeps them in working order to this very day. We do recognize however that present findings can be proven wrong, and replaced with new scientific discoveries.

Bible-believing Christians also believe in miracles. Miracles, by definition, usurp the laws of operational science. For example, operational science teaches us that people can’t walk on water and dead people don’t rise to life again. Christians don’t deny these laws of operational science; we simply believe that our supernatural God who established those laws also has the authority to intervene in human history to usurp them.

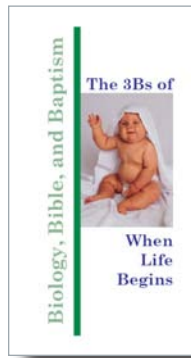
Some of the greatest scientific discoveries and advances were made by scientists who also accepted the biblical account of creation. Consider Isaac Newton who co-discovered calculus, formulated the laws of motion and gravity, calculated planetary orbits, and invented the reflecting telescope. Consider Johannes Kepler who discovered the three laws of planetary motion, or James Maxwell who discovered the four fundamental equations that light and all forms of electromagnetic radiation obey. A belief in the evolutionary claims of origins science was not required for any of these great scientists to advance their work.

Bible-believing Christians do not have a problem then with the findings of operational science when it comes to how our present world functions. Rather we disagree with the claims of origins science. Origins science is not based upon observation and experimentation of the present, but rather on speculation and unproven assumptions concerning the past. For example, operational science teaches that everything reproduces after its own kind. That is what we see happening today. Within a specific animal kind there is a great deal of room of variety and adaptation. However, we never observe microbes becoming monkeys or monkeys becoming men. In fact, the laws of

operational science teach us this is impossible. But proponents of origins science insist that in the distant past, things worked much differently. Back then mutations occurred on a regular basis over millions of years which continually added new genetic information to succeeding generations. We don't see it happening. We can't make it happen in a laboratory. The findings of operational science actually say it can't happen. And yet we are expected to believe that all these beneficial changes did happen over millions of years simply by random chance. Louis Pasteur developed the law of Biogenesis, which teaches that life only comes from life. No one has ever refuted this law of operational science. And yet we are expected to believe that billions of years ago, things worked differently, that life, intelligent life, could spring from non life, all on its own. Understand then that the claims of origins science are not based on sound scientific observation and experimentation, but more so upon a premise of naturalism that clouds the interpretation of the evidence we observe.

Christians don't have to put their brain in the closet to be good scientists. We do always need to keep our human reason subject to the Word of God. As God's Word teaches, **"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ"** (2 Corinthians 10:5-6 NIV). However, we normally expect our world to follow the rules of operational science which God established. This will enable Christians to excel in all sorts of scientific fields such as biology, chemistry, astronomy, botany, medical research, and in the development of new scientific technology. But Christians must always reject the unproven claims of origins science when these theories contradict the clear teachings of the infallible Word of God.

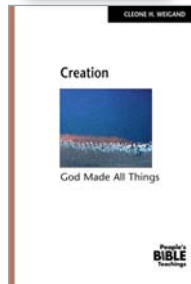
(LSI Journal, September-October 2007; lutheranscience.org)



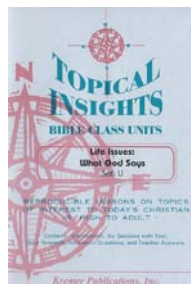
The 3 Bs of When Life Begins – Does anyone really know when life begins? If the “3Rs” are the basics of education, the “3Bs” are the basics of when life begins—Biology, Bible, and Baptism. *Brochure.*
Item 1004T. **\$0.25 ea.**



What About . . . Creation and Evolution – Christians sometimes wonder how they can help others consider the possibility that there is a Creator. This brochure provides a starting point. By Rev. Dr. Alvin L. Barry.
Item 207T. **\$0.25 ea.**



CREATION – God Made All Things makes 15 stops in God's “art gallery” to comment, through Scripture, on what He has made. By Cleone H. Weigand. 176 pages. *Item 202B.*
\$10.99 ea.



Life Issues: What God Says offers six sessions on topics such as: *What and When is Human Life, Genetic Engineering, Cloning and Stem Cell research, and Care Near the End of Life.* Discussion questions, Bible research, and a detailed teacher guide included. Reproducible from CD-ROM in PDF format. (Note: It is NOT legal to purchase one copy and pass the CD on from church to church, etc.) *Item 1005BS.* **\$21.95 ea.**

and a detailed teacher guide included. Reproducible from CD-ROM in PDF format. (Note: It is NOT legal to purchase one copy and pass the CD on from church to church, etc.) *Item 1005BS.* **\$21.95 ea.**

India: The United Nations' Population Fund estimates that 2,000 unborn girls are illegally aborted every day in India due to the traditional preference for boys over girls, and warned that the consequences will include skewing of the population and a possible rise in sexual violence, child abuse, and wife sharing. (*Reuters, 8/31; SPUC, 9/3*)

England/United States: A British woman whose daughter's leukemia was treated with stem cells from an American umbilical cord bank has called for more cords to be saved. Mrs. Amy Winston-Hart said cord blood "is a natural, life-saving resource that is currently being wasted. If it wasn't for that one couple who decided to freeze the blood from that cord, then [my daughter] might not be here today." (*BBC, 8/15; SPUC, 8/17*)

Ireland: Dan Neville, an Irish politician and President of the Irish Association of Suicidology has warned against a "slippery slope" to widespread euthanasia, saying that the example of the Netherlands shows that legalizing euthanasia can lead to a situation in which "there is a blurring between voluntary and involuntary euthanasia. It is possible that the elderly (especially those who are elderly and rich) become dispensable." (*Irish Examiner, SPUC, 8/21*)

Latin America: A report from The Population Research Institute has warned of a "systematic and international strategy" by pro-abortion groups to introduce abortion into Latin American countries where it is still illegal. This strategy consists of introducing pregnant women to abortifacient drugs. The report says: "This type of 'guidance' is nothing other than manipulation, as the choice they are presenting is the one they have already decided on for these women from the beginning." (*Catholic News Agency, 9/6; SPUC, 9/10*)



Australia: The State Parliament of New South Wales has passed legislation allowing the cloning of human embryos for research purposes. The legislation also authorizes the creation of human-animal hybrids, the use of ova from aborted baby girls to create embryos, and the creation of embryos from more than two donors. (*LifeSiteNews.com, 8/20; SPUC, 8/21*)

