



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

When Almost Everything Changes

**How do we as
Christians act and
react to a culture
that has abandoned
moral standards that
were in place only a
few years ago?**

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Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
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Keep the Change

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

“**T**here is nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9b). The sun rises, the earth turns, and people sin. Sun sets, clouds come, we rinse and repeat. As fond as we are of fantasizing that former means better, previous generations were no less evil than present ones, and our youth was just as wicked as today’s kids are. Our culture may fancy itself particularly creative, but we’re only rearranging deck chairs and recycling retired flavors. Greeks aborted and euthanized millennia ago, and Mesopotamians experimented with sexuality ages before. As Lutherans have sung for centuries,

All mankind fell in Adam’s fall; One common sin infects us all. From one to all the curse descends, And over all God’s wrath impends. (LSB 562)

The real problem isn’t novel crimes but corrupt nature. It’s not that these original sins haven’t been around long, but that original sin has been around all along.

In fact, as bad as it is that nothing’s changed, nothing’s better than the fact that nothing changes. The Almighty Maker remains more changeless than anything else:

“For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6).

“[I]f we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself” (2 Timothy 2:13).

“But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children” (Psalm 103:17).

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change” (James 1:17).

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father; There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not; As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be. (LSB 809)

I AM. Alpha and Omega. He was, and is, and is to come. It is finished. Once for all. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. We cannot be uncreated, unforgiven, unaccepted, unreconciled, unbaptized, unjustified, or uncalled any more than Jesus can be unborn, uncrucified, or unresurrected. His rising again and ascending into heaven ensures that His cross’s atonement will align and assimilate everything, and sooner rather than later.

Prayer: O God, You make the minds of Your faithful to be of one will. Grant that we may love what You have commanded and desire what You have promised, that among the many changes of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are found; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Jean Garton – “Where There Is Life, There Is Hope”

by Dave Andrusko

Pro-life heroine Jean Garton, author of the pro-life classic *Who Broke the Baby?* reminded 2016 NRLC Prayer Breakfast attendees, “the greatest friend of truth is time” and congratulated pro-lifers for an unflagging devotion to the cause of life.

Garton spoke of historical examples where products were advertised as uniquely beneficial only to be shown to be uniquely detrimental to people’s health over time. So, too, with abortion, sold as a “solution” to a crisis pregnancy.

Mrs. Garton—shown here with Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ)—delighted the audience with anecdotes from her own family, demonstrating that while adults can pretend not to know the unborn is one of us, children know different. Indeed, the origin of the title of Garton’s memorable book goes back to when her then-three-year-old son walked into a room where Jean was reviewing slides of aborted babies. He asked, “Mommy, who broke the baby?”

She talked of the famous National Prayer Breakfast when Mother Teresa spoke truth to power—to an audience that included members of the pro-abortion Clinton administration. The tiny nun said, “We are carved in the palm of His Hand, and the unborn child has been carved in the Hand of God from conception.”

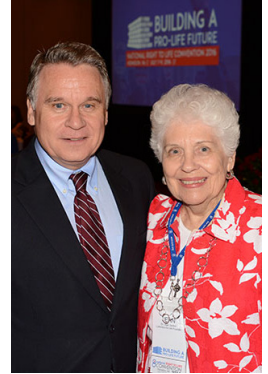
Garton said, “We, too, have the opportunity to display that same moral courage Mother Teresa did when we vote this November.” The election “provides an opportunity to determine who will appoint the next Supreme Court Justices.”

She reminded us, “If unborn children are to be protected from death by abortion; if newborn handicapped children are to be protected from death by infanticide; if the elderly, the ‘non-productive,’ the dependent are to be protected from death by euthanasia; and if the sanctity of life is to be affirmed and protected, then our voice is essential.”

Garton concluded with a story of a man who asked her why she did what she did. She responded with answers we all might offer up: she’s pro-life, abortion corrupts the whole culture even as it injures and maims women and men, and so forth.

Then when he repeated the question, Jean understood what he was really asking: why was she personally traveling when she is nearly 88 to give speeches hundreds and thousands of miles from home and after devoting 47 years of her life to our movement.

“I am always fishing for brothers and sisters in the faith that we might strengthen one another and share our joy in the Lord,” she explained. And because “In the pro-life movement, I have the opportunity to meet the finest people throughout the world.” And finally, Jean said, “I do what I do because I cannot not do it.” We have been called to be salt and light by Jesus Himself, she reminded us, and “I’ve learned from Jesus that Christianity is not a spectator sport.”



Dr. Jean Garton was the first president of LFL and is a keynote speaker at the 2016 LFL National Conference. (See pages 27-30.) The article is from National Right to Life News Today, 7/8/16. Used by permission.



For those who have had an abortion—there is a **Word of Hope** for broken hearts. Call 888-217-8679 or go to www.word-of-hope.org. **Word of Hope** is confidential and caring. **Word of Hope** is a ministry of Lutherans For Life.

JOIN US FOR A LIFE TEAM LEADER CONFERENCE CALL!

SAVE THE DATES FOR 2016 LEADER CALLS: October 18 and December 20. This is a one-hour call to give For Life leaders “strength for their journey.” The call will be led by Pastor Doug Merkey and will include a biblical devotional, leadership coaching, idea sharing, and prayer. Find out more at this link:



www.lutheransforlife.org/about/life-chapters-and-life-teams

AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWAL OF YOUR BILLS—AND LFL, TOO?

There are some things for which it probably just makes more sense to pay via automatic withdrawal. If this is good enough for a mortgage payment, how about your gift to **Lutherans For Life**? Doing so is easy enough. Just go to www.lutheransforlife.org and click “Give.” Then look for “**Automatic Monthly Debit from Your Checking or Savings Account (ACH)**.” Right below this is the link: Download ACH Contribution Form. Click on that and follow the instructions, and your automatic gift withdrawal will be in place. If you have any questions or need help, feel free to contact our office at 888.364.LIFE or info@lutheransforlife.org. Many thanks in Christ! – *John Hawkins*



Owen's Mission - Honoring Jesus by presenting a set of Touch of Life fetal models to every Lutheran elementary and high school in the country. Over 41,000 students have now heard about Owen's Mission! www.lutheransforlife.org/about/owens-mission

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Where to Start When Adoption Is Tugging at Your Heart

by Kim Laube, B.A.

There are many important aspects to adoption, but there is nothing more important than praying for God's guidance in the decisions ahead. Ask God to provide wisdom, courage, and clarity for you and protection for the children in need.

Discussing the possibility of adoption with your spouse is a natural next step for many. It is critical to be patient and allow the necessary time for your spouse to give proper consideration. For some, the process may include a time of grieving the loss of your own fertility.

Researching and exploring adoption possibilities together will allow for many discussion opportunities where you are able to express your fears, learn to lean on each other, and share your excitement for the future.

Here are some basic adoption options to research and consider.

Domestic Infant Adoption can involve an adoption agency or sometimes only an attorney. A good place to start is getting a list of *licensed* child-placing agencies in your state from your state's human services department.

Domestic infant adoption includes the possibility of being involved with the child even before he or she is born, relationships with the birth parent(s), being involved with the birth process, and bonding with the child from birth.

Risks involved include a birth parent's *change of heart*. Revocation laws vary greatly state by state. There is a path to permanency that must be followed in each state, and you will likely feel vulnerable during the process.

The costs for domestic infant adoption can vary widely; again, costs are largely based on the laws in the state. Some states allow for birth-parent expenses to be paid throughout the pregnancy, but other states don't allow for adoptive parents to pay any expenses at all.

Tips include avoiding unlicensed facilitators of adoption—especially if your state allows for unlimited birth-parent expenses to be paid. States are beginning to trend toward outlawing unlicensed facilitators, but depending on where you live, it's possible that all the agencies you see on the internet might not truly be licensed in your state.

Older Child Adoption through Domestic Foster Care is also governed by each state individually, but, overall, you can expect a few things to be true. The majority of children in state care were removed for reasons of neglect, but some have also suffered



abuse as well. The goals of the state will likely be reunification of the birth family when possible, meaning the child may not stay in your care.

The costs are very minimal financially, but there is time investment for the educational programs that prepare you to become foster and pre-adoptive parents.

Risks include caring for children who may not be in your care permanently and helping children through the trauma of losing their birth family and healing from that loss.

