



Darkness or Light – Science, Technology, and Bioethics

Great advances in science and technology have offered hope as well as ethical dilemmas.

How can Christians be like the Bereans and apply scriptural teaching to stem cell research, cloning, in vitro fertilization, surrogacy, cloning, vaccines, and more?

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by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

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Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life

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10 Reasons Embryo-Destroying Research Is Unnecessary

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

Forty years ago, the first child conceived via in vitro fertilization (IVF) was born. Twenty years have passed since scientists isolated embryonic stem cells (ESCs). Technicians value ESCs because they can engineer them into any type of cell or tissue. Financial concerns have led IVF clients and clinicians to create more embryos than they transfer to wombs. These “extra” embryos have served as the main source for ESCs. Harvesting ESCs destroys embryos and puts to death God’s precious human creatures, depriving us every time of the blessing of another neighbor. Happily, embryo-destroying research is unnecessary. Here are ten reasons why:

- **Other sources.** Researchers have obtained ESCs from placental tissue, umbilical cord blood, and amniotic fluid. These means don’t injure the little ones.
- **Adult stem cells.** Grown-up bodies also make stem cells. Although they don’t possess all the potential of ESCs, they still offer many possibilities and applications.
- **Induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs).** In 2006 a team of experts converted (adult) skin samples into cells functionally equivalent to ESCs. Lower costs and greater accessibility have made this the preferred process for stem cell experiments.
- **iPSC advancements.** Several treatments utilizing iPSCs have met with promising successes, including trials for stroke, heart damage, spinal cord injury, diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, and cancers. ESCs have encountered problems, and almost exclusively like tumor formation and immune rejection.
- **Organs-on-a-chip (OOCs).** Laboratories have developed circuit boards that have tiny fluid channels. Tissues can grow on these devices, which then substitute for and simulate the activities and mechanics of entire organs. They make possible more precise interactions and observations than ever before.
- **Natural Procreative Technology (NaProTech).** This approach diagnoses and treats the underlying causes of an individual’s infertility. It serves fertility care rather than fertility control, focusing on medical priorities rather than technological ones. IVF often entirely overlooks these possibilities.
- **Embryo adoption.** Couples have begun adopting and gestating IVF’s “surplus” embryos. Rather than leaving them in liquid limbo, discarding them altogether, or destroying them for study, this receives these children as the special treasures God has declared them to be.
- **We’re better than that.** We don’t need to sacrifice children for progress. Our belief in human life’s significance is what drives our need for medical research in the first place. Martyring embryos only undermines that basic belief.
- **Better two heads than one.** The fewer embryos we slay, the more will survive to apply their minds to scientific investigation and solving illnesses.
- **Jesus is real treatment.** Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection are the answer to disease and death. Forgiveness and everlasting life are already at work curing the sin that causes it all. God’s grace enables us to carry each other’s crosses until the healing is completed.

Calling Evil “Good”

by Linda D. Bartlett

As a Christian woman, mom, and grandmother from Iowa, I am compelled to ask: When Jesus returns, what will He say to pastors who advocate for abortion in His name? Who deny rights to unborn children, indeed the most vulnerable of all humans? Who praise a woman’s freedom from motherhood but seemingly care little about a woman held captive to sin?

In March, a group of Iowa clergy and religious leaders signed a letter to the Des Moines Register advocating for abortion on demand. Signers included Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, and Lutheran leaders.

The letter spoke against a bill that would prohibit abortions from the moment an unborn baby’s heartbeat is detectable, which is about six weeks of pregnancy. Some scientists give evidence for an unborn baby’s heartbeat beginning at 21 days; still others link to evidence that the heartbeat begins at about 18 days.

Oddly enough, the clergy who signed this letter claim that the Iowa bill prohibiting abortions is based on religion, not science. Now here is a real switch-a-roo. Government leaders are speaking up in defense of unborn babies because their hearts are beating, but church leaders are blaming them for being religious.

There are more questions.

The pro-abortion religious leaders maintain that women deserve to make their own decisions about their bodies and their pregnancies. Haven’t we heard this before? Slave owners used to say, “I have the right to do as I please with my property.” Which one of us dares look at another human person created in the image of God—of any color, age, stage of development, or place of residence—and declare them “property?” How does a female pregnant with a male child get away with claiming he is her “body”? What reasonable feminist would agree that an unborn baby girl with her own unique DNA is the “property” of the older woman who carries her?

When a biologically astute Christian woman willingly consents to or encourages sexual intercourse, what does she think might result? Does her choice about motherhood come before she is sexually intimate, or after?

“WOE TO THOSE WHO CALL EVIL GOOD AND GOOD EVIL ...”

Let's say that a Methodist, United Church of Christ, or Lutheran woman has longed to be a grandmother. What would she think if her eight-months-pregnant daughter claims, "It's my body and I've decided to abort." Abort what? To abort means to "end" or to "terminate." What pastor can, in Jesus' name, tell a mother and her pregnant daughter that a grandchild is not to be considered human life worthy of protection?

And, speaking of protection, what about the man who fathers a child but has no legal right to save his child from abortion by scissors, spinal injection, or chemical burning? According to these religious leaders, must a daddy who turns to his own Heavenly Father for courage to do right by his unborn child be ignored?

I am ashamed for these pastors and religious leaders who signed a letter calling pro-life legislation "immoral."

"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).

"For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

That time is now.

But there is hope! There is always hope! As a Lutheran who believes God is faithful and just, I confess with all repentant sinners:

Most merciful God, we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed. We have not loved You with our whole hearts, nor have we loved our (littlest, biggest, youngest, or oldest) neighbor as ourselves. We deserve Your punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us not according to our will but Yours.

Looking to the Cross of Christ, we hear the One who began His earthly life as an unborn Child say to His Father, "Forgive them."

(Source: <https://ezerwoman.blog/2018/03/20/calling-evil-good/>)



**"BUT THERE IS HOPE!
THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE!"**

Voice of Truth

by Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

As a nurse, I belong to the most trusted profession in the United States (according to Gallup polls). I take that trust very personally. I want to be trusted; therefore, I want the information that I share with patients or clients to be accurate and truthful and based on evidence from credible, independent, well-done research studies—so that my voice will be a voice of truth.

My daughter's recent pregnancy and delivery of a beautiful and healthy baby girl—another masterpiece by God's hand—spurred me to do further research into an area of nursing that I have been a part of for over 26 years: Obstetric and Newborn Nursing. Although I am required to stay current with the protocols of the healthcare system where I am employed, my research indicated that some standard (“routine”) care given is not necessarily evidence based. I found this very disturbing.

But, should I be surprised when society burns with half-truths and lies? We live in a world where wrong things are considered right, and right things are considered wrong.

God's Word, the Voice of Truth, beckons us to do as the Bereans did, to examine the Scriptures to see if the things that Paul taught were really true (Acts 17:11). We must live as the Bereans did, testing everything against the plumb line of God's Holy Word.

Since 1973, when abortion was accepted as a legal alternative to pregnancy, healthcare professionals have been confronted by an ever-increasing number of morally challenging life issues—and the list of ethical dilemmas continues to grow: in vitro fertilization, cloning, fetal experimentation, organ donation and transplantation, nutrition and hydration, patient rights, certain sterilization practices, looming rationing of medical resources, assisted suicide and euthanasia, and stem cell research with its promise of advances in the treatment of disease.

How does this myriad of biotechnology and life issues measure up to God's plumb line? We cannot let ourselves be spoon-fed with whatever “supposed” truths the media, corporate government, researchers/scientists, pharmaceuticals, special interest groups, or society at large want us to believe. It is imperative that we research and seek out the “real” truth, then search the Scriptures and ask God to reveal to us His good and perfect will.

From God's Word we know this:

God created us! “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb ... My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place ... Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” (Psalm 139:13, 15-16 NIV).

Murder is wrong! “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13 NIV).

Our body is not our own; we were bought at a price! “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received

from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20a NIV).

Just because something “can” be done, does not mean it “should” be done. “‘I have the right to do anything,’ you say—but not everything is beneficial. ‘I have the right to do anything’—but I will not be mastered by anything” (1 Corinthians 6:12 NIV).