United Kingdom: The Evangelical Alliance in the UK has expressed concern that the Parliamentary Committee on Science and Technology has said that it will only consider scientific arguments with respect to changes in abortion law, and not ethical arguments. Dr. Justin Thacker, the alliance's head of theology and a physician, said: "This statement sets the dangerous precedent that it is acceptable to undertake scientific enquiry in the absence of ethical considerations. The history of the 20th century has demonstrated the disastrous consequences of following that path." (*Inspire, 10/17; SPUC, 10/22*)

Nicaragua: The congress of Nicaragua has voted, 66 to 3, to renew the nation's total abortion ban. (*LifeSiteNews.com, 9/13; SPUC, 9/14*)

England: The British government has affirmed its intention to permit the creation of human-animal hybrid embryos. After the announcement on November 6, Anthony Ozimic, SPUC political secretary, commented: "Today is a fateful day for Britain and for the world, because the government's bill represents an unprecedented attack upon the dignity of human life, seeking to lead the world in truly sinister experiments—the creation of human-animal hybrids and the genetic modification of human beings. These developments, and the financial motivation behind them, are ethically deplorable." (*SPUC, 11/6*)

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

Held Captive No Longer!

by Grace Kern, 888-217-8679
www.word-of-hope.org



They call our hot line with vivid memories, as one young woman recalled:

“I can still remember the room and the old leather chairs. It was so cold and quiet. Women from all walks of life silently sitting there waiting. Our paths were crossing at this terrible place, a place where life was exchanged for death. We would now all be connected with this same, horrible secret.

“I could barely pick my head up to look at anyone. When I did for a second, I could see no one looked as if they wanted to be there. The lights were bright but the darkness I felt deep within my soul made seeing anything nearly impossible. I kept asking myself, what had brought all these women here? Were their reasons anything like mine? Were they sitting there blaming other people? Was there anyone else here that was being sexually abused by their step-father? I blamed my mother. After all, she gave me no choice in the matter. She simply said you will have an abortion. Why did she use drugs and bring abusive men in our home, one right after another, my whole life? I wanted to run out of that horrible place but no one cared. Where was God? Why had a loving God let such terrible things happen to me? Tears filled my eyes and deep sobs poured from my soul in that cold room. I knew this was wrong. My mom signed the papers because I was only 15. But, I allowed my baby to be aborted.”

This caller’s story, like so many, is heartbreaking. I can just imagine Satan taunting her, “You unforgivable sinner!” The constant agonizing regret, guilt, and shame from the past mixed with fear and anxiety for the future can bind and paralyze our relationship with God.

Let’s look at when shame made its debut. Genesis 2:25 says, **“The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”** Then Satan slithered onto the scene to deceive Eve. When Eve fell into sin and took Adam with her, their reaction was to hide and cover up their mistake. That’s exactly what so many do after an abortion for so many painful years. When you keep the secret in darkness Satan can use it against you. He is the father of darkness and the author of shame. He constantly whispers that you are worthless and that if anyone ever found out about your secret they would condemn you. But that is a lie from the pit of hell.

When women and men finally bring their sin to the light, God will meet them with His grace, healing, and forgiveness. Then God will give you the courage to let Him take all your shame.

Many who have come to Word of Hope want to share their stories so that others might be given healing and not make the same mistake. We have seen God touch and heal the shame of an abortion.

Jesus alone has the power to heal what we have buried and tried to hide for so long. Remember that Jesus Christ defeated Satan with the cross. Because of that, we do not have to be held captive to shame at the hands of our enemy any longer. With Christ we are spotless, clean and pure without blemish. Let His grace be enough for you today as you trust Him to work all things for His good.

“I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame” (Psalm 34:4-5 NIV).

Christmas Inserts!

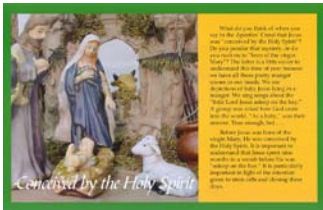


Send a Christmas insert with your Christmas cards!

BULLETIN INSERTS

The Miracle of Meagerness – The miracle of Christmas is that God would come at all into a world that had rejected Him. But He did . . . A Savior lying in a manger is a Savior for all—born and unborn, healthy and frail. *Item 1105BI. \$0.07 ea.*

Conceived by the Holy Spirit helps us understand, given the attention to stem cells



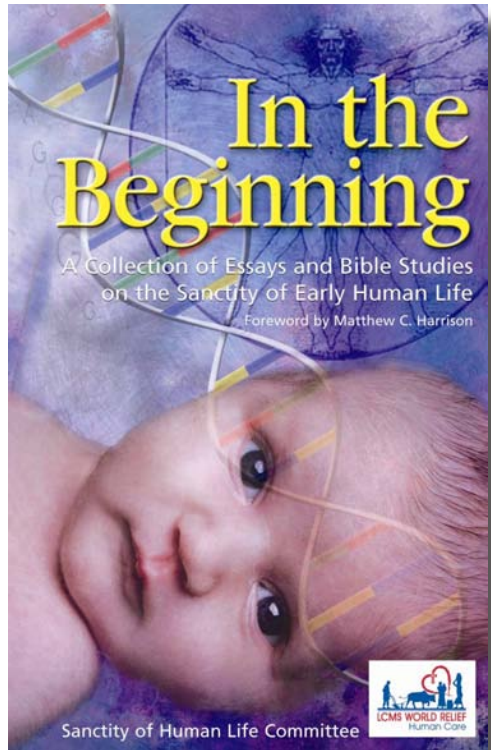
and cloning these days, that Jesus spent nine months in the womb before He was “asleep on the hay.” *Item 1005BI. \$0.07 ea.*

PRINT



Children Gathered at the Manger is an 8" x 10" black and white print, suitable for framing. Printed on heavy white matte paper. *Item 1617. \$4.00 ea.*