International Adoption focuses most often on the thousands of children in orphanages and foster care outside of the United States. Some countries belong to the Hague Convention and some do not. The Hague Convention is an international agreement to establish safeguards for intercountry adoption. It is important to determine if the country is a Hague Convention Country in order to select an appropriately accredited agency. Lists of Hague Convention Countries and appropriately accredited agencies can be found at <https://travel.state.gov/content/adoptionsabroad/en.html>.

Decisions that lie ahead include selecting a country, age and gender of the child, and an agency to assist you. Risks involved include country policies and practices changing which your agency will have no authority over and parenting children who have come from institutional care, which can include difficulties in attachment and associated behaviors.

Costs for international adoption vary greatly by country and by agency.

Embryo Adoption, also known as Embryo Rescue, involves accepting embryos of another couple who created them through *in vitro* fertilization but no longer intend to implant or carry them to birth for various reasons.

Embryo Adoption *legally speaking* is not an adoption but rather is a *legal transfer of property*—though, of course, we as Christians would never settle for referring to a fellow human being in such terms—where the genetic family (donating) cannot accept any payment from the receiving family (adopting). Costs are associated with the social and legal work and medical procedures involved.

Risks include implanted embryos not resulting in pregnancy. Commonly, however, there is more than one embryo in the property transfer, so an additional attempt for pregnancy is possible in some cases.

Frozen embryos whose genetic family has determined not to implant them are extremely vulnerable. Many will be thawed and discarded. Their only chance at birth may be an adopting family. *Frozen embryos are not merely “potential life” but rather life with potential.*

God calls us all to support widows and orphans, but that certainly does not mean every person is equipped to adopt a child. You can support a child in need without becoming his or her parent. Consider sponsoring a child overseas, going on a short-term mission trip to an orphanage, or financially supporting couples who adopt children through adoption grant-giving organizations. There are many ways to become involved.

Kim Laube, B.A., is director of pregnancy counseling and adoption at Lutheran Family Service in Urbandale, Iowa. www.LFSiowa.org

Seven Quick Specifics about Christian Citizenship

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

The Supreme Court’s recent decisions leave Christians reeling. Presidential policies appear to target our freedom to act according to conscience. Important elections are approaching. Culture’s “progress” pressures our relationships and our core beliefs. Should we fight back and take over society or step back and let society overtake itself? We don’t have to attempt either! The Gospel of Jesus Christ invites and enables us to neither attack nor abandon, but engage. Here are seven quick specifics of exercising Christian citizenship:

1. Jesus rules both Church and world.

Jesus is Lord—period! His dying and rising have exalted Him above all places and ascended Him over all people. This God of ours has purchased the whole universe for His own. Incarnate King of hearts is also King of kings. Atoning Lord of lives is also Lord of lords. Risen and forgiving Judge of living and dead has history and eternity under His feet. The good and gracious will of God is done around the world as it is across the heavens, apart from either our cooperation or request. Civil authorities serve as His ambassadors, and God establishes every government as His instrument. In spite of appearances, He orders all happenings for preserving and benefitting life.

2. We enjoy responsibilities and privileges in both Church and world.

Baptism unites us to Christ Jesus and seats us with Him on high. Heavenly Father bequeaths us His whole kingdom, above and below. As Adam’s descendants and heirs of Eve, we rightfully subdue and rule over this earth that produces our daily bread. Heaven holds us its citizens, but we live yet as residents in this realm, caretakers and brothers’ keepers. We whom God calls His sons and daughters know best both how to manage nature and govern nations because we have seen God’s will and received His Word. We have access to His own mind and heart. For our neighbor’s good, we



cannot neglect any speaking and acting that will direct and defend our common life.

3. Human governments keep order to make possible Gospel ministry.

Father, Son, and Spirit's ultimate goal remains saving every human soul. His left-hand rule of earthly life facilitates His right-hand rule of everlasting life in new heavens and earth. Using governments and laws—even citizens and politics—He creates a safe environment and establishes the suitable context for His Gospel and His people to have free course. The Lord's Law of love, written and reflected in the Ten Commandments, furnishes the framework for the more important Savior-message.

4. Expect tensions and persecutions.

The nations of creation lie broken because humankind has fallen into sin. Satan proliferates temptations, and selfishness runs rampant. Men and women wrestle to become masters over the entire earth, making enemies of each other and viewing God as rival. Pride and greed, lust, indulgence and laziness, jealousy and revenge often prevail even in the lives of baptized believers. In this world we will have trouble; indeed, the world hates us as it did Jesus. Representatives of humility and peace meet violence, crucifixion even. Our struggle rages against sinful nature and Satan but also against a world of foreign mind and hostile spirit.

5. When commands conflict, we obey God rather than men.

Divine authority is exercised by sinners. Sometimes governments demand ultimate and unrightful allegiance from Christians in contradiction to our Gospel confession. Sometimes leaders and laws threaten to take the goods and fame, safety and freedom, family or life God has given us. Such rulers no longer function as deputies of Almighty Maker but agents of hell. In those matters we may and must resist and rebuke, using whatever influence our goods, fame, safety, freedom, family, and life can obtain. We trust that anything God allows us to lose He will more than restore, and we stay secure in the truth of Christ.

6. Faith can't be legislated.

The Bible speaks no "separation" of church and state—and neither does the U. S. Constitution. Nevertheless, we recognize that God ordains a distinction of manner between them. The one He rules according to His Gospel and the other according to His Law. This Law, by force and coercion, commands, sets conditions, threatens consequences, and rewards obedience. It does nothing for souls or salvation. In Gospel, God does for us and gives freely unto everlasting resurrection. Law has to be permitted to precede, without interference from Gospel, in order that Gospel may supersede all. If God does not bully faith out of us, then government has no place either opposing or obligating Christianity.

7. Love, joy, and gratitude compel us rather than anger, fear, or guilt.

Our failures won't undermine the Lord's reign. Others' successes can't overthrow it. This world will go on as long as God wills and will then give way to new creation. In Jesus we are guaranteed inclusion in it, as well as having the privilege of participating in His activity—not to assert superiority but to save our opponents from the devil's deceptions and our neighbors from final destruction. Let's exercise our majesty enthusiastically!

Standing Right Side Up in an Upside Down World

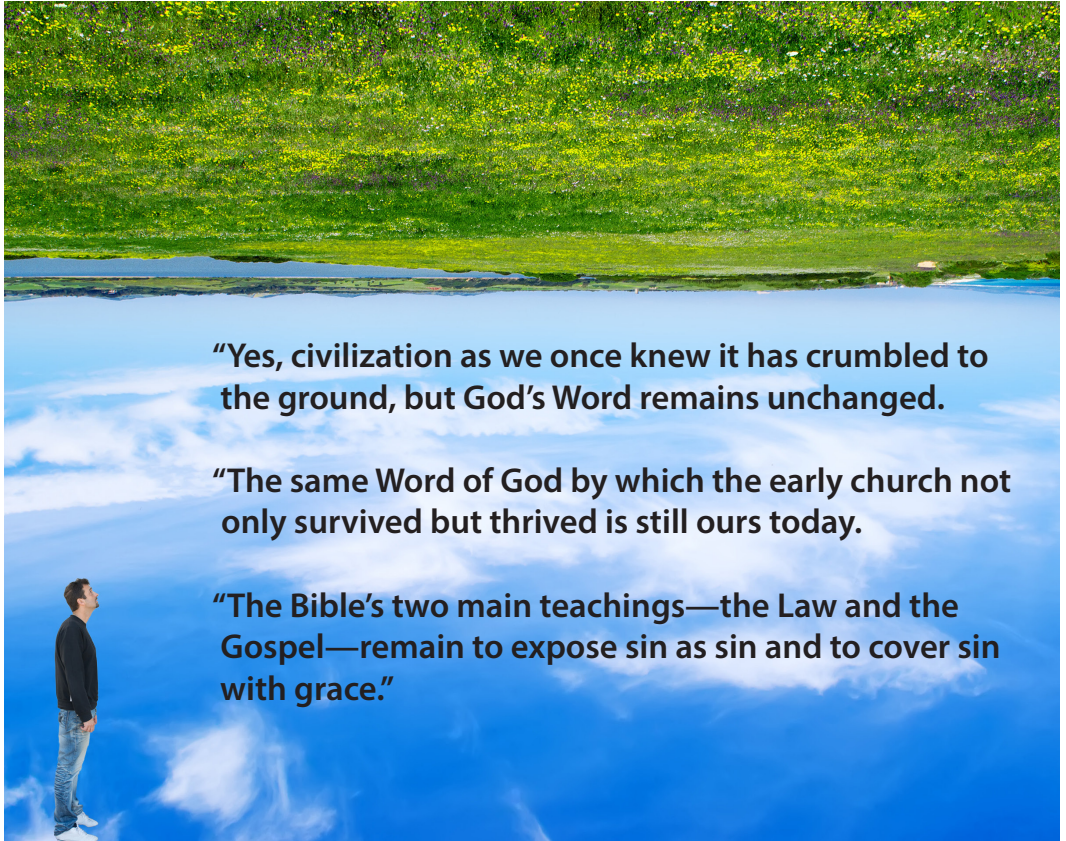
by Ryan MacPherson

Would you hire a kleptomaniac to install locks on your doors? Would you ask an enemy soldier to suggest a password for protecting your own military's secrets? Would you subscribe to a newspaper if you knew all of its journalists were pathological liars? If you did these things, and if everyone around you did such things, then what would be the definition of "pathology" anyway?