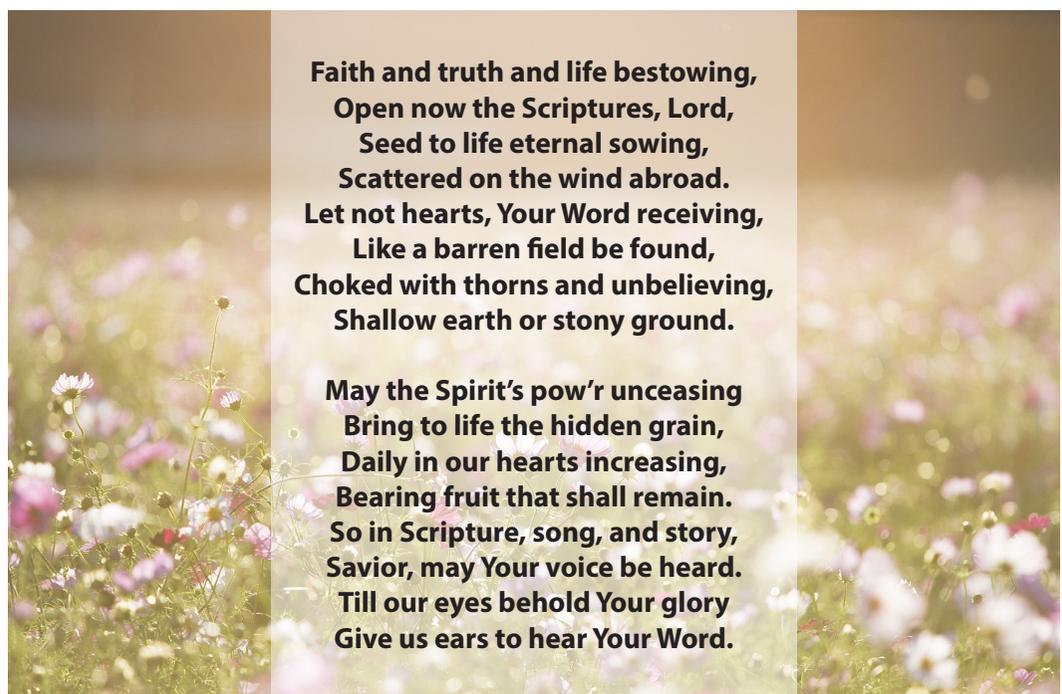
We are to speak! “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute” (Proverbs 31:8 NIV).

Expose the truth! “Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them” (Ephesians 5:11 NIV).

The question remains, how does science and biotechnology and all its avenues, such as in vitro fertilization, cloning, fetal experimentation, and aborting babies for the sake of stem cell research to make vaccines for diseases that are not even life-threatening, stack up to God’s voice of truth?

God’s Word resonates loudly the truth that **EVERY** life is a human being, **SOME-ONE** created by **GOD**, and redeemed by the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, and called into a relationship with God by the Holy Spirit. As Gospel-motivated voices for life, we **MUST** do our research, measure it against God’s plumb line, and speak up to expose the lies, and proclaim the truth—God’s **VOICE** of **TRUTH!**

Dear Heavenly Father, please help us to proclaim Your Voice of Truth to this broken, fallen world. Amen.



**Faith and truth and life bestowing,
Open now the Scriptures, Lord,
Seed to life eternal sowing,
Scattered on the wind abroad.
Let not hearts, Your Word receiving,
Like a barren field be found,
Choked with thorns and unbelieving,
Shallow earth or stony ground.**

**May the Spirit’s pow’r unceasing
Bring to life the hidden grain,
Daily in our hearts increasing,
Bearing fruit that shall remain.
So in Scripture, song, and story,
Savior, may Your voice be heard.
Till our eyes behold Your glory
Give us ears to hear Your Word.**

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Innocuous Inoculations?

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

Of course I had all three of my children vaccinated. Immunizations can prevent deadly diseases. These near-miracles have all but eradicated past threats like smallpox and polio. I got all my inoculations as a kid. Schools need a record of them. We followed the whole schedule our pediatrician recommended. But we would have proceeded differently if we had known that some vaccines contain tissue from aborted babies.

Vaccines target viruses. Viruses aren't alive like other germs. They only work by attaching to another organism. They hijack a cell's machinery and manufacture themselves by the millions. The organism's immune system must dispatch antibodies to dissolve the virus particles. When viruses fabricate faster than antibodies, they can interfere with vital functions. Vaccines use deactivated virus particles. They prompt our insides to make the right antibodies before we face the real infection. That way when we do get exposed, we can take out the pests fast.

Where do we get enough viruses to make the vaccines? Viruses can't grow without living tissue. Sometimes they have no effect on animal cells. Adult human cells might have defects or bring along other microbes. It seems wrong to infect any child on purpose, even when endangering the one could save many. So, scientists in the 1960s took tissue from aborted babies to develop many vaccines. Some records hint that the deaths took place just for the studies. Drug companies have kept these specimens, called cell lines, alive in their labs ever since. They continue using them to form vaccines today.

They called the first cell line WI-38. She never got to have a name. A doctor in Sweden took her from her mother at fourteen weeks in July 1962. The abortion was elective and did not take place for any medical reason. Her lung cells were harvested less than five minutes after her death. The number 38 stands for the thirty-eighth trial. The thirty-seven prior failures drew on twenty-one other aborted babies. They have used WI-38 to prepare vaccines for adenovirus (acute respiratory illness)¹, chickenpox², measles^{2,3}, mumps^{2,3}, rubella^{2,3}, and shingles². (It took sixty-seven more abortions to collect the rubella virus itself.) The other main cell line goes by MRC-5. He died by an abortion done in the U.K. during September 1966. His lung tissue has made vaccines for chickenpox^{2,3}, hepatitis A^{2,3,4}, hepatitis B^{3,4}, typhoid⁴, measles, mumps, rubella, polio^{3,4}, diphtheria-tetanus-acellular pertussis^{3,4}, shingles, and smallpox⁵.

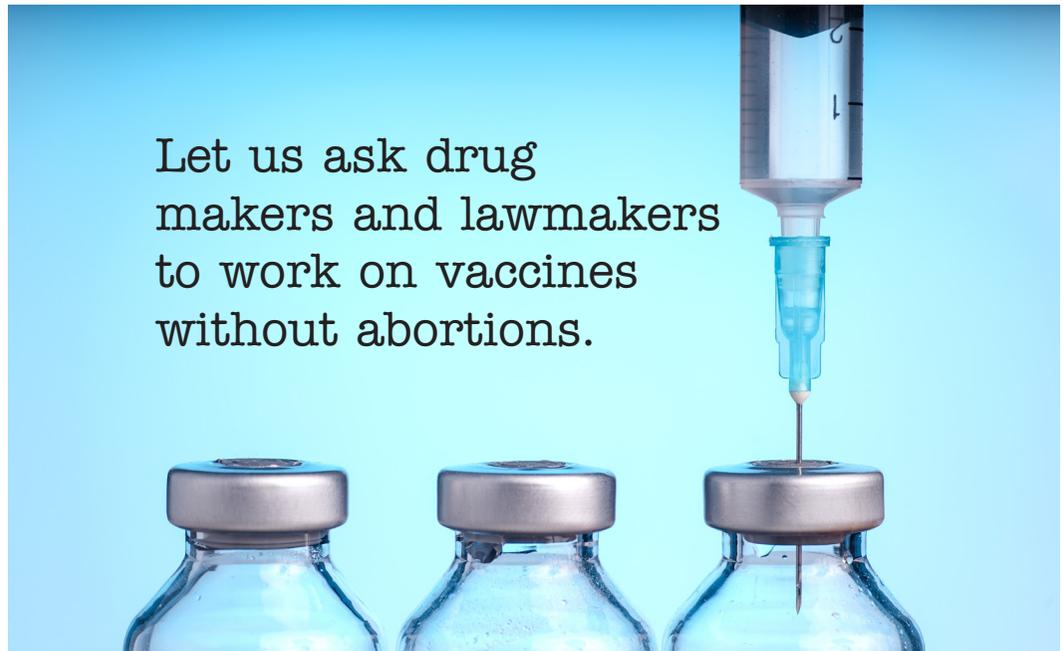
Like all cells, these cultures break down as they get old. They don't last forever. Researchers feel they must turn out more cell lines. Their firms like the funds they bring in, too. They put to death a Dutch baby girl at sixteen weeks in 1972 for HEK-293 (293!). (You can buy a sample to experiment on for \$289.) In the early 1990s another sixteen-week Dutch girl (and some eighty others) died for IMR-90. PER.C6 came from a little one of eighteen weeks in 1985, but the reports don't even recall the sex. Scientists in China ended a twelve-week female's life (and nine more) to get walvax-2 in 2015. These dear children now have become just human diploid cell strains (HDCSs). Our race slayed them so that we could test new vaccines for Ebola, HIV, malaria, and influenza.

Vaccines save lives. They wipe out grave illnesses. Our Lord Himself gives us health this way for Jesus' sake. But vaccines also come with dark sides. They have involved and encouraged abortions. They cause side effects, some of them quite serious. They can pass on other pathogens, like carcinogenic cells, since they carry some DNA from the host cells. When laws force folks to get vaccines, it can violate our conscience or religious freedoms. Certain ailments that vaccines treat only pose minor risks. The vaccine labels (who reads those?) and websites don't hide the origins and ingredients. And most of us don't think twice before having the shots done year in and year out. We just take the doctor's word and let insurance pay for it.