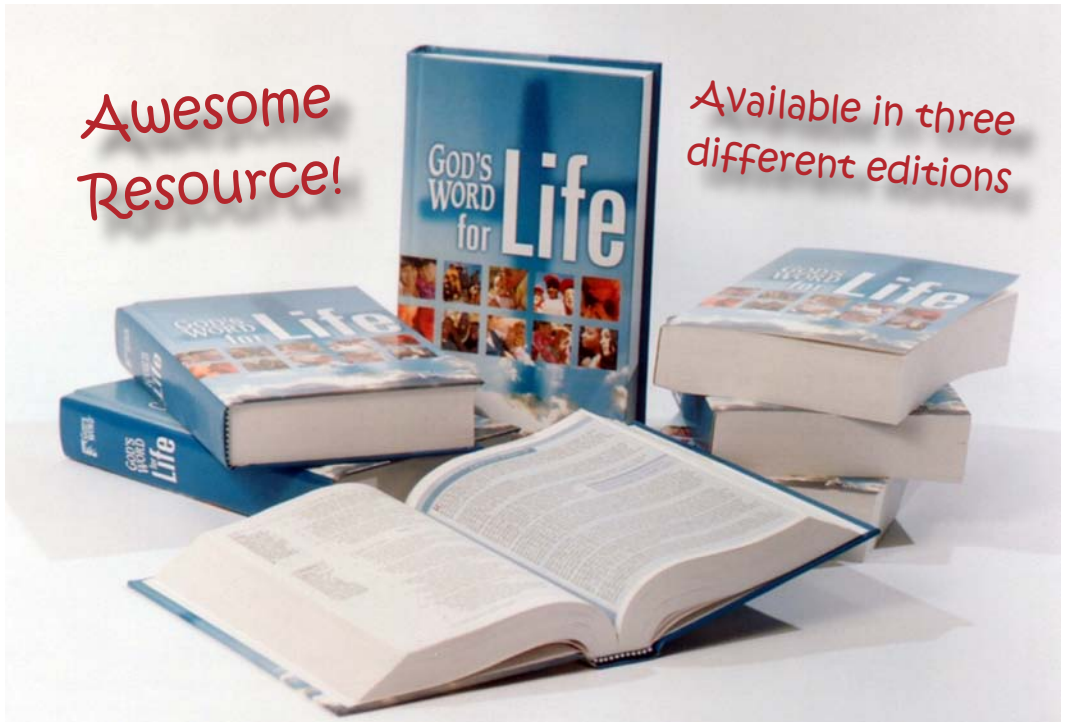
NEW BIBLE STUDY BOOKLET!



In the Beginning – A Collection of Essays and Bible Studies on the Sanctity of Early Human Life is an eight-session Bible study using essays from Lutheran writers, theologians, and medical experts on topics such as when human life begins and the ethics of stem cell research. Following each essay is a related Bible study written by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life. Essay topics include: *Creation: Made in God’s Image; Justification: Life Through His Word; Incarnation: Being Like Us in Every Way; Conception: A Medical Analysis of Early Life; Science: The Truth and Hype about Stem Cells; Defining Terms: The Importance of Vocabulary in Pursuing Ethics; Vocation: Serving God by Serving our Neighbor; God’s Two Kingdoms: Honoring Life’s Value in Our World.*

Item 1006BS. \$7.99 ea. (softcover)
 Downloadable and reproducible version: \$30.00 ea. (available through the LFL web site, see “Catalog,” then “Bioethics.”)

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www.lutheransforlife.org/gwfl.htm

"I've been reading the commentaries in the "GOD'S WORD for Life" Bible and find them outstanding! What a resource! It is such a thrill to read a Lutheran resource that is pure truth—not a shred of "political correctness" anywhere. Thank you, thank you!!!" Shirley B.

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The Heart of Marriage – Who We Are in Relationship to God

by Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer



At the heart of marriage, there is a message about who we are as human beings in relationship to God. Paul writes to the church in Ephesus, **“This mystery [called marriage] is profound and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church”** (Ephesians 5:32). The Lord is saying to us that marriage is a witness on earth of the victory by Christ that makes us one with Him. As Christ makes us one with Himself through the cross, so marriage makes us one as husband and wife through our faithfulness to each other. At a time in our society when the definition of marriage is being challenged in the courts it is important for us Christians to remember that marriage is not whatever we choose to make of it, but that it is what God has made it to be for us. There may be cultural and social changes that occur in marriages, but the heart of marriage as given by God must not change.

Marriage is like dancing! As in dance, the man must lead and the woman must follow if the dance is to be a delight to both. Marriage, where a husband leads and a wife follows is a reflection of God’s way with us. The Lord leads and we follow. In marriage, a husband is to lead as Ephesians 5:25 says, **“as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her.”** A wife is to follow her husband’s lead

as Ephesians 5:22 says, **“submit to your own husband as to the Lord.”** A husband dare not abuse his leadership and a wife dare not refuse to follow his proper lead. In marriage, it takes time to learn what it means to lead and what it means to follow, and how to do it. As with those learning to dance, it requires hard work and practice to learn good leading and good following. Learning to lead and to follow does not come easily, but as signs of improvement begin to appear, the marriage becomes more rewarding for both husband and wife.

Marriage is a gift of God to us, an act of God’s grace. If, as Christians we believe this then it is important that we work at our marriages and not allow them to deteriorate and die. We must learn that it is not love that keeps a marriage going, but the practice of daily forgiveness in marriage that results in love for each other. Love is not a feeling but a calculated commitment “for better or for worse.” When mutual forgiveness is present, love begins to grow. Where there is a willingness on the part of both husband and wife to rebuild a damaged

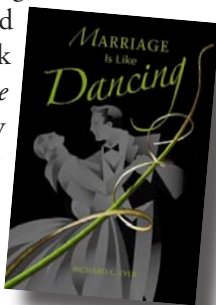


relationship in marriage, the forgiveness of sins will bring them together again by the grace of God. However, repentance in marriage does not come easily. Repentance does not begin with the “other person”; it always begins with “me.” Repentance requires honest, mutual self-evaluation in which we admit to the other person and to God, without reservation, our own sins. Once confession of wrong (sin) has been made there is no acceptable response but to forgive. Our Lord taught us to pray, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those

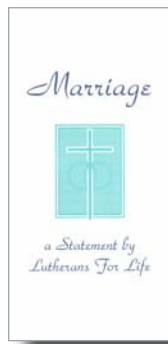
who trespass against us.” Rebuilding the relationship feeds on daily mutual confession and absolution as needed. This is the way it needs to be between spouses and between God and us.

Marriage has its good days and bad days. My wife and I have been blessed with a good marriage, in spite of the usual disagreements from time to time. We have been practicing marriage and forgiveness for more than forty years. Recently, we started dance lessons and practice dancing at home or at the dance studio several times a week. As difficult as it is to learn to dance, it is easier to dance than it is to learn how to be married. I do not know that we could have worked as hard and long or had as much success in dance or in marriage if it was not for the grace of God and the forgiveness of sins.