When grown adults don't even know which potty to use, we have a rather confused world. It's as if that childish game—that "no" means "yes" and "yes" means "no"—never ended. Where were Dad and Mom to say, "Enough is enough, kids. You're confusing your little sister, and I want you to use words properly for the rest of the day."

When men father children without getting married, when those who pledge "until death do us part" do part long before death, when it is two men or two women instead who get "married," when she who is pregnant "chooses" her child's death or she who has no man in her life turns to technology to generate a child—the longer these patterns persist, the more normal they seem. If people stand on their heads long enough, then upside down will appear right side up and right side up will appear upside down.

Jason discovered this phenomenon around the year A.D. 50 when a mob surrounded his home in Thessalonica because he was hosting Paul and Silas. From the



"Yes, civilization as we once knew it has crumbled to the ground, but God's Word remains unchanged.

"The same Word of God by which the early church not only survived but thrived is still ours today.

"The Bible's two main teachings—the Law and the Gospel—remain to expose sin as sin and to cover sin with grace."

Scriptures these apostles had been teaching that the Messiah was to suffer and die and then rise from the dead. They talked about how Jesus had fulfilled these prophecies precisely. They identified Jesus as the Savior who brought forgiveness and new life to God’s people—indeed, to all people, Jew and Gentile alike. Although many of the Gentiles believed, some of **“the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason ... [W]hen they could not find [Paul or Silas], they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, ‘These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them ...’”** (Acts 17:5–7a).

Did you notice that? To the unbelieving Jews, the apostles were guilty of turning the world upside down. Except that they really hadn’t. The world had been turned upside down and inside out by Satan’s connivings, by people’s rebellions, by the mutilation of God’s creation of man and woman until nothing was left but sinful flesh. The apostles proclaimed that Jesus had come to turn the world right side up again and to bathe the sinful flesh in the cleansing waters of baptism, but they appeared upside down and filthy to the deceived and deluded people around them.

Christ’s followers do not merely look different to unbelievers, they smell different, too. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, **“[W]e are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life”** (2 Corinthians 2:15–16). To those who believe that Jesus was just a man who died, Christians bear the stench of death; to those who believe that Jesus was the God-man who rose from the grave, Christians smell like a spring garden.

Upside down or right side up, alive or dead, stinky or fragrant—how can anyone be certain what’s what? Woe to us if we know not the difference! As Isaiah judged, **“Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!”** (Isaiah 5:20).

What remains for God’s people in a world increasingly hostile to Christ and His followers? A world that terms what is neither reproductive nor healthy nor caring as “reproductive health care”? A world that calls the despising of God’s institution of marriage a “diversity” worth celebrating? A world that idolizes tolerance and demonizes truth? A world that brands Christ’s followers as hateful and bigoted? A world that has been doing so for so long that few people seem to know the difference anymore?

Yes, civilization as we once knew it has crumbled to the ground, but God’s Word remains unchanged. The same Word of God by which the early church not only survived but thrived is still ours today. The Bible’s two main teachings—the Law and the Gospel—remain to expose sin as sin and to cover sin with grace. Let us read the Bible all the more earnestly in order that we can clearly distinguish right side up from upside down. Let us reach out in love to a deeply hurting world that needs the same peace with God that we have in Christ Jesus.

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Building in the Midst of Decay

by Linda D. Bartlett

What is a Christian to do? It's as if God asks the impossible of us. He wants us to build with one hand and resist evil with the other. But with more cultural decay comes more evil.

Mindful of raising up a new generation of Christians but also keenly aware of our own inadequacies and failures, parents, pastors, and all who love children become discouraged and even fearful. With fear comes the temptation to doubt the sufficiency of God's Word and more easily accept the help of passionate unbelievers. "Why do you cling to ancient traditions?" they ask. "Can't you see? We have something new!"

There is a lesson to be learned from God's people who, in a time before us, were also discouraged, overwhelmed, and taunted by unbelieving neighbors who offered something new.

The remnant of Israel that had survived exile in Persia returned home to find the walls of Jerusalem broken down and city gates destroyed. To this small number of faithful people was given the arduous task of rebuilding the temple and walls of Jerusalem. God also wanted His people to grow faithful families. He wanted them to be holy and set apart in their worship and practice. When people in the neighboring land saw that Jerusalem was being restored, they offered their help. After all, these people explained, they worshipped God too. (In reality, they were a people of blended religions.) Fearing that they would commit themselves to false worship, the Israelite fathers refused the offer of resources and help. They knew that God had entrusted the job of rebuilding the temple and walls only to them. So **"the people of the land discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to build and bribed counselors against them to frustrate their purpose"** (Ezra 4:4-5).

The culture in which God's people found themselves made the building project very difficult, but the Word of the LORD consistently commanded the people to persevere. God also reminded His people that they were to be holy and set apart for His good purpose. But the people of Israel, following the example of some of their leaders, mixed themselves with the Canaanites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and others through marriage (9:1-2). The people were guilty of breaking faith with God and allowing impurity of worship, teaching, and practice. There was confession and absolution, but because the potential for continued corruption of worship was so great, illegal marriages were identified and ended (10:18-19). The rebuilding of the temple, restoration of the walls, and growing of faithful families began anew.

However, when the neighbors in the land saw that the Israelites were again doing the work of God in rebuilding Jerusalem, they were angry. **"[T]hey all plotted together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to cause confusion in it"** (Nehemiah 4:8). It was easy to cause confusion and discouragement among the Israelites because fathers, mothers, and grandparents were overwhelmed by the task that lay before them. **"There is too much rubble. By ourselves we will not be able to rebuild the wall"** (4:10). The enemies said, **"They will not know or see till we come among them and kill them and stop the work"** (4:11). Nehemiah encouraged the people, **"Do not be**

afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes” (4:14). When the walls were rebuilt and the gates restored, the law of God was read to the people who were both joyful and repentant (chapters 8 and 9).

Everything was coming back into order, and Israel was prepared to live by the truth of God’s Word. What could go wrong? What went wrong is incredibly significant. Eliashib, the priest appointed over the chambers of God, gave Tobiah the Ammonite a place in the temple (13:4-5). Under the guise of helping God’s people, Tobiah was given a room formerly used to store the offering for God. There, within the temple, sat Tobiah and his possessions. Nehemiah was away when this happened, but when he returned, he **“was very angry, and [he] threw all the household furniture of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then [he] gave orders, and they cleansed the chambers, and [he] brought back there the vessels of the house of God”** (13:8-9).

God entrusted the rebuilding of His temple and the city walls to His people. He entrusted the growing of holy families to husbands and wives equipped with His Word. He does the same today.

God wants His people to keep their worship, teaching, and practices pure and different from that of the dark and unbelieving world. Certainly, there are resources in the world that can be practical and helpful to the Christian. But we must take care especially when it comes to instructing Jesus’ little ones. **“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven”** (Matthew 18:10). It is a frightening thing indeed to compromise one of the Father’s children.

Compromise happens, however, when God’s people are weary and burdened or prideful and above reproach. Compromise happens when we let down our guard and grow comfortable with the world. At such times it is easier for an opposing foe to gain access by offering some kind of help or resource. It was for this reason that Nehemiah **“stationed the people by their clans, with their swords, their spears, and their bows ... each of the builders had his sword strapped at his side while he built”** (Nehemiah 4:13, 18). The men were on guard at night and labored by day (22).