Our Heavenly Father treasures all lives. He gives us even the feeblest human person as a blessing and a privilege. The Lord Jesus dwells with us to free us from sin and death so that no life gets lost. He deals in grace toward us when we have not known what we should. He forgives us for the times we did not care. We may go forth not bound by bad ways, and we can do good.

Not all vaccines use HDCSs from aborted babies. Those that do also have ethical versions that don't come from fetal tissue (except for adenovirus, chickenpox, and MMR). Christians will want to make sure their doctors offer them. If they can't get them, Christians may claim state religious exemptions from required immunizations. And let us ask drug makers and lawmakers to work on vaccines without abortions.

The website www.cogforlife.org tells all this and more about vaccines and abortions. (Notes: ¹sold by Barr Labs, ²sold by Merck, ³sold by Glaxo-Smith-Kline, ⁴sold by Sanofi, ⁵sold by Acambis)



Let us ask drug
makers and lawmakers
to work on vaccines
without abortions.

Bioethics in Luther's Small Catechism

by Ryan C. MacPherson, Ph.D

Does the title of this article surprise you? We are accustomed to thinking of “bioethics” as “new,” stemming from ethical questions surrounding the medical technology of the 20th and 21st centuries. Luther’s *Small Catechism* dates back to 1530. How could Luther’s summary of Scripture possibly be relevant to today’s medical breakthroughs?

Simple. Luther latched onto timeless truths from God’s Word. Whether or not he personally anticipated that his catechism could be applied to bioethics is beside the point. God’s Word is always relevant.

Consider the **First Commandment**, unpacked by Luther into these words: “We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.” Intrauterine devices, contraceptive drugs, fertility treatments, embryonic stem-cell research, human cloning, gender transformation surgery—the list keeps growing, but the issue remains the same. First, consider motive: does your choice in these matters arise from faith in God—from fear, love, and trust in Him above all? Or do you fear pregnancy (or else infertility) more than you fear God? Do you love your scientific research ambitions more than you love Him? Do you trust in your own sense of “gender identity” rather than God’s design for male and female?

Consider the **Fifth Commandment**, unpacked by Luther into these words: “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.” Now talk with your physician about in vitro fertilization: fertilizing multiple eggs in the lab, selecting several of them to be implanted in the uterus, storing or else discarding the rest, knowing that most of the ones that get implanted will not survive, hoping that one will, worried that three might—triplets can be difficult, right? Now ask yourself whether this procedure defends and supports the life of each child, yes, from the moment of conception onward.

Or what about the **Fourth Commandment** in relation to **Holy Baptism**? In the Large Catechism, Luther identifies the reason that children ought to honor and obey their parents: God has given them parents in order to bless them through the spiritual and physical care that God expects parents to provide to their children. Bringing one’s children to Holy Baptism is an essential component of Christian parenthood. Now ask yourself how this applies to children who have been intentionally conceived and then discarded, or frozen in storage indefinitely, as part of the process of bringing a selected sibling of those children into the world. Is it right to baptize the selected one but cut Christian parenthood short with respect to the others?

Consider the **Sixth Commandment** and the numerous study questions and Bible passages provided in the synodical exposition to Luther’s Catechism. Read Genesis 1:28, Psalms 127 and 128, and Malachi 2:15. Now ask yourself whether God desires that husband and wife should remain open to His blessing of children, or whether God regards children as choices to be welcomed only when the situation is convenient by human standards. You know that the world has spoken loudly and clearly as to its position on this issue. Can you also hear that still, quiet voice of God? When you fear,

do you turn to the world's strategy for consolation, or do you remember the **First Article** and the **Fourth Petition**? God richly and daily provides, and He invites you to receive your daily bread with thanksgiving.

Consider **Confession**, unpacked by Luther into these words: "Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of." Perhaps in contemplating the questions provided above, you still do not know right from wrong. Perhaps your conscience is unsettled about prior decisions or confused about forthcoming decisions. Frankly, the remedy is not for you to get your bioethics checklist just right; checklists are for Pharisees, who think they can figure out the right standard and then follow it perfectly. You are too broken for that, and God knows it.

When all else fails (and all else will fail!), consider **Absolution**. The point of absolution is that God forgives those sins which we confess specifically and also those sins which we aren't even sure we need to confess. Lean not on your ability to confess but on His promise to forgive. Come to Jesus with the sincerity of your doubt: "Lord, I've sinned against You in ways that I know and in ways that I don't know. O Christ, I rely on nothing other than Your promise to forgive."

Now ask yourself one more question: Do you still think it odd to speak of "Bioethics in Luther's Small Catechism"? Or, do you realize now that Luther's summary of Holy Scripture provides a framework for addressing all kinds of challenging topics? Luther, like John the Baptist before him, simply pointed to Christ. That's the value of the catechism, for all of life.

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"Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord ..."

Psalm 127:3a



A Turning Point

by Diane E. Schroeder, former President of Lutherans For Life

The day after Thanksgiving was a turning point in my life. I was admitted to our local hospital with a bowel blockage caused by intestinal infection and swelling. A colonoscopy was attempted the next day but failed because of the swelling. Upon returning to the recovery room, I vomited and aspirated the colonoscopy prep liquid into my lungs. I was immediately transferred to the ICU for pulmonary support. My lungs eventually failed. I was ventilated, and my doctor attempted to keep me alive by pumping me with 100% oxygen and paralyzing me so that only my internal organs were supplied with oxygen. Still I continued to decline.

My oxygenation level dropped to the low 70s; it should be 90% or more. Without help I would die. My doctor started making calls to Chicago's teaching hospitals, looking for an ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation) machine and an ECMO medical team to keep me alive. An ECMO machine uses a pump to circulate blood through an artificial lung that oxygenates the blood. I needed a machine to breathe for me if I was going to survive.

The University of Chicago answered my doctor's call for help, and they sent a portable ECMO machine and accompanying medical team via helicopter to my hospital. (It had been determined that I would not survive an ambulance trip.) At our local hospital, they hooked me up to the machine, which immediately oxygenated my blood, and then flew me back to the U of C ICU for further treatment and, hopefully, recovery. Two



nurses hovered over me daily—both an ICU nurse and an ECMO nurse. To the medical community, I was the sickest person in the hospital—ECMO is a last resort for survival.

After weeks in the ICU and a failed attempt to take me off the respirator, I was eventually weaned off the respirator and finally the ECMO machine. My lungs have healed enough for me to breathe normal air without assistance, although I continue to work on my lung endurance for daily tasks. They may never heal completely—only time will tell.

During this whole experience, the devotion of my husband and children was overwhelming. My husband, Carl, kept a careful record of my progress (or lack thereof) on Caring Bridge, where friends and relatives could follow. As I look back at this record, what is astonishing to me is the spiritual uplifting and prayers offered on my behalf by my Christian community. From Caring Bridge:

“The same God that she has served so well is holding her in His hands.”

“Know that your CareNet friends are praying for you, all trusting God and the way He will provide for you.”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and all your soul. God hears and answers prayer. Know that many, many people are praying for one of God’s miracles for one of God’s faithful.”

And when I started to get better, Carl posted, “I know that we have truly assaulted the gates of heaven with our prayers, and we see the results. Keep praying!”

My daughter Liz summed it up best: “Her recovery process has been a perfect reminder that God works in His time, and not in ours, but that it is always worth it to wait on Him! I look forward to seeing what else He has in store for Diane in this season and to the ways He is shaping all of us through this process. God is good, all the time, and all the time, God is good! He alone deserves the glory!”

Through the weeks of hospitalization, the delirium, and the procedures, I never once felt afraid or threatened. God was holding me in His hand. I felt as if I was in a cocoon surrounded by love and support. All the prayers offered on my behalf made a difference. I truly believe that God changed His mind and decided not to bring me home. Like Hezekiah who prayed to God for additional years for his life, God granted all of the prayers offered on my behalf and healed me.

The medical community tells me that I am a walking miracle. Against the odds, the ECMO machine kept me alive and allowed my lungs to heal until I could breathe on my own.

But the greatest miracle is that God saw me as I lay in that hospital bed, held me in His hand, and in His infinite wisdom, granted me healing. Nothing that occurs in our lives is coincidence. God is in complete charge. Although I don’t know the specific purpose behind my near-death experience, I do know that God took this control-freak person and taught her some lessons. It is not often that we are blessed by having our mortality thrown in our face and then living, but the lessons it teaches are life-changing.