Because of God’s grace toward us in marriage, my wife and I have written a book titled, *Marriage Is Like Dancing*, published by Concordia Publishing House (www.cph.org; 800-325-3040) a few months ago. Although I was the primary author, the book was written with much discussion between us and it concludes with an Afterward by my wife. We give it as a gift to the Church that God’s Word might be evident in what we have learned and written.



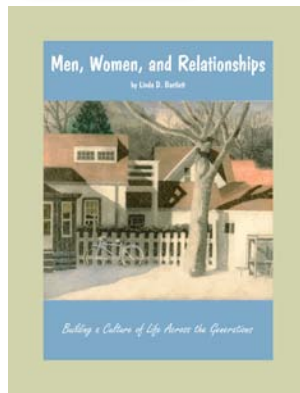
In 1998 Dr. Eyer founded the Concordia Bioethics Institute (www.cuu.edu/Academics/institutes/bioethics/index.html) and in retirement continues as Director Emeritus and Professor Emeritus (Concordia University Wisconsin). He is the author of several books: “Marriage is Like Dancing,” “They Shall See His Face,” “Holy People Holy Lives: Law and Gospel in Bioethics,” and “Pastoral Care Under the Cross: God in the Midst of Suffering,” all published by Concordia Publishing House. Dr. Eyer has spoken at a number of Lutherans For Life Conferences.



Marriage – A Statement by Lutherans For Life explains that what God intended marriage to be in the beginning, He still intends marriage to be. Jesus makes this clear in Mark 10:6-8. Brochure. Item 905T. **\$0.25 ea.**



Joseph and His Rib by Linda D. Bartlett – Mary was pregnant, but Joseph was not the father—he felt betrayed, hurt, angry. At this precarious moment in his life, Joseph had nothing to hang on to . . . nothing, that is, except the Word of the Lord. Brochure. Item 904T. **\$0.25 ea.**



Men, Women, and Relationships (Building a Culture of Life Across the Generations)

by Linda D. Bartlett – 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? This Bible study offers 12 lessons with leader’s guide and reproducible student pages. Item 901BS. **\$10.00 ea.**

The Last Chapter in the Book of Max

by Linda D. Bartlett



No, no, no! A new book of Scripture has not been discovered in an Israeli cave along the Dead Sea, nor did the Holy Spirit inspire Saint Paul to write a book named Max. But, yes! There is a book—a story, a life—named Max written by the very hand of God. Eighty-five chapters of this man's life testify to the work of those mighty hands.

In 2002, my father-in-law, Max Bartlett, was very sick. *Nocardia* (a bacteria) infected his brain. Max could do nothing but *rest in the hands of His Creator*. Miraculously, he was *rescued by the mighty hands of God*. By faith, Max clung to *the promise of hope written in blood by the hands of God*. Max knew his need for a Savior. *The hands of that Savior, Jesus Christ, were faithful to lead Max for five more years on the journey toward his heavenly home.*

The hands of God could be trusted. One week before his death, Max said to me, “We’re starting on that [last] journey you and I’ve been talking about, aren’t we?” On August 7, 2007, Max was *lifted by mighty hands that carried him home.*

Was the journey without difficulty? No. Was it the path of choice? No. Was it convenient for family members? No.

Can you imagine how the attitude of a dying man can impact those around him? Max knew he was in his final days, but that did not give him freedom to complain or demand.

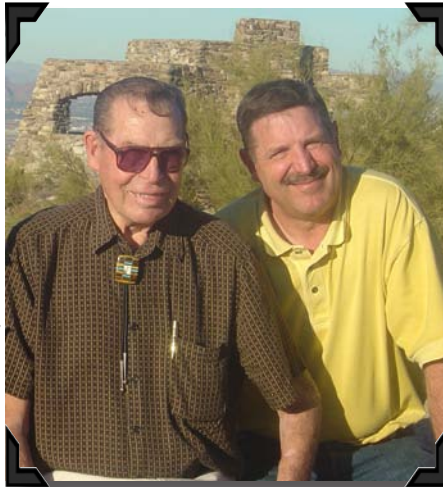
He used his freedom in Christ to think of others. He brightened the day of a tired nurse with compliments. He bragged on the skills of doctors. Before leaving the hospital for hospice at home, he invited all who could fit into his room for prayer.

Can you imagine conversations free of fear? One evening, a few days before being released from the hospital for palliative care at home, Max kept me standing by his bed until late. He wanted to talk about the hands of God at work in both our lives. Whether God wanted him to stay here with us. . . or go on before us—either was just fine with Max.

Once settled at home in his hospice bed, Max asked me, “How will I die?” I could respond, “Peacefully.” Then, I began to describe to this son of Adam and tiller of the soil how seven perfect angels would carry him to be with the Lord in a place where corn and bean fields of bright green stretch straight and tall with not a weed to be seen. Tilting his head toward my husband, his son and partner on the family farm, Max said

with a crooked grin, “I’m skeptical.” (OK, maybe I got a little carried away.)

Can you picture friends and relatives coming to “cheer” this man as he neared the finish line? One evening, Max was comforted by a fellow elder from his congregation who had come to offer encouragement. Suddenly entering into a mostly one-sided conversation, Max proclaimed with clarity and focus, “I’m ready to take my vows.” My father-in-law was not Lutheran, but I was reminded of my own liturgical response in the Divine Service: “I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people, in the courts of



Max Bartlett with his son, Paul, at Phoenix, Arizona, in February.

the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem." Or, perhaps Max was thinking of the vows to be taken when Jesus comes for His bride, the Church.

Can you visualize Max's own living room where his wife and three sons were able to serve him? After the funeral, my husband said to me, "I'm not grieving in the way I thought I might." I wondered aloud. "Is it possible you've found peace in knowing that you and your father not only worked side-by-side and enjoyed life side-by-side, but that you were also at his side walking his last steps toward heaven?" "Well," he whispered, "the privilege was mine."

Can you grasp the significance of countless mentoring moments? The hands of God shaped an "older" vessel in ways that would be of help to this "younger" vessel. Max, like many others, didn't see himself as a mentor. But his responses to various challenges and circumstances did, indeed, instruct me in one way or another.