We are weary and overwhelmed by a multitude of life issues. Sometimes we are prideful after doubting God’s Word and trusting something else. As the culture decays and evil abounds, we may believe that God asks the impossible of us. But Martin Luther reminds us that the task of rebuilding the temple and shoring up walls was given to a weak people, few in number; a people against whom stood powerful princes and nations which lived round about and daily threatened imminent destruction.

There will be days when failure distracts us from the building project. There will be those like Tobiah who mock our faithfulness to an ancient faith while tempting us with new practices. In the face of evil, let it be said of us: Look! They remember **“the Lord, who is great and awesome,”** and they **“fight for [their] brothers ... sons ... daughters ... wives, and ... homes”** (Nehemiah 4:14).

This article is excerpted from Linda’s book The Failure of Sex Education in the Church: Mistaken Identity, Compromised Purity (pp 61-63), Amazon.com (www.ouridentitymatters.com).

In the Eye of the Storm

by Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

Do you ever feel that this world has absolutely been turned on its head? It seems anything goes—except what brings glory and honor to the triune God.

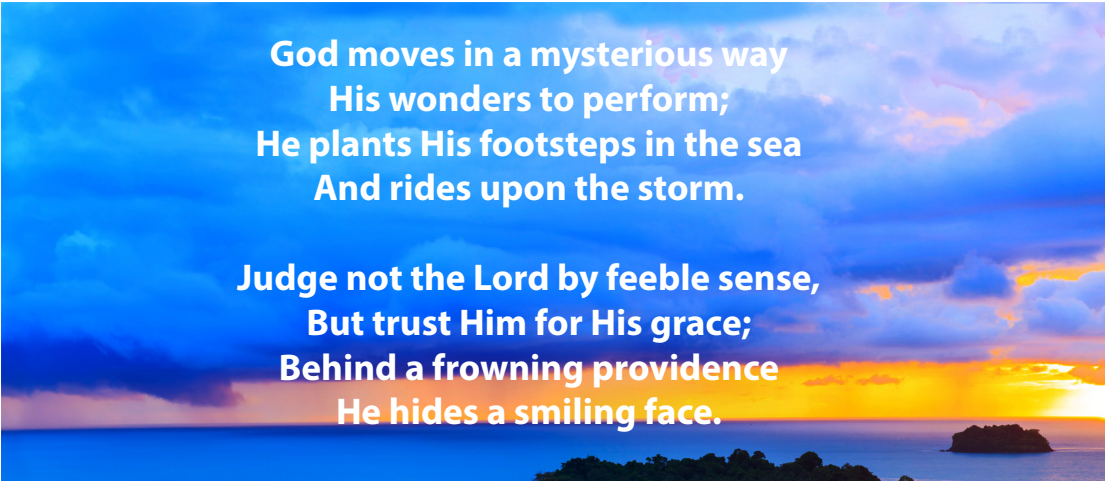
The sacredness of marriage between one man and one woman has been destroyed. The infamous United States Supreme Court makes ludicrous rulings that strip good medical sense from Texas law on abortion clinics. Young men and women, with a whole lifetime ahead of them, see life so hopeless and without purpose that they no longer care to live. People, young and old, are so confused about who they are that they mutilate their God-given bodies and ingest toxic drugs to try to become someone or something they are not. Parents, so strung out—addicted to drugs, alcohol, or gambling—cannot properly provide or care for their children. It seems laws are no longer about doing what is good and right for the protection of human lives and peace of the land but, instead, benefit those who can benefit the most at the expense of others. And the list goes on!

Everything that we as Christians believe to be sacred and holy is being challenged, changed, rewritten, or just plain trashed before our very eyes, and we seem to be powerless to do anything about it.

Where is the sanity in all of this? I literally feel I am in the “eye of the storm” and feel more like a stranger in this world every day.

I wonder if that was how God’s people felt when they were exiled to Babylon. Each of the exiles had his life turned on its head. Almost everything they knew was suddenly changed—taken from their homes and places of worship and thrown into a pagan culture, government system, and way of life totally unfamiliar to them.

But God gave them an interesting message: **“Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease”** (Jeremiah 29:5-6 NIV).



**God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.**

**Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.**

What a message! Despite their exile and the storm in their lives, God basically told them to carry on with **L.I.F.E.** – **Live In Faith Everyday** (our 2014 Life Sunday theme): build, plant, eat, marry, bear children, increase in numbers—not decrease. These are great instructions for the storm that rages around us today!

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea ... Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts ... He says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God ...’” (Psalm 46:1-2, 6, 10 NIV).

God also charged the exiles with the welfare of the city! **“Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper”** (Jeremiah 29:7 NIV).

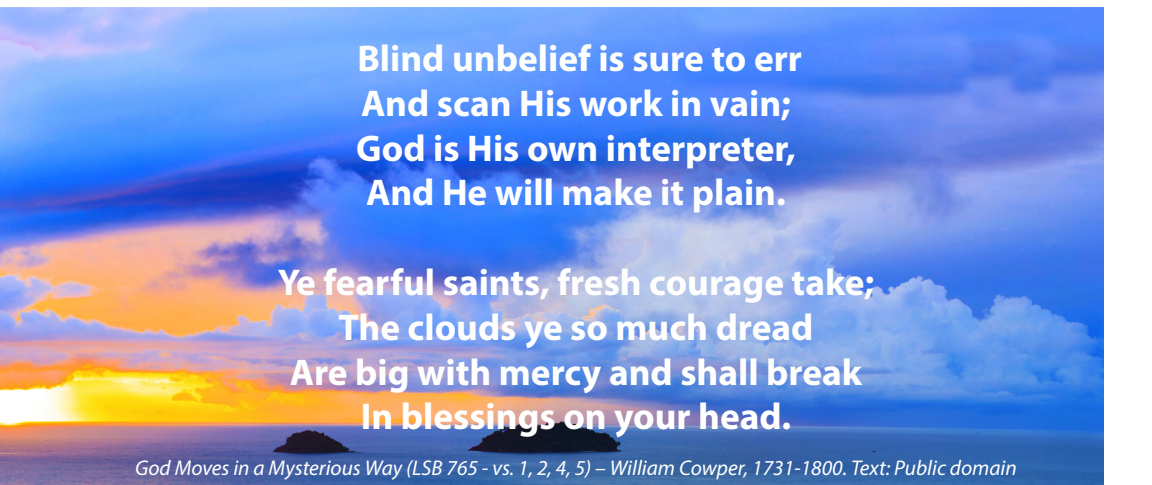
“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV).

We must be diligent and unceasing in prayer for our land: the church, people, governments, and culture to repent, seek God’s forgiveness, turn from wicked ways, and prosper by hearing the saving message of the Gospel which leads to life everlasting.

God continued His message: **“Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you ... They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them... 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 29:8-9, 11 NIV).

God warned the exiles, as He warns us, against believing the lies of the deceiver who **“comes only to steal and kill and destroy.”** God had plans for the exiles for a future and a hope. God has plans for us! **“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”** (John 10:10 NIV).

Yes, even in the eye of the storm when everything seems turned on its head, we can live **L.I.F.E.** (Live In Faith Everyday). As former Lutherans For Life President Diane Schroeder wrote, **“We live in H.O.P.E. – Having Optimism Pending Eternity.** Because no matter what happens, we know that He loves us and our future is secure.”