- 1. Life is extremely fragile and unpredictable. Do not take it for granted.**
- 2. Time on this earth is limited. Plan it well.**
- 3. Do not wait to tell your spouse you love him, spend time with your children, play with your grandchildren, or forgive another person who has harmed you. Once the opportunity is gone, you might not have another chance.**
- 4. Appreciate the small things. I learned the incredible value of breathing, something most of us don’t even think about.**
- 5. Love unconditionally and forgive. Life is too short. Focus on the big picture, and don’t let yourself get drawn into the weeds of pettiness.**

These are all truths that we say we know, but the reality is that our lives do not reflect their importance. We still believe that we are in control of our lives and that we have time. Not true.

God has given each of us a limited time to be on this earth, a purpose for that time, and people to share that time with. Don’t wait for a near-death experience to teach you the lesson of appreciating to the fullest what God has given you.

Life is too short.

Marvelous Are Your Works!

by Marie K. MacPherson

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret ... Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them” (Psalm 139:13–16 NKJV).

How easy it is to get caught up in our daily frustrations with our children! As imperfect mothers, we wonder why our son just can’t “get it” or why our daughter always acts “like that.” We sometimes get stuck in our perceptions, whether or not they are grounded in reality. Sure, our children are sinners with shortcomings and failings (just like mom), but they are also fearfully and wonderfully made (just like mom)!

Remember the moment you found yourself pregnant with that frustrating child? Whether that instant was filled with joy or fear, it was humbling. To know that God is using a simple, sinful vessel—namely, you—to knit together new life is astounding! The child is totally dependent on you, and yet you have no control over the outcome of the pregnancy! Job 34:14b-15 puts it well:

“If [God] should gather to Himself ... His breath, All flesh would perish together, And man would return to dust.”

Both before and after their births, our children are precious lives belonging to God and redeemed by Him. (Their mothers are, too.) Each of our days is ordained by Him, including the challenging days of motherhood. (For further reading see Psalm 139 and Job 10:8–12.)

Praise to the Lord,
Who hath fearfully, wondrously, made thee;
Health hath vouchsafed
And, when heedlessly falling, hath stayed thee.
What need or grief
Ever hath failed of relief?
Wings of His mercy did shade thee.

(Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary 65:3)

Marie K. MacPherson is author of *Meditations on the Vocation of Motherhood* (from which this devotion is excerpted), *The Story of Baby Shalom* (see page 16), and editor of *Mothering Many: Sanity-Saving Strategies from Moms of Four or More*. Follow her blog at www.intoyourhandsllc.com/blog.



A Father's Prayer

by Pastor Mark Jeske

“Blessed is the man you discipline, O Lord, the man you teach from your law; you grant him relief from days of trouble, till a pit is dug for the wicked. For the Lord will not reject his people; he will never forsake his inheritance” (Psalm 94:12-14).

Lord, I am honored that You made me a father. It was not I who joined a male cell to a female cell and made a new living creature. It was not I who engineered the spectacular event of childbirth. I can't make my child grow even one inch—it is all You. I am humbled and grateful to be a steward of Your wondrous creation.

I am also painfully aware of my own shortcomings. Forgive me for my many acts of selfishness, for being slow at seeing and meeting the needs of my children. Thank You for Your discipline; thank You even more for Your promise never to forsake me.

I need more wisdom than I have now. Please grow my capacity to see, to understand, to remember, to care, and to lead like a servant. I need more strength than I have now. Please grow my stamina, patience, resilience, trust, and courage.

Father, help me to be a father like You.

(www.timeofgrace.org/moments, 6/17/2017. Used by permission of Time of Grace®)

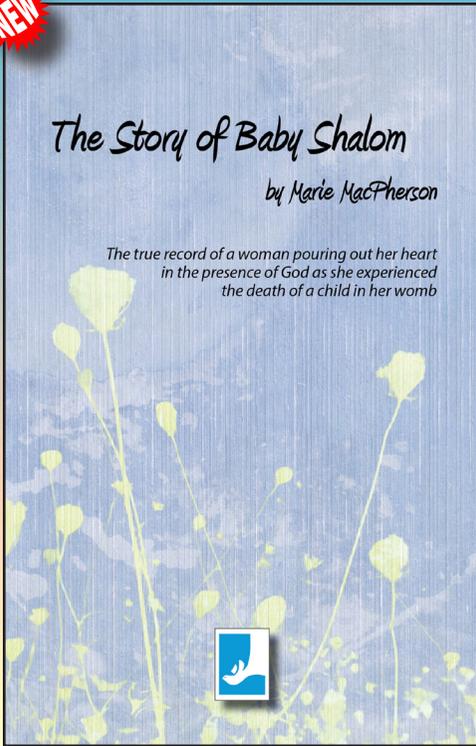
“Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching.

“When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, ‘Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth.’”

Proverbs 4:1-5



NEW



The Story of Baby Shalom by Marie MacPherson

"This is the true record of a woman pouring her heart out in the presence of God as she experienced the death of a child in her womb.

"We offer it here with the hope of bringing comfort and encouragement to others who may find themselves struggling in similar circumstances (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). Shalom means 'peace' and, despite the emotional challenges portrayed, this story ends with the mother of Baby Shalom resting in God's peace.

"May it be so also for you, dear reader, no matter what tragedies befall you."

Item LFL910B. \$2.00 ea.

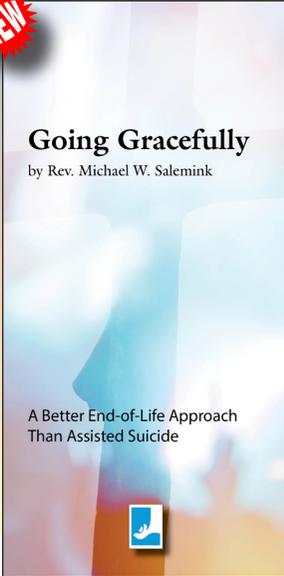
Blessed is the person who trusts the Lord.
The LORD will be his confidence.
He will be like a tree that is planted by water.
It will send its roots down to a stream.
It will not be afraid in the heat of summer.
Its leaves will turn green.
It will not be anxious during droughts.
It will not stop producing fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7-9 *GOD'S WORD*

Going Gracefully - A Better End-of-Life Approach Than Assisted Suicide

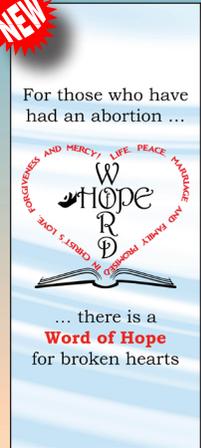


Rev. Michael W. Salemink presents a better end-of-life approach than assisted suicide. Rev. Salemink looks at the issues of autonomy, pain, quality of life, and death with dignity (“What it is,” “Why it’s bad,” and “What is better”). Also included are “Eight Things You Should Know About Assisted Suicide” and “Sixteen Things You Can Do About Assisted Suicide.”
Item LFL811T. \$0.50 ea.



Word of Hope brochure

Abortion. It’s so painful. It’s an experience that goes beyond our physical and emotional being. It penetrates deep into the heart of our spiritual life. The pain just doesn’t go away. This brochure offers information on LFL’s Word of Hope post-abortion ministry, which offers confidential post-abortion referral, counseling, and reconciliation.



Item LFL404T. FREE

Check out our new Word of Hope website! If you are in a crisis situation, have had an abortion, are pregnant right now, or have been hurt by someone, here you will find hope. Word of Hope:

**888.217.8679; info@word-of-hope.org
www.word-of-hope.org.**

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>



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*)

You can find Life Thoughts based on the historic One-Year Lectionary at:

www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-thoughts-in-the-church.