Max was famous for saying, "It's destiny!" Like King David, I think Max knew he could enjoy his lot in life because God is the One who *marked out boundary lines for him in pleasant places*. (Psalm 16:5-6) God does not take pleasure in evil. Instead, He gives us good counsel and makes the path of life known to us. I believe that Max prayed every night something like this: *O Lord, I fall asleep in peace the moment I lie down because You are the only one who enables me to live securely*. (Psalm 4:8) In the morning, I believe that Max started his day with words similar to these: *I lay my needs before You God . . . and wait. Lead me in Your righteousness. Make Your way smooth in front of me. I will enter Your house because of Your great mercy*. (Psalm 5:3-8) Such a prayer is true! It should be my prayer and yours.

Max had confidence in knowing he was made by the hands of God—and that *every day of his life was recorded in His book before any one of them began*. (Psalm 139:16) It's true. The life of Max was precious, not because of

anything he did, but because he was hand-made by God! Max was precious because his very life was purchased and won by the blood of Jesus Christ! God knew everything about Max. No matter where he traveled, God was already there. No matter what situation Max found himself in, God was already there. The God in whom Max put his trust is the God of amazement. This is the God who loves you and me—and knows everything about us.

Max was a pitiful man who, like King David, cried out to the Lord every time he stumbled or was afraid. The Lord hears those who call out to Him. In fact, we are told that *the angel of the Lord [makes] camp around those who fear Him, and He rescues them*. (Psalm 34:4-7) It's true. Max acknowledged he was a poor man—a poor, miserable sinner. He knew that, without Jesus Christ, he was nothing. Without Jesus, you and I are nothing. But with Jesus, we are everything! We are forgiven sinners and people of hope!

In the wee morning hours of August 7, as Max was taking his last breaths here on earth, there was a storm with loud thunder and sharp lightening. That storm is significant to me. I think Satan fights God for our souls—right until our last moment in this world. At almost the same time the storm subsided, Max was delivered to God—safe and victorious!

My father-in-law never raised sheep on his farm; nevertheless, I believe the last chapter of the book of Max reads: **"I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."** (John 10:9-11 NIV). It's true. This was Max's confidence.

It is our confidence!

Linda Bartlett is the founder of the mentoring ministry called Titus 2 for Life: www.titus2-4life.org. See page 19 for resources by Linda. Many more can be found at the Lutherans For Life web site.

End-of-Life Consultation Service



by *Dennis Di Mauro*

On September 18, United Church of Christ minister Kristi Denham announced that a new organization of clergy called the End-of-Life Consultation Service (ELCS) had been created that would be devoted to ministering to critically ill medical patients.¹ She said this organization would “help terminal patients access hospice, pain treatment, and other excellent end of life care.”²

At first glance, the ELCS sounds like a charitable Christian group devoted to helping the sick and suffering, or another new ministry devoted to providing spiritual assurance to the gravely ill. Well, not exactly. You see, what makes this organization different from many others is that the ELCS’s main purpose is to assist medical patients in planning their own deaths and one of the options offered by the ELCS includes committing suicide.

The ELCS plans to have an 800 hotline which would provide potential callers with “volunteers [who would] visit patients and families in the home, and together they [could] identify a path to peaceful dying, well-suited to an individual’s illness and circumstances.”³ After the consultation the clients would then be free to “obtain and self-administer the means” of killing themselves.⁴

Rev. Denham also noted that the creation of the ELCS was precipitated by the failure of the California Compassionate Choices Act (AB374)—an act similar to Oregon’s assisted suicide law—to pass through the California state legislature. This failure to legalize physician-assisted suicide was not attributed to many legislators’ reluctance to open the door to medically-endorsed killing, but instead was simply chalked up by Rev. Denham to the legislature’s “playing politics.”

As disturbing as the creation of the ELCS is, with its effort to wrap physician–assisted suicide up in clerical attire, its methods are really nothing new. Indeed, one cannot fail to see the parallel between the creation of the ELCS and the effort forty years ago by activist clergymen and women to legalize abortion.

Much of this early Christian support for the legalization of abortion was driven by an organization called the Clergy Consultation Service (CCS) (name sound familiar?) which was started by the Rev. Howard Moody, an American Baptist minister from New York.⁵ In 1967 this organization, which consisted of a group of twenty-one Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis,⁶ began providing a referral service for women seeking illegal abortions. It seems that the ordained members of the CCS, much like the ELCS today, were deeply frustrated by the inability of state legislatures to change existing abortion laws, and so they took the law into their own hands. The CCS grew quickly, becoming active in twenty states before the *Roe v. Wade* decision.⁷ And if anyone thinks that the similarities between the ELCS and the CCS is just a coincidence, one only needs to refer back to Rev. Denham’s statement in which she expresses her pride in being associated with “Rev. Moody, who has shown how clergy and caring advocates can change the law to meet current social needs through personal action.”⁸

Well, we know how the story ended forty years ago: in 1973 the US Supreme Court moved to legalize abortion for any reason in the first three months of pregnancy, and for “health” reasons (which was interpreted by the courts to include any type of psychological distress) in the last six months of gestation.

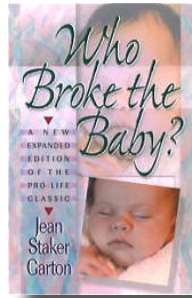
Dr. Jean Garton, in her classic pro-life book, *Who Broke the Baby*, noted that the legalization of abortion opened the door to a dangerous and destructive “new ethic.”

“In the acceptance of abortion-on-demand, there occurs a subtle but

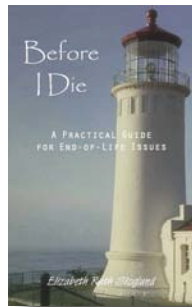
profound shift in the attitude of society toward all people who are unwanted, imperfect, and dependent. The same forces involved in legalizing abortion, while claiming to alleviate the suffering of a woman with an unwanted pregnancy, are the same forces involved in the promotion of infanticide and *euthanasia*, claiming to want to eliminate the suffering of the *handicapped, sick, and senile*. When we choose to offer death as an alternative to suffering, the list of those who qualify under 'the new ethic' expands greatly. [italics mine]"⁹

On September 18th, the prognostications of Dr. Garton became a new and deeply sinful reality. The only question remains as to how our nation's churches will react to this new organization. Will they, as was done in the 1960s and 1970s, simply bury their heads in the sand, preferring to involve themselves instead in preparations for the upcoming advent tea? Or will they publicly denounce this new organization which elevates death as a virtue and attempts to legitimize suicide by baptizing it in the name of Jesus Christ. My prayer is that they will choose the latter.