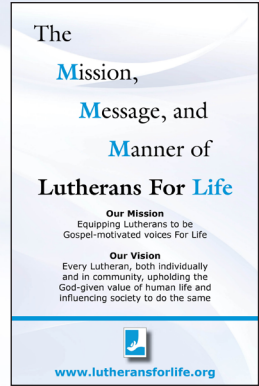
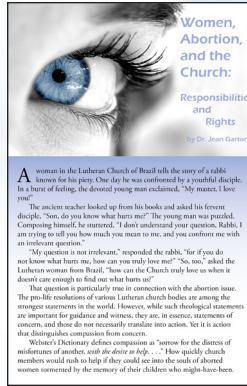
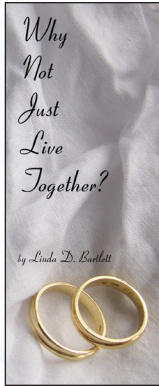
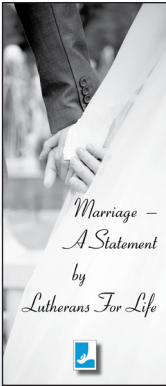


**Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.**

**Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy and shall break
In blessings on your head.**

God Moves in a Mysterious Way (LSB 765 - vs. 1, 2, 4, 5) – William Cowper, 1731-1800. Text: Public domain

Updated Resources from Lutherans For Life



Brochure: Marriage – A Statement from Lutherans For Life – 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 flesh” (Mark 10:6-8 NIV). What God intended marriage to be in the beginning, He still intends marriage to be. *Item LFL905T. \$0.50 ea.*

Brochure: Why Not Just Live Together? by Linda D. Bartlett – Linda provides guidance in response to popular statements such as “I won’t know if it feels right until we try living together first.” *Item LFL607T. \$0.50 ea.*

Brochure: Women, Abortion, and the Church by Dr. Jean Garton – Using situational ethics, even some Christians conclude that abortion is the compassionate solution—the lesser of two evils. Why, asks author Dr. Jean Garton, should we offer a woman an evil of any sort? *Item LFL201A. \$0.50 ea.*

Booklet: The Mission, Message, and Manner of Lutherans For Life – There are a few misconceptions about Lutherans For Life that have been heard, and these come from fellow Lutherans! How about you? Do you really understand what LFL is all about? This booklet is designed to help people understand the unique role LFL has in the pro-life community and consider LFL’s Mission, Message, and Manner. *Item LFL1614. \$0.50 ea.*

Be sure to like/follow LFL on social media! See links below:

- www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife
- <https://twitter.com/ForLifers>
- www.instagram.com/lfly4life



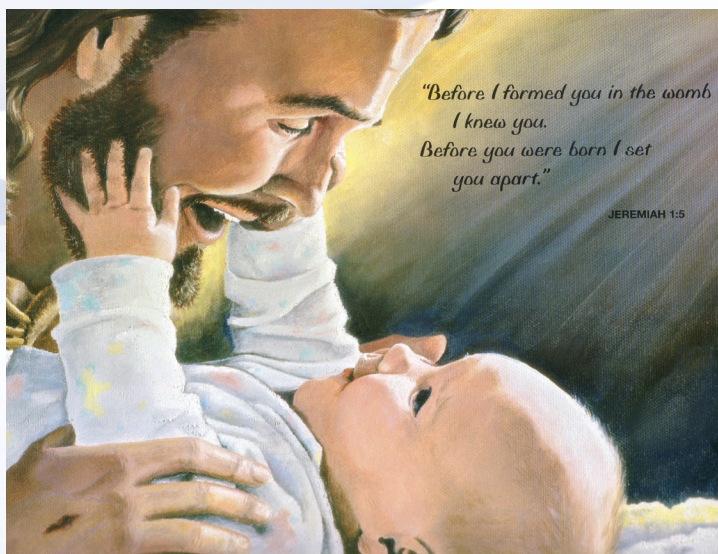
Also see:

- www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife
- <https://vimeo.com/user4132928>



Best Way to Order LFL Resources: At www.cph.org or 800.325.3040. Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.

I Knew You – 9" x 12" Frameable Print



The beautiful baby in our popular *I Knew You* print is all grown up and married! Here she is with her mother and *I Knew You* artist Shannon Wirrenga (www.shannonsartroom.com). *I Knew You* makes a great gift! Item LFL1606. **\$8.00 ea.** Order at www.cph.org. Limited quantities of the print remain. (Also see: www.shannonsartroom.com.)

Adoption Resources from Lutherans For Life

DVD – Together for Good is loosely based on the adoption story of Pastor Ahlman and his wife, Beth. Item LFL506DVD. **\$12.99 ea.**

Bulletin Insert – A Beautiful Solution shares how adoption is life saving and life affirming. Item LFL505BI. **\$0.10 ea.**

Booklet – Adoption: Finding a Family for a Child by Wanda Pritzel – Adoption is not just about finding a child for a family who can't have a child. Consider it the other way around: adoption is about finding a family for a child who doesn't have a family. Item LFL503B. **Item \$0.50 ea.**

Booklet – The Adoption Option – Dr. Jean Garton explores the often forgotten option of adoption. Item LFL500B. **\$1.00 ea.**

Find adoption resources and articles at www.lutheransforlife.org/life-issues/adoption.



Best Way to Order LFL Resources: At www.cph.org or 800.325.3040. Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

(Based on appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*)

October 2 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 22) – Heavenly Father has both ability and affinity for working mightily through seemingly insignificant and even apparently contrary situations. Humble faith (Luke 17:5; 2 Timothy 1:5), conversational testifying (2 Timothy 1:8), servant tasks (Luke 17:10), and suffering itself (Habakkuk 1:2-4; 2 Timothy 1:12)—like broken-bodied Jesus—bring life and immortality to light (2 Timothy 1:10). *Almighty Maker, establish us in Your simple truth that we may witness and participate in Your miraculous acts. Amen.*

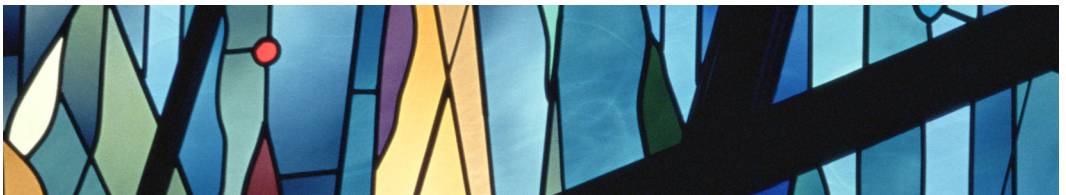
October 9 – Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 23) – Jesus’ Gospel gives us God as Father and a whole family as well. True faith and real joy recognize and receive “Your people [as] my people” (Ruth 1:16-17), witnesses who sympathize and strengthen us (2 Timothy 2:2), however impaired or dependent they may be (Luke 17:12-14). *Good Shepherd, lead us to love Your people as You love us through them. Amen.*

October 16 – Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 24) – We remain patient and persistent (Luke 18:1, 5) in rebuking the culture of death and in comforting all its victims with Words from God (2 Timothy 3:16-4:2). Compassion will overcome selfishness, wrestling will give way to blessing (Genesis 32:25-26), and hurt will meet healing because God does not deal with us like a gruff judge but as a loving and victorious Savior (Luke 18:6-8). *Risen Lord, accompany and sustain us under Your cross with Your promises. Amen.*

October 23 – Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 25) – Heaven and earth grieve every life ended by another (Genesis 4:10). Worse yet is believing ourselves any better than murderers (Luke 18:11-14). Lord God regards all as precious as little babies, and His Son’s forgiving Word and works of faith rescue from death’s mouth (2 Timothy 4:17) when tempted (Genesis 4:7) and from hell’s mouth when guilty (Genesis 4:15). *Merciful Father, intervene that we may be saved and safe from death and hell. Amen.*

October 30 – Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 26) – Jesus didn’t disregard Zacchaeus due to his stature (Luke 19:3-5). So God doesn’t cast us off because of our sins against life (Isaiah 1:18). His salvation would dwell (Luke 19:9) in every beating heart until His grace displaces selfish decisions crowding (Luke 19:3) and persecuting us (2 Thessalonians 1:4) and relieves afflictions (Luke 1:7) by restoring more than fourfold (Luke 19:8). *Gracious God, make us receive even the helpless as Your children and suffering as Your gift. Amen.*

November 6 – Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 27) – No amount of clever excuses (Exodus 3:11, 13) or philosophical objections (Luke 20:28-33) can deny Jesus as the Lord and God who works and wills life (Luke 20:36-38), even where mortal eyes behold only death’s oppressions (Exodus 3:7-9). His message of resurrection lays rebellion to rest (2 Thessalonians 2:6-8). *Holy One, station Yourself as “I AM” in our hearts and lives, in our words and our world. Amen.*



November 13 – Twenty-sixth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 28) – We do not fall idle or grow weary (2 Thessalonians 3:11-13) of turning people’s hearts to their parents and children (Malachi 4:5-6). The Gospel of Christ’s redemption lifts heads in hope (Luke 21:28) and turns their hearts and ours toward life in our Heavenly Father and with His children in need. *Lord of hosts, bestow Your Spirit of wisdom that our witness may prevent many from perishing. Amen.*