July 1 – Pentecost VI (Proper 8B) – Jesus welcomes a woman with an undignified condition (Mark 5:25). His compassion reaches into the deepest brokenness. The Lord’s mercy works healing. His acceptance restores wholeness. He even gives life to little ones where others can only see death (Mark 5:39). These riches—His presence, His power, His pardon and peace (2 Corinthians 8:9)—they motivate our message more than politics or public opinion. *Gracious Savior, make us to know and show Your healing words. Amen.*

July 8 – Pentecost VII (Proper 9B) – The Heavenly Father fashions crowns from thorns (2 Corinthians 12:9). In His steady hands, human pains have sacred purposes. What most would dismiss as burdensome, hopeless, futile, the God of the Cross adopts and adapts into blessing, holy, significant. He Who redeems hearts redeems hurts as well, whether crises or incurable or even crimes against life, to display His forgiving salvation. *Almighty God, shape us into examples of Your power perfected in weakness and place us as its ambassadors. Amen.*

July 15 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 10B) – Adoption embodies the whole truth and love of God (Ephesians 1:3-5). He came into our flesh, gave it as lifeblood sacrifice, and raised it up from restful death just to adopt sinners as His own sons and daughters. Christians promote and pursue adoptions not primarily as a solution to infertility but as extension of the grace we’ve received to our neighbors in need. *Ever-present Lord, open our eyes and our arms to the ones left forsaken by the devil’s deceptions. Amen.*

July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene – Mary had carried the weight of seven demons (Luke 8:2). No doubt they shouted to her about guilt and pounded her heart with grief. Yet God’s innocent Son wasn’t ashamed that she should see Him crucified. In resurrection He who forgives seventy times seven couldn’t wait to encounter her (John 20:16). We get to impart this relief and experience this rejoicing by bringing His deliverance to souls struggling with abortions. *Dear Jesus, drive away our fears that we may speak Your life. Amen.*

July 29 – Pentecost X (Proper 12B) – God rearranged the atmosphere to proclaim His love for human lives (Genesis 9:16). He has made all the universe’s structures, including our bodies, to serve human survival and salvation. No pregnancy comes forth except at His bidding, and no sickness sets in without His permission (Mark 6:51). If angels and atoms delight respecting every Adam and protecting each Eve, won’t it make us glad declaring it? *Maker of heavens and earth, assist us to commit everything into Your care. Amen.*

August 5 – Pentecost XI (Proper 13B) – Crafty deceitfulness tosses many about concerning life issues (Ephesians 4:14). Christians see more than debates and regulations. At stake are safety and eternity for members of our one body in Christ (4:16). For their sake we speak and show truth in love (4:15) according to our God-given vocations (4:11-12). We take courage that it changes hearts and saves lives even if we suffer for it (4:1). *Bread of Life, build us into a body of hope. Amen.*

August 12 – Pentecost XII (Proper 14B) – The antidote to despair is not autonomy (1 Kings 19:4). God only gives (or reserves!) daily bread to draw hearts into the bakery and unto the Bread-Maker (John 6:35, 44). He has designed human beings for community (1 Kings 19:7), and our opponent has no countermeasure for compassion. When we don’t apathetically abandon those facing life-or-death



situations but instead embrace and assist, we receive them as treasures from heaven. *Giver of Life, strengthen us to strengthen others with Your ways. Amen.*

August 19 – Pentecost XIII (Proper 15B) – Even out of Jesus’ mouth the Gospel causes offense (John 6:61, 66). Yet to whom else shall we go? Shall we take refuge in the empty, ever-changing trends of politically correct popular opinion? Only the Savior speaks life—abundant life, eternal life, life for free, life for all (6:63). If our words do not declare and deliver life, they do not come from the Lord. *O Wisdom from on high, let Your goodness fill our hearts and mouths. Amen.*

August 26 – Pentecost XIV (Proper 16B) – Matters of marriage, sexuality, and procreation are not marginal to the Christian message. Husband, wife, and children capture the heart of the Gospel in their unconditional acceptance and self-sacrificing servanthood (Ephesians 5:31-32). Indifference or abuse to family structure diminishes our life-saving witness. Celebrating and exercising these gifts will strengthen all other social institutions as well. *Heavenly Bridegroom, charm us into enthusiastically submitting to Your will. Amen.*

September 2 – Pentecost XV (Proper 17B) – Life issues can present great temptations. The complications of surprise pregnancies pressure folks into adding to God’s Word. Infertility and terminal illnesses steer many toward subtracting from the Lord’s commands (Deuteronomy 4:2). Still, He who takes ownership of the inner life by His forgiveness also takes responsibility for the body’s survival by His resurrection. His presence and promises arm and guard against every threat (Ephesians 6:11). *Good Shepherd and Guardian, give security to us and through us in Your words. Amen.*

September 9 – Pentecost XVI (Proper 18B) – Abortions, assisted suicides, and embryo-destroying experiments all discriminate. These actions assign value according to age, appearance, ability, environment, or history. The Gospel of Jesus Christ eagerly dispenses with such partiality (James 2:1, 5). The Word of His grace proclaims life to those in need and then performs it with and for them (James 2:17-18). How may we echo and imitate this miracle in our neighborhoods? *Humble Lord Jesus, teach us poverty of pride that we may obtain riches in relationships. Amen.*

September 16 – Pentecost XVII (Proper 19B) – Ancient societies often avoided demon-possessed persons (Mark 9:17-18, 22). “It’s your problem, not my business. Don’t bother me, deal with it yourself.” The modern mantra, “Your body, your choice,” tells the same lie. When we keep silent and still on life issues, we only confirm this devilish deception. Christians get to speak with Christ’s courage and reach out in God’s compassion: “You matter. We’ll help” (Isaiah 50:4). *O Lord, loose our tongues to declare Your mighty deeds. Amen.*

September 23 – Pentecost XVIII (Proper 20B) – Everyone who loves the Lord God also loves His little ones (Mark 9:37). Every child is a treasure. Every person, especially the vulnerable, is our neighbor. Every life, even the feeblest, is gift and privilege from above. Life-or-death situations allow opportunity for us to receive them—see them, be seen with them, meet their needs. The Gospel of Jesus Christ means life with a Father and His family. *Father in heaven, assist us to receive Your little ones. Amen.*

September 30 – Pentecost XIX (Proper 21B) – “I can’t carry this alone” (Numbers 11:14). Moses echoes the emotions of sudden pregnancy, chronic conditions, and advocating for life among communities that ignore. “You’re not alone,” says the Lord (Numbers 11:16, Mark 9:40, James 5:14). “Lean on my people.” Jesus Christ goes with you. The communion of saints shares your joys and sorrows. Sometimes speaking up for life starts with approaching the lonely. *Lord of the Church, cause our fellowship to show Your love. Amen.*



A Vancouver, British Columbia, doctor is credited with saving a woman who had contemplated jumping off a bridge. Emily Stevens was seven-months pregnant on the day she grabbed and hung onto the woman on the Granville Bridge. The counterbalance of the pregnancy kept Stevens upright as she held onto the suicidal woman before police arrived. Now Stevens has received a merit award from the Vancouver Police Department for her actions. At the time, Dr. Stevens explained her then-unborn daughter Lily helped her in a way she had not expected: “I say Lily was my counterbalance because I was a bit heavier than usual and had a different center of gravity than I usually would.” During the March 1 ceremony, Stevens held six-month-old Lily in her arms. Stevens has not seen the woman since that day last June. “I like to think that no matter what, she got another chance at the end of the day to get some help and get better,” she said. “I hope that as my daughter grows up, if she unfortunately has mental issues, that someone else will be there to help her when she needed it.” (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 3/28/18; *CLR LifeWire*, 3/29/18)

Abortions Worldwide in 2018

www.worldometers.info/abortions

A report released March 7 by the Netherlands’ euthanasia monitoring committee finds the number of Dutch assisted deaths increased again in 2017—by 8%. Last year a total of 6,585 Dutch citizens died by assisted death. That’s up from 4,188 five years ago. The annual data also shows the number of assisted deaths for dementia or psychiatric reasons rose in 2017: 169 individuals died by euthanasia for dementia, and 83 people died by euthanasia for psychiatric reasons. A dozen of the euthanasia deaths were labeled as questionable. Another four assisted death cases of Dutch women warranted criminal inquiries, and they have been referred to the public prosecutor’s office. The Netherlands’ euthanasia law uses a voluntary self-reporting system, one that permits the doctor who lethally injects the patient to also submit the report. Terminations of life without request go unreported. There is yet to be a single prosecution of a doctor involved in such deaths. (*NRL News Today*, 3/14/18; *CLR LifeWire*, 3/15/18)

Belgium’s euthanasia regulatory body is under fire after evidence of gross negligence in its oversight practices surfaced after a patient was euthanized without consent. Dr. Ludo Van Opdenbosch ... stated the [Federal Commission for Euthanasia Control and Evaluation] failed to refer a doctor to authorities who allegedly euthanized a dementia patient incapable of giving consent. The letter gave details of the case—specifically, the undisclosed patient euthanized at the family’s request with no record of any prior request for euthanasia from the patient ... “It’s not euthanasia because the patient didn’t ask, so it’s the voluntary taking of a life,” said Dr. An Haekens, psychiatric director at the Alexianen Psychiatric Hospital in Tienen, Belgium. “I don’t know another word other than murder to describe this.” (*BioEdge.org*, 2/17/18; *CLRLifeWire*, 2/22/18)

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

Share the Life Message All through the Year!

Lutherans For Life offers several easy ways to keep the life message before your congregation! Go to www.lutheransforlife.org (MEDIA tab).