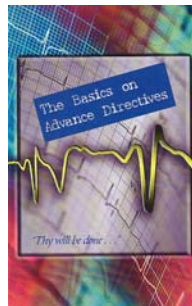
Dennis Di Mauro is President of Northern Virginia Lutherans for Life, Secretary of the National Pro-Life Religious Council (www.nprcouncil.org), and a doctoral student in Church History at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. An excerpt of this article was originally printed at FirstThings.com.



Who Broke The Baby
by Dr. Jean Garton. If you have always known that abortion is wrong, but wanted help in expressing it, this book is for you! This best seller provides solid responses to the slogans used to promote abortion. 141 pages. Paperback. *Item 103B. \$6.50 ea.*



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 that will help a Christian answer that question, "Is it proper for a Christian to have a Living Will?" *Item 807B. \$0.25 ea.*



A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions shares spiritual insight into end-of-life issues by Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer who offers guidance in Christian decision-making and in being a faithful witness to God's presence in your life. *Item 801R. \$0.25 ea.*

¹ "While California Legislators Play Politics with Compassionate Choices Act, End of Life Consultation to Help Terminally Ill is Launched" from the California Progress Report web site, (CA: California Progress Report, 9/18/07 [10/8/07] available at www.californiaprogressreport.com/2007/09/while_californi_11.html).

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ James Risen and Judy Thomas, *Wrath of Angels: The American Abortion War*. (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 20.

⁶ Ibid., 20.

⁷ J. Christopher Soper, *Evangelical Christianity in the United States and Great Britain*. (New York: New York University Press, 1994), 107.

⁸ "While California Legislators Play Politics with Compassionate Choices Act, End of Life Consultation to Help Terminally Ill is Launched" from the California Progress Report web site, (CA: California Progress Report, 9/18/07 [cited 10/8/07] available at www.californiaprogressreport.com/2007/09/while_californi_11.html).

⁹ Jean Garton, *Who Broke The Baby*, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1998), 130.

He Has No Hands

by Karen L. Frohwein
Director of Development



“He has no hands.” That statement seems a bit out of place in this issue of *LifeDate* with our focus on “In the Hand of God.” We can certainly find many references in the Bible to God’s hands, the hands that create, redeem, and sustain life. When we talk about our incarnate Savior, it’s important to remember he has physical hands, just like us. Through those hands came our salvation. No doubt about it, the value of life comes from the hand of God.

So, when the choir sings “He has no hands . . . no feet . . . no voice . . .” are they a bit “off key”? Not at all! While the hands of God give us His good and gracious gifts, we are called to use our hands and the gifts He gives us to His glory. Our hands are not those pierced on the cross for our salvation, but we can be the hands of God in service to others.

Here at Lutherans For Life, we prayerfully ask God to use us as His hands, feet, and voice on the life issues. Through written materials and DVDs, through teaching and preaching, through speaking and radio interviews thousands and thousands of people from pre-schoolers to seminarians to the elderly have heard about the value God gives to their lives. It’s made a difference! It’s changed and saved lives!

We humbly thank the Lord for allowing us to serve Him this past year. By the Lord’s will, LFL will continue to apply His Word to these difficult issues—and we look forward to doing it in brand new and exciting ways in 2008! In the coming months, you will be hearing a lot about two exciting projects at Lutherans For Life: **Teaching For Life**, our graded curriculum for use in Lutheran schools, and **Renewal For Life**, a comprehensive initiative meant to renew awareness among all

Lutherans that life issues are spiritual issues to which the Scriptures speak.

In order for Lutherans For Life to not just continue what we have been doing, but also move forward to reach even more people with the Gospel of Life, we need more hands! We need hands in service, hands in prayer, and hands that give of the bounty they have been given to support this work.

Would you be willing to extend a hand to someone struggling with a life issue by partnering with Lutherans For Life? Is there a certain area of the ministry that is of particular interest to you? Perhaps you can use your hands at the local or state level. Or, perhaps you could support a need at the national office with a monetary gift.

On the next page of *LifeDate*, you will see something new, an LFL “Wish List.” This is only a sampling of the projects that are funded through your gifts to Lutherans For Life. Perhaps you would like to designate a gift to help with one of these projects, or allow us to apply your gift to the area where there is the greatest need at this time.

Are you looking for a way to honor someone important in your life this Christmas season? You might consider a donation in honor or memory of a family member or friend. If you include their name and address, we will send a personal note (with donation amount excluded) to the person you have chosen to honor letting them know of your gift.

“He has no hands.” Certainly, we know that God’s hands create, redeem and hold human life. It is because of His hand that we value life. As members of His body, the Church, we are called to be His hands to others as we speak up for the life His hands create. We can be God’s hands as we reach out with the Gospel to those who have made mistakes. Our hand can be His hand of hope to those hurting and struggling. And yes, our hands can give because of what He has given us so that God’s “For Life” message can reach even more people looking for hope and forgiveness.

Maybe you have never heard the choir anthem *He Has No Hands*, but these words from *Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying* may be familiar:

*Let none hear you idly saying,
 "There is nothing I can do,"
 While the multitudes are dying,
 and the Master calls for you.
 Take the task He gives you gladly,
 Let His work your pleasure be;
 Answer quickly when He calleth,
 "Here am I. Send me, send me!"*

(LSB 826, v. 4)

As you thank the Lord for the work of His hands, look at your hands. May they be a reflection of the hand of God as you find ways to reach out to others with God's Word of Life.



LFL received matching funds as a result of the gifts of our generous supporters. In response to the fall matching gift appeal, LFL was blessed with over \$37,000 in gifts and an additional \$30,000 was received from LCMS Life Ministries as a matching gift. We are so thankful for your gifts and our partnership with Life Ministries/LCMS World Relief and Human Care. By offering to match the gifts of our donors and other joint efforts, more Lutherans are making the connection between God's Word of Life and the life issues they face in their families, churches, and communities. Pictured above is Maggie Karner, Life Ministries director, and Dr. Lamb, executive director of LFL.

Lutherans For Life "Wish List"

Would you or someone you know be interested in supporting a special LFL project? Here are some opportunities that might be of interest:

1st printing of new resources: \$7500.

LFL continues to produce full-color resources for use in churches, schools, and home. New materials are waiting to be printed!

2008 Convention display and travel expenses: \$920 average per conference.

Next year LFL will display at 13 national conventions. Would you or your group be interested in adopting a convention? Call me for a list!

New heating and cooling units for the Life Center: \$5000 per unit.

Our present heating and cooling units are over 25 years old and repair costs keep rising. It is time to think about replacing the 5 units in the building.

