

May 2018



www.lutheransforlife.org



**Life Newsbytes**

**In April, Hawaii Governor David Ige signed a bill legalizing assisted suicide.** The “Our Care, Our Choice Act” passed the state House of Representatives on a 39-12 vote in March, followed by Senate passage, 23-2. The law goes into effect on January 1, 2019. The law permits mentally competent adults with six months or less to live to obtain a lethal prescription. The patient must give two separate oral requests—with a 20-day waiting period—for the medication. They are further required to sign a written request in front of two witnesses. The individual can make the request without first notifying family. Despite Hawaii’s passage of the law, more states have banned the practice or refused to legalize assisted suicide. Utah recently added assisted suicide to the criminal code. Assisted suicide measures have failed in 27 states ... Hawaii joins California, Colorado, Oregon, Vermont, Washington state, and the District of Columbia in allowing physician-assisted suicide. (*Live Action News, 4/9/18; CLR LifeWire, 4/12/18*)

**Speaking Up For Life**

“What do we share with that unmarried, pregnant college freshman who is ashamed and afraid and sees only one way out? We share that she is loved and forgiven and not forsaken because she is created, redeemed, and called.” *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former executive director of Lutherans For Life*

“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 atonement will align and assimilate everything, and sooner rather than later.” *Rev. Michael W. Salemink, executive director of Lutherans For Life*

“As the Church of God, it’s time we rightly extolled the vocation of motherhood, and it’s time we finally saw the resplendent majesty concealed therein. There is no greater vocation on Earth, for it is God’s chosen means to bring children into this world and, likewise through parents, to bring children into Christ’s kingdom of forgiveness through Holy Baptism.”

*Rev. Jonathan Conner, Zion Lutheran Church, Manning, Iowa*

**Abortions in America Since 1973: 60,069,971**

Source: [www.lifenews.com](http://www.lifenews.com)

For those who have had an abortion—  
a **Word of Hope.**  
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## More of Paradise—Gone

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink (*adapted from the April Sponsor Member letter*)

We just lost a little more of paradise. And Jesus wept. Hawaii's legislature has decriminalized assisted suicide. This makes it the sixth state to do so.

Assisted suicide occurs when someone, such as a doctor, helps a person take his or her own life, usually by making available a prescription for poisonous "medication."

Why do Christians oppose assisted suicide? Is it because we want to control people? Is it because we like doctors, hospitals, and insurers having final say in healthcare decisions? Why do Lutherans lament assisted suicide? Is it because we harbor archaic and irrational fears about death? Is it because we prioritize our political opinions over individuals' freedoms? Is it because we relish forcing our religious principles on them? Why does Lutherans For Life discourage assisted suicide? Is it because we enjoy seeing loved ones suffer? Is it because we value our own feelings more than their well-being?

We object to assisted suicide because it does not serve the common good or God's will. Assisted suicide also endangers other elderly or disabled persons. The society that accepts death as a right soon expects it as a responsibility. This entangles otherwise uninvolved (and perhaps unwilling) bystanders, like caregivers, pharmacists, lawmakers, insurers, and coroners. Even when conducted as legislated, assisted suicide carries critical risks for coercion and complications. Other deaths (non-assisted suicides, elder abuses, and involuntary euthanasia) have increased where assisted suicide occurs. The example of other nations indicates that it inevitably escalates and expands into non-terminal and non-voluntary settings.

We reject assisted suicide because Christ is risen. Jesus is Lord, and as both humankind's Creator and our Savior, He holds authority over death and life. He wields this authority to serve the everlasting salvation of every one of us. Awaiting natural death entrusts the ultimate decisions about time and manner of living and dying to His superior wisdom and goodness. By His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, He has touched and taken hold of all humanity, even in the depths of sorrow and the very valley of the shadow of death itself. His forgiveness and His promises to abide and guide bid us restfully surrender ourselves and face all intimidating unknowns with joy and hope. He has created, He has redeemed, He has called every human being. This leaves no cause lost and no life—or death—meaningless.

In every state, at every stage, and even amid afflictions, human life is His gift. The Gospel of Jesus Christ gives a better way for handling suffering and meeting dying. Not just people's lives but also their deaths matter to our Lord. Even compromised bodies have profound dignity in His image. They accomplish significant purposes even in pain—and sometimes especially or exclusively in pain. Interdependence, not autonomy, makes community possible and makes community powerful. "Becoming a burden" bestows the blessing of being needed on neighbors and loved ones. Palliative care and hospice can manage pain and provide comfort in almost every case. Mental impairments and emotional turmoils call for compassionate intervention, not complacent enabling. Every human being is a precious treasure to our Maker and Father. Every moment of every human person is a special privilege to us.

Life will win. He already has. He has invited and enlisted us to serve as agents asserting it everywhere. We can proclaim it with courage by speaking truth, investigating, educating, advocating. We can perform it with compassion by showing love, visiting, listening, affirming, embracing, celebrating, assisting, accompanying. What privilege and delight our Lord extends to us by offering us front-row seats to witness His miraculous activity and allowing us to participate firsthand in it!

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