- **LifeDate:** Order **LifeDate** in bulk quantities at no charge. (Donations for shipping cost will gladly be accepted.) Call 888.364.LIFE (5433).
- **Life News:** Download **Life News**, our monthly bulletin insert with life-issue news and more!
- **Life Notes:** Sign up for **Life Notes**, our weekly email update.
- **Life Quotes/Life Thoughts:** Share **Life Quotes** and **Life Thoughts in the Church Year** in weekly congregational bulletins (or monthly newsletters).

Check Out “Life on the Web” on our Life Blog



www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog

Automatic Withdrawal of Your Bills—and LFL, Too?

Go to www.lutheransforlife.org and click “Give.” Then look for “**Automatic Monthly Debit from Your Checking or Savings Account (ACH)**.” Download the ACH Contribution Form. Follow the instructions, and your automatic gift withdrawal will be in place. Many thanks in Christ! – *John Hawkins*

For Those Who Have Had an Abortion, a Word of Hope



We all have grieved the loss of someone at some point in our lives ... But those who have lost a child because they had an abortion, or were part of an abortion decision, often do not allow themselves to grieve or don't know how to grieve. 888-217-8679 or info@word-of-hope.org • www.word-of-hope.org

Since 1973: 60,069,971 abortions in America

Source: www.lifenews.com/2018/01/18/60069971-abortions-in-america-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973

Children of the Heavenly Father – A Visit to India

by Rev. Scott Licht, National Director of Lutherans For Life

A boy who watched helplessly as his father was mauled to death by a tiger ... a girl whose prostitute-mother committed suicide ... a boy whose parents abandoned him because “he walks funny,” and they were embarrassed by him ... a girl who was rescued from her sex-trafficking aunt by an alert motel clerk ... a girl who was found wandering the streets in just her underwear and had no idea where her parents had gone many days before—these are just a few of the stories of the children who have found a home in one of the two orphanages in India that I have visited annually for four years.

I certainly don’t profess to be an expert in the religio-socio-political morass that is the Indian government, nor do I claim any special knowledge about orphans—or children, for that matter. I just know that when Brianca, Vinit, Prabhakar, or any of the other children give me a hug, there’s a connection that transcends language, skin color, or the fact that we make our homes literally half a world away from each other.

But there’s another, deeper connection. Both of the orphanages are run by pastors and their families associated with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC). The children not only are blessed to have their physical needs met, but they have daily devotions, pray before every meal, and live in a Christian “family” setting in a nation that is growing increasingly hostile toward Christians.

While they share a similar Lutheran background, the two orphanages are quite different. Both are in Andhra Pradesh, a state in east central India. The orphanage in Gudipadu, a village of about 3,000 residents, mostly Hindu, houses 35 children but provides food and other support for an additional 15. The one-story, open, rectangular facility sits on the edge of town, surrounded by fields of peppers or cotton. Children have learned to be wary of the aggressive stray dogs, monkeys, and the occasional cobra. Farmers pass by every morning and evening with their cattle or goats headed for the little bit of brush and weeds growing in the arid pasture. Six days a week the children rise at 5:30 a.m. to do their chores, eat breakfast, and walk down the gravel road to their public school. After school, they have a set routine of play and study in the central courtyard of the orphanage. Pastor Benarji Duggi; his wife, Lalitha; and their children and grandchildren provide a genuine feel of one big, happy family. The



Lutheran congregation that Pastor Duggi serves meets every Sunday at 11:00 in one of the larger rooms in the compound.

The other orphanage is in a relatively small three-bedroom apartment on the sixth floor in the city of Tanuku—population 115,000—about 150 miles from Gudipadu. Four girls occupy one bedroom, eleven boys occupy another bedroom, and the “house parents” (Pastor Swen Kumar and his wife, Aruna) live in the third. The 450-square-foot common area serves as a study, play room, lunch room, TV room, and overflow sleeping quarters for the boys. There is an open area outside of the apartment (yes, also on the sixth floor) where the children play, hang up laundry, or just hang out. Six days a week the children fight the snarl of cars, motorcycles, trucks, and bikes as they walk the half mile to school. After school, Aruna helps them with their homework, listens to their joys and frustrations, or just takes some time to snuggle with a few of the children. The Lutheran congregation that Pastor Swen serves meets in Rapaka, about five miles from the orphanage. The children are ferried to church on a motorcycle or in a tuk tuk (an auto rickshaw).

So, for one week per orphanage each year, I get to play cricket, badminton, and soccer. The children get to laugh at my white skin and bald head. They get to practice their English skills on me and try to teach me Telugu. I get to eat food that’s so spicy it makes the top of my head sweat, but also bananas and pineapple so fresh and sweet that it’s difficult to eat them when I get back home. The children get to try such delicacies as “imported” Rice Krispie Bars and candy canes as I try to describe things like “snow” and “lawn mowing.”

But at the end of the day, we might pass around the fetal models that have been donated to the orphanage and look up at the moon and stars, giving thanks and praise to the same God who “created, redeemed, and called” each of us regardless of language, skin color, food preference, or homeland. We are all “Children of the Heavenly Father.”

If you feel led to help support these orphanages, the point location for the Tanuku orphanage is Bethany Lutheran Church, 609 Giddings St., Kelley, IA 50134. The point location for the Gudipadu orphanage is Immanuel Lutheran Church, 900 Warrior Lane, Waukeez, IA 50263. Also see www.facebook.com/cscministries and www.lutheransforlife.org/article/children-of-the-heavenly-father-a-visit-to-india for an extensive photo gallery.



Can You Believe This? A Very Shocking Statistic (Part One)

by John Hawkins, Director of Development

A couple months ago, something came across my desk that I still find hard to believe. Let me tell you about it.

Recently, the Pew Research Center surveyed American denominations on abortion. Among their findings was that of Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod members polled, 46% said abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

If that wasn't bad enough, the survey contained what I thought was even more unsettling news.

Among other church bodies polled, 30% of Southern Baptists similarly felt abortion should be legal while 66% didn't. While I rejoice that a solid majority of their members are pro-life, I also found the contrast in percentages with the LCMS to be troubling.

Why? Because Lutherans pride themselves in making sure prospective members know what the Bible and their church teach *before* they join. This is done through confirmation, instruction classes, etc. This structured approach is much different than bringing members in via an altar call with the particulars of the faith intended to be shared at a later date.

If pro-life has taken stronger root in a Christian body with less training on its beliefs than a more formal one like the LCMS, it can only mean that the process has broken down somewhere (at least on life affirmation).

In short, either a Gospel-centered, life-affirming stance has (1) *not* been shared with those in the pews (or only very sparingly), or if it has, it's (2) been forgotten or rejected by its members.

Regarding (1), I've observed in the four years I've been with LFL a lack of sharing can take generally one of two scenarios: (A) the congregation considers the subject of abortion to be "untouchable" therein or (B) life affirmation is so far on the back burner it might as well not be there at all.

A lot of factors can be part of this. In some instances, there are both longstanding pro-life and pro-choice factions in the church along with concern that assertively embracing the former will split the congregation. In some cases, pro-life folks want to do something in their church but meet resistance from the pastor or vice versa. (Does this describe your church?)

Another factor can be concern for persons in the parish who have participated in an abortion decision and that old and serious wounds will be reopened. So, the subject



is never mentioned. The result is additional ladies in the pew may decide to terminate their pregnancy because reasons not to are never shared.

Still other churches I perceive don't take a pro-life stance because they feel this will discourage unchurched persons from exploring their congregation or joining it. (Personally, I don't understand why outreach to singularly save souls takes precedence over trying to save *lives and souls*.) Which leads to the question: is it possible to be confirmed as an adult in an LCMS congregation and *not know* it's pro-life? Are there instruction classes where this subject is never mentioned? (How is this handled at your church?)

Even more tragically, is it possible as a teenager to be confirmed and not know that life affirmation is taught by the Bible and the church? Fortunately, some data indicates this is less likely. According to the 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering Survey, 76.2% said they were pro-life. So, the message may be getting through to more of our teens than adults. (We can praise God for this!)

Regarding scenario B, this is where life affirmation is not ignored but put on the back burner—way back. It reminds me of a pundit's scenario once regarding Christianity. It goes like this: *if the government was overthrown and a brutal, anti-Christian dictatorship took over and hauled you before one of their courts and accused you of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to find you guilty?* The answer is that you hope so.

A pro-life “take-off” on that could be that while an LCMS congregation supports the pro-life position of the Synod, nobody can remember the last time Life Sunday was observed, either LFL or another pro-life group had a display in the narthex, a life-affirming sermon was preached, anyone from the parish volunteered at the local pregnancy center (or it was advertised in the church newsletter that help was needed), the website or literature rack displayed anything to indicate the church affirmed life, and last but not least, the congregation hosted or at least had some members who were active in an LFL Life Chapter/Team, pregnancy center, Right to Life group, etc. (or financially supported one or more of the same).