November 20 – Last Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 29) – The days have come when abortion-minded society says, “Blessed are the wombs that never bore” (Luke 23:29). Many demand mountains fall upon them, asking to end their lives early in assisted suicide. Even under darkness’ dominion (Colossians 1:13), Jesus’ atoning forgiveness (Luke 23:34) remembers (Malachi 3:16-17; Luke 23:42-43) what His hands created (Colossians 1:16-18), delivers and redeems (Colossians 1:14) for heaven everlasting. *Dear Jesus, remember us into Paradise, with all Your treasured possessions. Amen.*

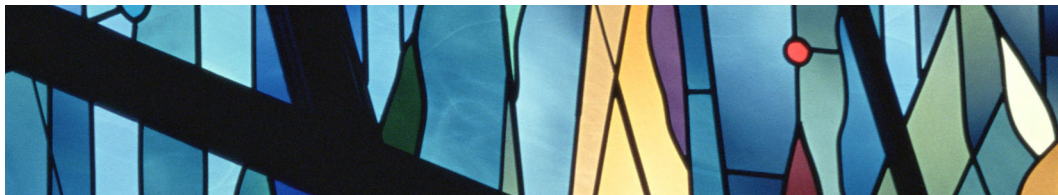
November 27 – First Sunday in Advent – Wherever humankind indulges flesh’s desires in immorality (Romans 13:13-14), swords and quarrels, spears and war and all manner of death are sure to follow (Isaiah 2:4). Wherever Jesus comes humbly (Matthew 21:5) in Word and Church, salvation arrives (Romans 13:11). He dresses sinners instead in armor of light that they may cast off works of darkness (Romans 13:12). *Coming Savior, beat our swords into plowshares. Amen.*

December 4 – Second Sunday in Advent – Only knowledge that God Himself lives in human hearts like shoots from a stump (Isaiah 11:1) and leads like a little child can keep people from hurting and destroying (Isaiah 11:6). In our repentance He brings us near His kingdom (Matthew 3:1-2) of encouragement and harmony (Romans 15:5), and those the world calls lifeless stones He claims as His dear children (Matthew 3:9). *God of hope, fill us with Your joy and peace. Amen.*

December 11 – Third Sunday in Advent – Jesus shines God’s attention and showers His assistance upon blind and deaf, lame and leprous, unresponsive and impoverished persons (Matthew 11:5), even though it earns Him opposition (Matthew 11:12). Better that we should patiently (James 5:10-11) endure violence against us as His kingdom than that any unborn, impaired, overlooked, elderly, or otherwise vulnerable suffer death. *O God our Lord, come and ransom every uncertain heart into everlasting joy. Amen.*

December 18 – Fourth Sunday in Advent – Had Mary and Joseph foreseen only unplanned pregnancy’s sufferings, they may have chosen death. Instead, God’s promises focused their faith on what goodness Jesus brings from impossible predicaments. He showed His self-sacrificing love in theirs and shared peace, meaning, healing, hope, and salvation with all humankind. *Incarnate Love, redeem our mistakes and sanctify our misery. Amen.*

December 25 – Festival of the Nativity of our Lord – The Word first became flesh (John 1:14) as an invisible embryo. He made Himself every way like us and with us, bearing even our weaknesses through death to bestow His glories beyond imagining. No state of human development and no stage of human decline is not exalted by Christ’s ongoing presence. *Mighty Deliverer, consecrate our hopeless circumstances by Your incarnate mercy. Amen.*



What's Beautiful?

by Rev. Michael Brown

You know what's beautiful? The Eifel. It's Germany at its finest. The Eifel National Park's green mountains are rolling, its streams rushing, its lakes blue, its picture-perfect hamlets timber-framed. In fact, a few weeks ago I was thrilled to once again stay in my favorite village there. It's just quintessential Deutschland.

Except for the Vogelsang, that is. It's just creepy. Haunting. Evil.

Perched over a vast lake tucked deep in the Eifel's pine forest, this massive fortress clinging to a mountainside is perhaps the largest sprawling remnant of Nazi Germany. The Ordensburg Vogelsang was a training camp. From 1936-1939 at this National Socialist school for mind, body, and soul, thousands of leaders for the Nazi Party were forged. The Vogelsang is where men became monsters. And deep in its labyrinth of buildings lay its most sacred space—a long hall, much like a church nave, that led to a holy of holies of sorts. Except upon this holy of holies' pagan altar was a statue of an Aryan man, the giant bronze embodiment of the *herrenmensch*, or master race. This *Übermensch*, this superman that was to be worshiped, was exactly what these young men at the Vogelsang were training to be. To be anything else was to be weak, less than, *untermensch* (subhuman).

Subhuman. That shouldn't be too hard for us to grasp here in America. It's how our laws treat the unborn—weak, less than, *untermensch*. Not to mention 300,000 human beings, many of them children, that are victims of human trafficking in our country each year—yes, even along I-80 in Nebraska.

Now, there are even those here in Lincoln, Nebraska, at the legislature who think Nebraska's "Good Life" should include our ill and elderly loved ones committing suicide. So what about our weak, our less than, our *untermensch*? Is that creepy to us? Haunting? Evil? What does it mean that in our land and in our time for so many it is not considered haunting or evil?

Well, God's answer to all of these questions and the issues that we face as a people can be found in His "training camps." In fact, just an hour before our visit to the Vogelsang a few weeks ago, I led a group of 20 Lutherans traveling with me in worship



at one of God’s “training camps”—a church. We gathered there in that sacred space, that long church nave, yet in its “holy of holies,” there was no *Übermensch* upon its altar. No, just a body given and blood shed for the weak that gathered that Sunday along with an *untermensch*, a pastor (me), that led them in their *gottesdienst* (divine service or worship) that morning.

In fact, we worship a God who loves the life of those whom the world counts as weak, and less than, and subhuman—even us. He loves us so much that He came to earth to die for us, even embodying those things we count as naught. Weak—a lowly peasant who led an insignificant life. Less than—seen and treated by others as so. Subhuman—tortured and murdered as such. Why? To make us sinful monsters into men. To forge us into new creations in Christ. To forgive us, give us life, and save us.

Think about it. Every gift that was given, every word that was proclaimed in that church the morning we visited the Vogelsang, stood in total opposition to every evil that was proclaimed and lessons that were learned in that evil place 80 years ago. And you know what? The same thing happens in your church—God’s training camp for you—each Sunday.

There each week, the same God comes and gives you His gifts in Christ through Word and Sacrament—gifts that are given; God’s Word that is proclaimed, that stands in total opposition to the evil that is proclaimed as good; and deceitful, sinful lessons that are taught as true in our own land and in our time.

God has come in Jesus Christ to redeem life at all stages, in all places, and at all times—so that one day we have ruins like the Vogelsang in our land. Overgrown landmarks where once death and evil reigned, but they do no more. And when we visit those places, I hope they feel just as creepy, haunting, and evil to us. Yet until that day, we gather in God’s training camps to receive God’s gifts in Jesus Christ, letting God’s Word and Spirit strengthen us and forge us into New Creations. Then, strengthened and nourished by God’s Word and Sacraments, we go out into our various vocations each week and live lives of love and service to the weak, the less than, and the subhuman among us. And you know what’s beautiful? That is.

Rev. Michael Brown is Spiritual Advisor to Nebraska Lutherans For Life and associate pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Lincoln (www.redeemerlincoln.org).



At NYG—Fun, Fellowship, and Spiritual Growth

by Sarah Krueger, **Y4Life** Intern

This summer, **Y4Life** had the incredible opportunity to go to the LCMS National Youth Gathering (NYG) in New Orleans, Louisiana. This event was three days packed with fun, fellowship, and spiritual growth. With more than 22,000 kids from 48 states and 14 countries, there was plenty to keep us busy!

At NYG, the Experiential Learning Room was a place where youth could go between sessions to play games and learn about over 200 organizations across the country. With an incredible group of volunteers, this was an awesome opportunity to engage youth and spread the Gospel through life issues. Our activities included a “former fetus” photo booth, where youth could take a picture in an ultrasound; a “recharge and reflect” station, where youth could rest and learn more about the issue of abortion; and the most popular activity, the “baby bump relay,” where students were challenged to put on backpacks filled with flour, which resembled a baby bump, and race to pick up laundry. The baby bump relay race was so popular that the emcees featured it on a video that all 22,000 youth saw at the mass event! Laura Davis, Director of **Y4Life**, was briefly interviewed about Lutherans For Life and encouraged youth to come learn more. Every one of these activities engaged the youth at NYG and opened many doors for conversation.