LifeDate printing and mailing costs: \$14,200 per issue.

Our #1 resource reaching over 30,000 homes, churches, and organizations every quarter.

Update computers: \$750 each. Update software: \$2000 (total).

While not all our computers need to be replaced, updating computers and Windows software is an ongoing need in order for us to work efficiently and effectively convey the For Life message of the Gospel.

Learn more about these or other opportunities to support the ministry of Lutherans For Life by contacting Karen Frohwein at:

888-364-LIFE

kfrohwein@lutheransforlife.org

In the Hand of God – Life Sunday 2008

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



God sure has His hands in things! The Scriptures talk about God’s hands being involved in our lives over 300 times. This year’s Life Sunday materials—**see the flyer in the center of LifeDate**—focus upon those hands and our Trinitarian theology.

God created us with His hands. He redeemed us with His hands nailed to a cross. He calls us in the waters of baptism and holds us in His hands. The value of human life comes from our “hands-on” God. Our theology focuses, not upon the work of our hands, but upon what God’s hands have done that give this value.

This has powerful and positive implications for the life issues. I pray that the 2008 Life Sunday materials will help your congregation apply our Trinitarian theology to the lives of God’s people facing difficult issues.

The “official” Life Sunday is January 20, 2008. However, our materials may be used at any time during the year. Here is a partial list of what is available:

- *In the Hand of God* bulletin insert
- *Just For Kids XV* bulletin insert
- *The Handiwork of God* children’s message
- *In the Hand of God—A Foundational For Life Bible Study*
- Five new (downloadable) sermons:

God in Hand or in God’s Hand?, based on Job 12:4-10. My sermon points out the contrast in the text between those who carry their god in their hands and God, who has all things in His hand—this is our

Triune God who brings value to every life with His hands.

Why a Womb? based on Isaiah 49:1-6. If you were God, why enter the world through a womb? In this sermon, I present the thesis that the Messiah would be called from the womb to identify with, and bring salvation for, all humanity.

Jesus’ Big Hands of Blessing, based on Matthew 18:13-15. Rev. Dr. Glenn Nielsen uses the imagery of a stained glass window (shown on CD) to show the blessings that come from God’s hands.

In the Hand of God based on Job 12:10. Rev. Dr. Arthur Just develops the three points highlighted on the bulletin insert—He creates life with His hands, He redeemed life with His hands, He calls us and holds us with His hands.

All Life is in God’s Hand, based on Job 12:10. Rev. Tom Aadland asks: “Where do we turn when faced with problems in today’s world? . . . Come and see on whom Job puts his trust and hope . . . Job reminds us that we are in the hand of God and that hand belongs to a loving God. We are reminded that God showed us His love by sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the penalty for our sins. We are reminded that the very hands that hold us are the very hands that were pierced for our transgressions.

LFL designed these materials to compliment one another. We encourage using as many as possible to help people connect our Trinitarian theology to the life issues. (Additional Life Sunday flyers are available on request—quantities are limited.)

In the Hand of God Life Sunday 2008

But ask the beasts, and they will teach you;

the birds of the heavens,
and they will tell you;
or the bushes of the earth,
and they will teach you;
and the fish of the sea
will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?

In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.

Job 12:7-10

Bulletin Inserts
Bible Studies
Worship Service Formats
Children's Message
Sermons and more!
www.lutheransforlife.org

Question:

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



Answer:
3,526

Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute.

Lutherans For Life (LFL), a pan-Lutheran, pro-life educational ministry, 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 bachelor's 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 is required.

Send resume, by January 31, 2008, to: Lutherans For Life, 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada, IA 50201-2774; Telephone: 888-364-5433; FAX: 515-382-3020; E-mail: info@lutheransforlife.org.

For those who have had an abortion . . .
there is a word of hope!

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147).



Please call Word of Hope, toll-free,
at 888-217-8679 or visit
www.word-of-hope.org.

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 6 – The Epiphany of Our Lord

The thick darkness of sin fell upon us all. (Isaiah 60:2) Perhaps more than anyone else, those who have sinned against life can understand the oppressive nature of this darkness. Perhaps more than anyone else, they need to hear “Arise, shine, for your light has come” (60:1) applied to them and their sin. That’s the Epiphany message! The Christ Child came to shine upon *all* sinners!

January 13 – The Baptism of our Lord

Here’s a thought to add to the many you will have as you mediate over today’s readings: A compelling reason to oppose abortion is an eternal one, that these children might be baptized.

January 20 – 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

Many congregations across the country will be observing Sanctity of Human Life Sunday today. Lutherans For Life offers materials to help, including a sermon based on today’s Old Testament reading from Isaiah 49:1-7. The purpose of these *Life Thoughts*, of course, is to help apply God’s “For Life” message at a variety of times throughout the year.

January 27 – 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

The United States continues to dwell, quite literally, in the “shadow of death” (Matthew 4:16). Indeed, we have been deceived into

thinking the shadow is light and seek to solve the problems of human beings through the death of human beings. But the shadow only lengthens. Christians who have “seen a great light” in Jesus Christ, have great opportunity in our culture to let that light shine and push back the shadow.

February 3 – The Transfiguration of our Lord

“Listen to him,” the Father said of His Son (Matthew 17:5). Recalling the Transfiguration, Peter echoes this thought concerning the prophetic word, “to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place” (2 Peter 1:19). Christians who think the Church should be silent when it comes to the darkness of abortion need to “pay attention.” We are to illumine the darkness with the light of Christ.

February 10 – 1st Sunday in Lent

“It is written” (Matthew 4:4,7,10). Only the Word of Christ can defeat the devil and the god of death to which he points us. “Be gone Satan!” (4:10).

February 17 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

God loves life! (John 3:16)

February 24 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

Jesus confronted the woman at the well with her sin (John 4:16-18). Jesus presented Himself to this woman as her Savior (4:25-26). God’s people must be confronted with the horrible reality of the sin of abortion. Those who have committed this sin and are crushed with repentant hearts, need Jesus presented to them as their Savior.



March 2 – 4th Sunday in Lent

The story of Jesus healing the man born blind in John 9 offers great comfort and hope to God’s people. It is not the hope of healing. It is the certain hope that the “works of God” (9:3) are displayed in the midst of our trials. Christ was exalted as He worked in this blind man’s life. Christ can exalt Himself and bring purpose to any life under any conditions.