In short, no one would ever be counseled to get an abortion at this church, but no one is going to take leadership in trying to persuade anybody in the pews who might be among the 46% of pro-choice folks to change their minds, either.

The solution in either scenario, of course, is to prayerfully embrace one and hopefully several of the approaches above as part of either a first-time or renewed commitment to Gospel-centered life affirmation. The reason why? **BECAUSE EVERY LUTHERAN CHURCH THAT BELIEVES LIFE BEGINS AT CONCEPTION HAS A DUTY TO WITNESS GOSPEL-CENTERED LIFE AFFIRMATION BEGINNING WITH THEIR OWN MEMBERS.**

But what about situations where the church *is* doing its job in the pro-life arena and still finds it has members that are directly or indirectly supporting a pro-choice position?

That will be discussed in Part Two in the next issue of LifeDate. **In the meantime, LFL has a lot of work to do to try** to assist churches, its Life Chapters and Life Teams, and its members win over many of our own people along with others. **We also need you to partner with us! If you have not yet given in 2018, can you help us at this time? An envelope is included with this issue, and you can give online at www.lutheransforlife.org/give. Many thanks in Christ.**

Mark your calendars ...

2018 Lutherans For Life National
Conference • St. Louis, Missouri
October 12-13



From Age to Age the Same

www.lutheransforlife.org/conference

Online Registration is Open!

“... I am he,
and to gray
hairs I will
carry you. I
have made,
and I will
bear; I will
carry and
will save.”
Isaiah 46:4

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Join us in St. Louis! Our Lord and Savior remains the same from eternity unto eternity through all changes in human history and individual experiences—including our sinfulness;

Human sanctity and dignity are the same—that is, infinite—from the invisible miracle of conception to the moment of natural death, through all states and stages of a person’s life; and

Lutherans For Life, celebrating 40 years of being a voice For Life, is still motivated by the same Gospel courage and compassion to speak truth and show love, respecting and protecting every human being as a treasure and privilege from God our Father.

Speakers include:

www.lutheransforlife.org/conference

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- Rev. Dr. Sam Nafzger
- Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb
- Rev. Ed Fehskens III
- Rev. Michael Newman
- Rev. Chris Wheatley
- Laura Davis
- Deaconess Rachel Geraci
- Brian Young
- Rev. Michael Salemink
- Rev. Rory Karg
- Rev. Fredric Hinz
- Deaconess Chrissie Gillet, PsyD
- Lynette Auch
- Dr. Cara Buskmiller
- Rev. Michael Dobler
- Rev. Todd Kollbaum
- Mona Fuerstenau

Thank You, Life Chapters!

In addition to all they do to serve Gospel-centered life affirmation and Lutherans For Life in their local communities, we would like to thank the following Life Chapters for their support of National Lutherans For Life during 2017:

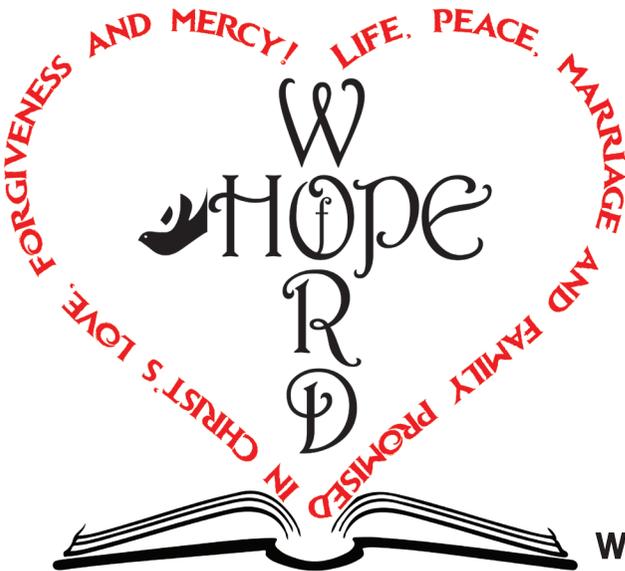
Carver Lifelines LFL #096, Waconia, MN; Central Connecticut LFL #204, Bristol, CT; Cleveland West LFL #161, Westlake, OH; Dupage County LFL #083, Villa Park, IL; Fargo-Moorhead Area LFL #037, Fargo, ND; Fond du Lac LFL #304, Fond du Lac, WI; Fort Wayne Area LFL #141, Fort Wayne, IN; Four-S LFL #034, Stewardson, IL; Fremont Area LFL #309, Fremont, NE; Helena Area LFL #318, Helena, MT; Houston LFL #132, Houston, TX; Jefferson County LFL #180, Dittmer, MO; Lakeshore LFL #152, Luxemburg, WI; LFL of Denver #023, Littleton, CO; LFL of Greater Grand Rapids Minnesota #317, Grand Rapids, MN; Lincoln Area LFL #184, Lincoln, NE; Linn Area LFL #072, Marion, IA; Los Angeles LFL #275 - Our Redeemer Lutheran, Winnetka, CA; Loving Arms LFL #094, Fraser, MI; McHenry County LFL #155, Marengo, IL; Missouri-Capital Area LFL #102, Jefferson City, MO; Monadnock LFL #241, Keene, NH; Natoma LFL #308, Natoma, KS; Norfolk Area LFL #195, Norfolk, NE; North Carolina LFL #006, Conover, NC; Northern Virginia LFL #168, Fairfax, VA; Ozaukee County LFL #026, Cedarburg, WI; Peoria Area LFL #268, Eureka, IL; Portage Area LFL #038, Portage, WI; Rochester Area LFL #339, Stewartville, MN; Root River LFL #139, Spring Valley, MN; Salem Lutheran LFL #246, Black Jack, MO; Shawano Area LFL #093, Shawano, WI; South St Louis City/County LFL #124, St. Louis, MO; Southeast Nebraska LFL #125, Steinauer, NE; West Central Wisconsin LFL #011, Mondovi, WI; West St Louis County LFL #192, Pacific, MO; Winona Area LFL #110, Winona, MN; Yellowstone Valley LFL #331, Billings, MT



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www.word-of-hope.org

2017 Congregational Auxiliaries – Organizations Donor Honor Roll

Lutherans For Life is very grateful to the following congregational auxiliaries and organizations for their financial support in 2017. To God be the Glory!