In addition to our experiential learning section, Laura and Pastor Salemink spoke in two different breakout sessions each of the three days, speaking to over 800 students. The youth were able to engage in their interactive talks to learn more about how to talk about life issues. It was encouraging to hear questions and stories from the youth in these sessions. They were passionate and were eager to learn how to engage in important conversations with their peers. After one of the sessions, a boy came up and told Laura that he appreciated her talk. After hearing it, his mind was opened to new ways of engaging people that he hadn't thought of before. The National Youth Gathering was an incredible place to go to spread the life-affirming Gospel of Jesus Christ through life issues to thousands of youth across the country. We pray that through the short time we had with these youth, they would take what they learned and be encouraged to talk with their peers about life.



LFL/LCMS National Youth Gathering Stats

- 800+ students taught at LFL Interest Centers
- 350 T-shirts given out to relay-race winners
- 1,200 **Y4Life** magnets given out
- 1,500 **Y4Life** buttons given out (and worn proudly)
- 1,800 **Y4Life** glow sticks given out



Y4 at NYG 2016!
LIFE www.Y4Life.org



To Leave or Not to Leave an Estate Gift—10 Things to Consider (Part Two of Two)

by John Hawkins, Director of Development for Lutherans For Life

This is the second article in a two-part series. The Summer 2016 issue covered the first five “Things to Consider” including: 1. Do you have a heart for the organization or cause? 2. Do you have discretionary assets? 3. Do you have an encouraging family? 4. Do you understand how estates or planned gifts work? 5. Do you have supportive legal counsel? See the Summer 2016 issue for more details.

6. Tax Benefits

In my many years of stewardship work, I’ve never met anyone who wants the government to get any part of their worldly possessions after they die. In short, they don’t want to pay estate or “other” taxes if possible. On this subject, I have good news and good news.

First, the odds that you will owe any estate taxes are very slim. In fact, it is estimated that only 2/10 of 1% of those who passed in 2015 owed estate tax. Why? Because in order to have a taxable estate, an individual must have left \$5.4 million or more in assets. (Fortunately, we are looking at similar numbers in 2016.) So, whether you leave an estate gift or not, estate taxes are likely a non-issue for you. (Note: If you are blessed to have a taxable estate that equals or exceeds that amount and would be interested in learning about planned-giving concepts that will reduce your tax and provide additional income for loved ones, feel free to contact me.)

Second, there can be good news also about some of the “other” taxes that may be owed when you are called home (and here charitable estate planning can play an important role). For example, when you die (and your spouse has predeceased you if applicable) if you have left behind monies in an IRA, 401k, 403b, or other tax deferred account, your successors are going to owe ordinary income tax on this type of inheritance. However, if you leave monies from an IRA, etc., to a ministry as an estate gift, no tax will be owed since charities are exempt. So, leaving an estate gift from this type of account is preferable to monies that are clear of income taxes.

To illustrate, here is “The Story of Ruth.” Ruth is 65 and never married. During her lifetime, she has acquired assets totaling \$600,000, including a home, life insurance, cash, securities, and an IRA (the latter of which has about \$60,000). A lifelong tither, Ruth would like to leave 10% of her estate to be divided between her two favorite ministries. She also doesn’t want any of her estate to be taxed. So, she contacts the holder of her IRA, requests a beneficiary form, receives it, names the two ministries as equal beneficiaries, and mails it back to the company. When she is called home, her IRA will go to charity while the vast majority of her estate will transfer to her loved ones tax free.

7. Personal Benefit

Most of the time, the personal benefit of leaving an estate gift to ministry is the joy and satisfaction of knowing that you are helping them in the Lord’s work for many years to come. A more “tangible” benefit from a financial standpoint is tax avoidance (as illustrated earlier).

8. Beneficiaries

A couple of things should be looked at here. First, do you (or your attorney) have the proper name, address, etc., of the ministry/charity you are leaving a gift to? This is especially important if the organization not only has a national operation but perhaps state and local ones as well. The best way to make sure is to ask for the “Form of Bequest” the organization uses, which includes the legal name, address, and tax ID number. (For example, Lutherans For Life’s tax ID number is 41-1374293.) Second, make sure the ministry can use the funds in the way you wish. The safest thing to do here is to designate the name of the organization—only. This will give the board of directors the greatest leeway to do what is best at the moment. If you wish to leave a gift for a restricted purpose, make sure it is for something that is already established (e.g., an endowment). If the organization has to implement a new program or activity which may not be viable in the future in order to fulfill the bequest, it can create a difficult and expensive process to change. If you have any doubts or questions about this, it’s a good idea to contact them beforehand to discuss your wishes and confirm that they can be accomplished after you are gone.

9. Timing

A will, living trust, or overall estate plan can be changed at any time, as long as the person remains of sound mind. A charitable estate or planned gift can be the driving factor in changing the same (and/or separate beneficiary designations via an insurance policy, IRA, CEF account, etc.). However, most estate gifts are designated as part of the overall process of doing either an initial will or estate plan or revising the same. The latter is often dictated by a change in circumstances, such as the death of a spouse or loved one, moving to a new state, etc. Even if this is not the case, it’s a good idea to review your will every couple of years just to make sure no changes are desired. If need be, a revised one can be completed.

10. One More Thing to Consider

And the most important thing is to have the guidance and blessing of the Lord! To sum up, what is His will regarding your earthly blessings and where they go after you are gone? Certainly first (and not last!) on the list is to seek His will through prayer. **“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you”** (Matthew 7:7 NIV).

If at any time you have any questions about LFL or remembering the ministry in your estate plan, please contact me at 888.364.LIFE or jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org.

Please note this article is not intended as legal or financial advice. For assistance with specific cases, you are encouraged to seek the advice of an attorney or other professional advisor.



Buying or selling a home or commercial property? You can support Lutherans For Life at no cost to you by taking advantage of the Real Estate for Life program. Call 877.543.3871 or email proliferealestate@yahoo.com for more information.

www.realestateforlife.org
www.lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life

According to an article in *Le Devoir* published on July 6, 2016, there have been 252 requests for euthanasia in Quebec since December 10, 2015, and 166 people died by euthanasia. Another 249 people were given terminal palliative sedation. A similar article from Radio Canada published on the Huffington Post Quebec website on the same day put the figures somewhat lower. The Radio Canada report said that 128 people have been euthanized, while 200 people requested the procedure ... The statistics were compiled by each publication from information on the websites of hospitals throughout Quebec. Each media outlet has interpreted the statistics according to its own position on the issue. While Radio Canada's article is relatively neutral, the piece in *Le Devoir* implies that people's rights are being violated if they die before the eligibility evaluation process is completed and euthanasia can be administered. (*Euthanasia Prevention Coalition*, 7/11/16; *CLR LifeWire*, 7/14/16)

A Catholic nursing home in Belgium that refused to allow a woman to be euthanized has been ordered to pay the woman's family €6,000 (approximately \$6,645). The court ruled that while a doctor has the right to refuse to take part in euthanasia, institutions do not, even if the institution is religiously affiliated. Concerns arise on the length of time before an individual's right of refusal will be denied, or the timing when other countries and states with legalized assisted suicide will slide into euthanasia and away from honoring rights of conscience. (*Center for Bioethics and Culture*, 7/8/16; *CLR LifeWire*, 7/14/16)

A bill which would have legalized abortion in limited circumstances has been resoundingly rejected by the Irish Parliament. The Fatal Fetal Abnormalities Bill ... was rejected by 95 votes to 45 despite having the support of several ministers ... The bill's rejection has been welcomed by pro-life groups. Patrick Buckley, SPUC's Ireland officer, commented: "The ... bill was opportunistic. It was presented on so-called compassionate grounds, but it ignored the hundreds of women who decide to give life a chance and allow their babies to live as long as they possibly can. It is very hurtful to such women to describe their babies as 'nonviable' and 'incompatible with life'" ... The bill's rejection was also welcomed by organizations such as One Day More and Every Life Counts, which support parents who have been given a distressing diagnosis concerning their unborn babies. Cliona Johnson of One Day More, whose baby John Paul was diagnosed at 20 weeks as suffering from anencephaly resulting in a limited life span, told George Hook of Newstalk Radio that the term "fatal fetal abnormality" is not a medical diagnosis and that some members of their organization who were given a similar diagnosis subsequently had healthy babies. (*SPUC*, 7/8/16)

The Mexican Supreme Court has rejected a proposed verdict that would have imposed abortion-on-demand during the earliest stages of pregnancy throughout the country. The justices of the Supreme Court's First Chamber voted 3-1 against the draft decision, which cites *Roe v. Wade* to justify requiring all of Mexico's 31 states to adopt the legal regime currently in use in Mexico City. The Mexican capital allows abortion-on-demand during the first trimester of pregnancy while applying restrictions in later stages of gestation of the unborn child. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 7/4/16)

To learn about the international outreach of Lutherans For Life, go to www.lutheransforlife.org/about/international.