March 9 – 5th Sunday in Lent

Through the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11, Jesus shows He has the power over death. He is “the resurrection and the life” (11:25). He controls life and death. Like Martha, we trust in Him as the Son of God no matter how bleak our circumstances seem.

March 16 – Palm Sunday

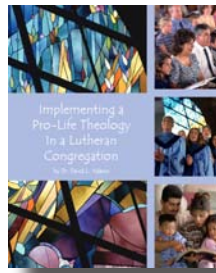
Jesus came into Jerusalem as a King. (John 12:13-15) He would leave as a criminal condemned to crucifixion. Those who see more glory in the latter than the former, understand how Christ can be glorified in all things.

March 23 – The Resurrection of our Lord

In a world where the way of death so often seems to hold sway over the way of life, it is good to be reminded again on this glorious day that LIFE WINS!

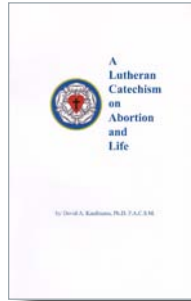
March 30 – 2nd Sunday of Easter

Easter hope lies not in some good man who taught of peace and love. Easter hope lies not in some man who died for a good cause. Easter hope lies not in some man who was raised from the dead. Easter hope lies in the words of Thomas, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). That makes Easter hope a sure and certain hope!



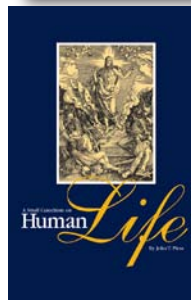
In Implementing a Pro-Life Theology in a Lutheran Congregation,

Dr. David L. Adams shares a plan to help put pro-life convictions into action by teaching the faith, caring for people in need, and witnessing to the teachings of God’s Word. *Item 208B. \$0.75 ea.*



A Lutheran Catechism on Abortion and Life

provides a Q & A primer on abortion and life in the format of *Luther’s Small Catechism*. *Item 104B. \$1.00 ea.*



A Small Catechism on Human Life

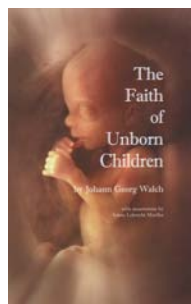
examines life issues through the biblical eyeglasses of *Luther’s Small Catechism*. Thorough, but lay-friendly; each chapter is followed by thoughtful discussion questions and

Bible references. Available in a beautiful hardback edition or a smaller version edited for younger readers!

Adult version: *Item 213B. \$14.99 ea.*

Youth version (sold in packs of 10):

Item 214B. \$9.99 ea.



The Faith of Unborn Children,

by Johann Georg Walch, is a witness to the value of children before birth and a call for a return to that historic Christian concern for the preservation of such valuable life.

Item 211B. \$4.95 ea.

Being God's Hands

by Diane E. Schroeder
National LFL President



What a difference it makes to Christians to know that they are in the hand of God. This knowledge gives us identity, value, strength, comfort, and trust. It changes how we think about ourselves and the people around us and it influences our behavior.

When trouble, pain, or loss come, as they must, we know that we are in the hand of God. One of the memories most parents have is a handprint of their child done with paint or clay when they were little. I'm sure your household has many of them, as does mine. Why do we have our kids make handprints when they are small? When times get tough as they grow, as a teenager, in college, or whatever, we as parents can remember when they were small and trusted us implicitly.

When times get tough in our lives we can remember what God's hands did for us.

God's hands formed us in the womb. We are individually-unique creations, handmade, one-of-a-kind, known by God before all eternity.

God's hands redeemed us. We can look at the hands of Christ bloodied with nail holes and remember we are loved so much that God sacrificed His only son for us.

When times get tough we know God is holding us by the hand. We know that we are safe and He will lead us away from danger.

When crushed by life's problems—an unplanned pregnancy in our family or caring for elderly parents—we trust in God's promises knowing that He is the God of life and life is in His hands, not ours.

But there's more. We are in God's hands

so we can be the hand of God for others.

When we reach out with hands of compassion to the pregnant teen and her baby with love and support, we are the hands of God. When we teach our children to trust the Lord of life even when they make bad decisions, we are the hands of God. When we care for rather than kill the elderly, ill, or handicapped, we are the hands of God. That's what Lutherans For Life is all about—helping Christians connect, through either our words or actions, biblical truth to life issues. When that happens, lives are changed.

Lives such as Sally, a woman who had an abortion years ago and struggles with the extreme guilt. Through the efforts of some LFLers Sally's pastor preached his first pro-life sermon last January. Sally wrote her pastor the following letter:



“Where can I begin to thank you? I attended church on January 21. As usual I was forcing myself to go. I must admit once again I had been feeling like the ultimate sinner as I have felt most of my life since my abortion. I want to just tell you that your sermon changed my life. With all my heart I want to move on with my life. I have always felt like God should punish me and many times I think He has for my terrible choices. I can't begin to tell you how I have tried to destroy myself with risky behavior. I finally feel safe somewhere thanks to the truth you shared in your sermon. We need someone to speak for us. God bless you.”

Or Kara, pregnant and scheduled for an abortion, who ran across *LifeDate* and read an article about abortion risks for teenagers:

“I just want to thank you for the magazine. I know God reached out to me. I am not going to hurt my baby. I can not believe how close I came to doing something I would regret for the rest of my life. I am going to consider adoption.”

Or Pastor Jim:

“I am convinced that your *Better Off Dead?* article along with *Ventilators, Feeding Tubes, and Other End-of-Life Questions* and *Before I Die, a Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues* were primarily responsible for a family that I am serving to reverse their decision to remove the feeding tube from their 80-year-old father and husband who suffered a stroke 5 weeks ago following surgery. My face-to-face conversation with them made them only angry at me. I think they believed I was questioning their faith. After all, Dad wouldn't want to live like this. On Tuesday they pulled the feeding tube but kept the trach. Even at this time Fred was still responding with nods. I visited with the family on Thursday and asked them to consider reversing their action. They had set their course and indicated that they were not going to change their minds. I asked them to do me the favor of simply reading the three documents listed above. I rejoiced when I entered Fred's room on Saturday and found that nutrition had been re-established. Thank you so much for the wonderful materials that helped this family to see how they might honor Christ in their decision regarding their father's life.”

So LFLers, thank you for accepting the responsibility to be God's hands by supporting the ministry of Lutherans For Life through your gifts, your words, and your actions!

Our Mission . . . To witness to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God. LFL has 15 state federations, 151 local chapters, and 198 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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