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Ladies Guild, Broomfield, CO; Bella Vista Lutheran Church LWML, Bella Vista, AR; Bethlehem Luth. Church – Middleville LWML, Annandale, MN; Bethlehem Lutheran Ladies Aid, Morristown, MN; Bethlehem Lutheran Women's Guild, West Dundee, IL; Christ Greenfield Lutheran School, Gilbert, AZ; Christ Lutheran Church – Dorcas Circle, Duluth, MN; Christ Lutheran Ladies Aid, St. Paul, NE; Christ Lutheran LWML, Elbow Lake, MN; Christ Lutheran LWML, Rawlins, WY; Christ Lutheran Women's Guild, Mantua, OH; Community Lutheran Church Women, Wausaukee, WI; Concordia Ladies Aid, Clearwater, NE; Concordia Luth. Bible Classes, Machesney Park, IL; Concordia Lutheran LWML, Oak Harbor, WA; Concordia Women in Mission, Machesney Park, IL; Daughters of Peace, Rock Rapids, IA; Dorcas Society, Taylor Ridge, IL; Dorcas Society, Troy, MO; Drummond Island Lutheran Women, Drummond Island, MI; Ebenezer Lutheran Johanna Jacobs Circle, Greensboro, NC; Ebenezer Mission Society, Leslie, MO; Emmanuel Ladies Aid, Green River, WY; Faith Lutheran Christian Service League, Sturtevant, WI; Faith Lutheran Church LWML, Jefferson City, MO; Faith Lutheran Church Women, Dannebrog, NE; Faith Lutheran Ladies Society, Early, IA; Faith Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Grand Prairie, TX; First Lutheran Church Guild–LWML, Phillipsburg, KS; First Lutheran Women in Mission, Waldorf, MN; First Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Paola, KS; Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Pekin, IL; Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Columbia, MO; Good Shepherd Lutheran Youth Group, Sherman, IL; Grace Lutheran Adult Bible Class, Paris, IL; Grace Lutheran Church LWML, Crescent City, CA; Grace Lutheran LWML, Visalia, CA; Grace Lutheran School, Brenham, TX; Green Park Lutheran School, St. Louis, MO; Guardian Lutheran School, Dearborn, MI; Holy Cross Lutheran Ladies Aid, Waterloo, IL; Immanuel Luth. Ladies Aid of Potsdam, Elgin, MN; Immanuel Lutheran Church Ladies Aid, Tilden, NE; Immanuel Lutheran Church Women, Plainview, MN; Immanuel Lutheran Church–Mission Club, Davenport, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Evening Guild, Hewitt, WI; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Aid, Logan, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Aid/LWML, Rockwell City, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Society, Decatur, IN; Immanuel Lutheran School, Bay City, MI; Immanuel Lutheran School, Alpena, MI; Immanuel Lutheran School, Jefferson City, MO; Immanuel LWML, Powell, WY; Immanuel LWML (Lotts Creek), Lone Rock, IA; LLL Club – St Paul Blue Point, Altamont, IL; Lutheran Central School, Brownstown, IN; Lutheran CORE (Coalition For Renewal), Wausau, WI; Lutheran Women's Missionary Guild, Madison, CT; Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Falls City, NE; Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Salinas, CA; LWML - St. Matthew Luth. Church, Hazen, ND; LWML Minnesota North Dist. – Faith Circle, Barnum, MN; LWML of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pittsfield, IL; LWML Washington-Alaska District, Yakima, WA; LWML-Rochester Zone, Rochester, MN; Lydia Circle – St. Paul's Luth. Church, Boone, IA; Lydia's Fellowship Thrift Store, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Mary Martha Guild, Columbia, MO; Mary-Martha Circle, Oakley, KS; Messiah Lutheran Women's Guild, Ripon, WI; Minkota Mission District, Erskine, MN; Mission Circle - LWML (Trinity), Glidden, WI; National AALC Women of Life, Nunda, SD; North Shore Lutheran Ministry, Lake Forest, IL; Our Redeemer Women of Life, Williston, ND; Our Savior's Afternoon Guild, Crookston, MN; Our Savior's Lutheran Women's Guild, Hutchinson, MN; Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid, Wall Lake, IA; Peace Lutheran Women's Guild, Columbus, NE; Peace Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Rockport, TX; Pella Lutheran Ladies Aid, Waupun, WI; Redeemer Lutheran Church LWML, Sioux City, IA; Redeemer Lutheran School, Verona, PA; Saint John Lutheran Ladies Guild, Motley, MN; Salem Lutheran Morning Bible Class, Salem, MO; St John Lutheran Guild, McCook, NE; St John Lutheran School, Wykoff, MN; St John LWML, Alta, IA; St John LWML, Covina, CA; St John's Fellowship Club, Pekin, IL; St John's Luth. Church Ladies Aid, Hammond, MN; St John's Luth. Church LWML, Wilcox, NE; St John's Lutheran Church Ladies Aid, Wisconsin Rapids, WI;

St John's Lutheran Ladies Aid, Lincoln Park, MI; St John's Lutheran Ladies Aid, Victor, IA; St John's LWML, Buffalo, MN; St Matthew Lutheran Ladies Society, Almena, WI; St Matthew LWML, Lees Summit, MO; St Michaels Lutheran Church - Mary Martha Guild, Richville, MI; St Michael's Lutheran School, Richville, MI; St Paul Church Cotta Guild, Waseca, MN; St Paul Dorcas Society, Fairview, KS; St Paul Ladies Aid-Whitehall, Strum, WI; St Paul Lutheran Church LWML, Minot, ND; St Paul Lutheran School, Bay City, MI; St Paul LWML, Garner, IA; St Paul Women of Life, Tripoli, IA; St Paul's Ev Lutheran Lydia Circle, Fredericksburg, IA; St Paul's Ladies Aid, Fulda, MN; St Paul's LWML, Park City, MT; St Paul's LWML, Wauneta, NE; St Paul's Men's Club, Concordia, MO; St Peter's Ladies Aid, LWML, Scribner, NE; St Peter's Lutheran Church LWML, Riceville, IA; St Peter's Lutheran School, St. Peter, IL; St. James Lutheran Church LWML, Lexington, TX; St. John Lutheran LWML, Melcher-Dallas, IA; St. John Lutheran Wings Ministry, Battle Creek, NE; St. John's Luth. Ladies Aid, Villard, MN; St. John's Luth. Women's Missionary League, Norwood Young America, MN; St. John's LWML, Denver, IA; St. Luke's Lutheran Church Missionary League, Worland, WY; St. Matthew LWML, Rocklin, CA; St. Matthew's Ev. LWML, Max, ND; St. Paul Ev. Lutheran LWML, Lester Prairie, MN; St. Paul Lutheran Dorcas Circle, Bishop, TX; St. Paul Lutheran Guild, Red Bluff, CA; St. Paul Lutheran Ladies Aid, Sanford, MI; St. Paul LWML, Lewistown, MT; St. Paul's Dorcas Circle, Falls City, NE; St. Paul's Ladies Society, Boone, IA; St. Paul's Lutheran Church Women, Wenatchee, WA; St. Paul's LWML, Webster City, IA; St. Paul's LWML, Janesville, WI; St. Paul's LWML, Bridgeport, NE; St. Paul's LWML, Jerome, ID; St. Peter Lutheran Ladies Aid, Ocheyedon, IA; Trinity All Circle Guild, Mallard, IA; Trinity Ladies Aid, State Center, IA; Trinity Ladies Aid, New Haven, MO; Trinity Lutheran Adult Bible Class, Conklin, MI; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Chariton, IA; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Knoxville, IA; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Hartford, SD; Trinity Lutheran Church Mary Guild, Pine Bluff, AR; Trinity Lutheran Church Willing Workers, Springfield, IL; Trinity Lutheran Church Women, Blanco, TX; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid, Marcus, IA; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid, Packwaukee, WI; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid & LWML, Jansen, NE; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid/LWML, Cissna Park, IL; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Society, Hampton, IA; Trinity Lutheran School, Davenport, IA; Trinity Lutheran School, Winfield, KS; Trinity Lutheran Women's League, Casper, WY; Trinity Lutheran Women's League, Fort Dodge, IA; Trinity Missionary League (LWML), Copperas Cove, TX; Women of St Paul, Fort Dodge, IA; Women's League of St John's Luth. Church, Topeka, KS; Zion Ladies Aid, Offerle, KS; Zion Lutheran Church Bible Class, Grant Park, IL; Zion Lutheran Church LWML, Hiawatha, IA; Zion Lutheran Evening Circle, Arcadia, IA; Zion Lutheran Ladies' Aid & LWML, Cologne, MN; Zion Lutheran Ladies Aid Society, Mondovi, WI; Zion Lutheran School, Denison, IA; Zion Lutheran School, Beecher, IL; Zion Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), Terra Bella, CA; Zion Lutheran Women's Society, Sauk Centre, MN; Zion LWML, Ogden, IA; Zion LWML, Detroit Lakes, MN; Zion LWML, Buffalo, OK

While every effort was made to include all contributing auxiliaries and organizations, we regret any that may have been omitted by oversight.



MARCH *for* **LIFE**

The next March for Life ...

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 2019

Lutherans For Life will be there!

marchforlife.org

www.lutheransforlife.org/event/1094694-2019-01-18-march-for-life-2019

A Letter of Thanks to Every Member of Lutherans For Life

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

What a great time to be Lutherans For Life! Our message is reaching more ears and more needs than ever. We're finding motivation, getting education, and taking action across the country and around the world. Your partnership and support are making it possible for us to participate firsthand in the miracles of the Lord our God changing hearts and saving lives.

As a member of Lutherans For Life, you are testifying to the sanctity of humanity even in suffering. You are witnessing with us to the opportunities each life represents even in uncertainty. You are giving voice to the promise every person has even in weakness. You are putting into practice how precious the Almighty Maker has created, redeemed, and called all human individuals to be even in unexpected circumstances. By declaring and demonstrating what blessings a human being brings—at any age, appearance, or ability—you are giving purpose, hope, and joy to vulnerable souls—and to the whole world!

Thank you for helping us speak God's truth and show Christ's love. He is lending His own heavenly success to our efforts. All of Lutherans For Life's members are a great encouragement to our ministry. Please accept our grateful appreciation for your continued fellowship. We couldn't be Lutherans For Life without you. And may our Savior grant us the next thirty-nine years serving together as well!

In truth and love,



Rev. Michael W. Salemink
Executive Director, Lutherans For Life

P.S. If you are not a member of Lutherans For Life but wish to change that now, please return the enclosed donation envelope. You can also join online at www.lutheransforlife.org/give.

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.

Lutherans For Life ...

Is a **Recognized Service Organization** (RSO) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Is a **ministry partner** of the North American Lutheran Church.

Is not subsidized by any church body.

Is supported entirely by individual donations and grants.



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

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran, both individually and in community, 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 a Gospel-motivated witness to the Church and society on these and other related issues, such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living. We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult situations.

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