2016 Lutherans For Life National Conference
Here We Stand • October 21-22, 2016
St. Michael's Lutheran Church
Bloomington, Minnesota

Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in October:

Frank Runyeon on "Hollywood vs. Faith"

Dr. Jean Garton, co-founder and President Emeritus of Lutherans For Life

Col. John Eidsmoe on "Preachers, Politics, and the Two Kingdoms: What Does the IRS Allow?"

John Hawkins on "Giving 'Unusual' Gifts to Ministry"

Rev. Doug Merkey on "Helping Your Church Stand For Life"

Allen Quist on "Creation and What You May Not Know"

Barbara Lyons on "Threats to Lives of the Vulnerable from Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia"

Stephenie Hovland on "Family For Life"

Laura Davis on "Defusing the Tension: Revealing the Heart of the Abortion Debate"

Rev. Don Richman on "Eastern Europe and Russia – The Next Generation: To Kill or to Keep?"

Rev. Fredric Hinz on "Advocating For Life: Lutherans in the Public Square"

Dr. Sheila Page on "Legislation & Medical Perspectives on End of Life—How We Can Make a Difference"

Dr. Sheila Page on "Pain Perception in the Developing Human"

Deaconess Kimberly Trombley on "Here We Stand: Welcoming People of All Abilities into the Church"

Jānis Diekonts with an update on Lutherans For Life of Latvia

Rev. Michael Salemink, Lutherans For Life Executive Director

Heather Salemink with a workshop of children's life activities, games, stories, and more

Betty McGuire with a tour of the City Life Center in Minneapolis, which will include a prayer walk past a nearby abortion facility and through the neighborhood

REGISTER NOW!

[www.lutheransforlife.org/
conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference)

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm" (Ephesians 6:13).

Pre-Conference Events Friday, October 21



Pastor's Luncheon with Col. John Eidsmoe

– “Yes, I know Luther spoke of Two Kingdoms and I need to educate my people on their responsibilities to the Kingdom of the Left. But if I mention politics, the IRS will yank our tax exemption—won’t they?” May we influence elections? May we influence legislation? What does the IRS allow, and what does the IRS prohibit? And is there a time when we must obey God rather than men?

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Workshop: Helping Your Church Stand for Life with Rev. Doug Merkey

– How do I equip my congregation to get more involved in life issues? What is a “Life Team,” and how can I form one? How can Life Team training help my Life Chapter? How do we keep going when the going gets tough in life ministry? Get extremely practical, field-tested, Gospel-centered answers to these and similar questions at this valuable workshop. It’s ideal for anyone who wants to see their church more consistently and robustly enjoying and expressing the Gospel in the life arena.

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Workshop: Giving “Unusual” Gifts to Ministry with John Hawkins

– When it comes to making either a current or planned gift to ministry, donating cash usually comes to mind first followed by other common assets, such as securities, real estate, etc. But are there some “other” things that can be contributed—especially through your estate—that would prove to be beneficial to a donor and/or the receiving ministry? In this session, John will look at some different types of assets which aren’t donated every day but which, nevertheless, ministry friends may want to consider as part of their giving plans.

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Tour: City Life Center with Betty McGuire,

Executive Director – The City Life Center is a multi-faceted, pro-life ministry located in Minneapolis in the most diverse neighborhood in the United States, with over 100 different languages spoken in a two-mile radius. We will tour the City Life Center’s turn-of-the-century, converted three-story brick home and the two-story brick carriage house. After touring the center and learning about their ministry, staff will guide us on a square-block prayer walk past a local abortion facility and through the neighborhood where many live who regularly meet at the City Life Center for prayer and Bible study.

Leave church 1:30 p.m./Return 4:00 p.m.



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2016 Lutherans For Life National Conference
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SCHEDULE: 2016 LFL National Conference

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration – Exhibitor set up
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Pastor's Luncheon with Col. John Eidsmoe "Preachers, Politics, and the Two Kingdoms: What Does the IRS Allow?"

Pre-Conference Tour & Workshops:

1:30 p.m.	City Life Center Tour leaves from church
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	"Helping Your Church Stand For Life" with Rev. Doug Merkey
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	"Giving 'Unusual' Gifts to Ministry" with John Hawkins
5:00 p.m.	Opening Worship Service
6:30 p.m.	Banquet
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Keynote Address – Frank Runyeon – "Hollywood vs. Faith"

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Registration
8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.	Opening Devotion
8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Workshop I
8:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Children's Workshop
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Workshop II
10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	BREAK
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Workshop III
12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	LUNCH
12:45 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Exhibits and Development and Life Ministry hospitality room visits
1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Workshop IV
1:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Children's Workshop
2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	BREAK
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Dr. Jean Garton, co-founder and LFL President Emeritus
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	LFL International Update – Jānis Diekonts/Rev. Don Richman
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	LFL Closing & Devotions



REGISTRATION FEES

Adult registration (Early Bird) – \$100
Adult registration (after 9/15/16) – \$125
Friday only – \$40
Saturday only – \$75
Student registration* – \$50
Child registration (6-12) – \$30
Child 5 and under** – no charge

*Student financial assistance available
**Children 5 and under are admitted free, but please include them when registering.

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CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP!

Instead of placing “ads” in a conference book, sponsorship donations will be listed and acknowledged in the conference information folder.

Sponsorship levels are:

Bronze - \$50 • Silver - \$100

Gold - \$250 • Platinum - \$500

Sponsorships may be given in honor or memory of someone or an event. Download the sponsorship form from the conference page on the website (www.lutheransforlife.org/conference).



Virginia Flo • National Conference Director • vflo@lutheransforlife.org

Lutherans For Life ...

- **Applies God's Word**, both His Law and His Gospel, to all the life issues—abortion, chastity, assisted suicide and euthanasia, and bio-technology.
- **Assists For Life Christians** in offering the hope and help of the Good News of Jesus Christ to: women with an untimely pregnancy; women, men, and families suffering under the guilt of an abortion; young people with questions and concerns about sexuality; and the elderly and those with disabilities or terminal illnesses.
- **Believes God gives the gift of life to all people**—from the moment of conception until natural death.
- **Needs your support to continue to encourage, educate, and uplift with a Gospel-centered, Word-based message of hope, forgiveness, and new life!**

Lutherans For Life ...

Witnesses to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God.

Serves through individuals who volunteer at pregnancy care centers, with hospice, through prayer, and in a wide variety of caring activities.

Educates and Encourages through conferences and workshops, printed resources (including our *LifeDate* journal, *Life News*, *Life Quotes*, and *Directions*), Life Sunday materials and Bible studies, curricula (including Teaching For Life®), video, and through www.lutheransforlife.org.

Equips local congregations to speak out on life issues in their communities through Life Chapters and Life Teams. Many Lutherans For Life State Federations and Life Chapters also support a variety of compassionate, caring pregnancy and post-abortion ministries that offer pre- and post-natal counseling, parenting skills workshops, and lifestyle counsel.

Share the Life Message All Through the Year!

Lutherans For Life offers several easy ways to keep the life message before your congregation!

Order **LifeDate** in bulk quantities at no charge. (Donations for shipping cost will gladly be accepted.) Call 888.364.LIFE.

Download **Life News**, our monthly bulletin insert with life-issue news and more!

Sign up for **Life Notes**, our weekly email update.

Share **Life Quotes** and **Life Thoughts in the Church Year** in weekly congregational bulletins (or monthly newsletters).



Our Mission ... Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same.

Our Philosophy ... Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give 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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LFL has 11 State Federations, 97 local Life Chapters, 118 Life Ministry Coordinators, and 104 Life Teams in the US.

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Here We Stand

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**See pages 27-30
to find out more!**

