

LifeDate

Summer/June
2019
Digital



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life



Science on the Side of Life

A look at scientific advancements relevant to affirming life

“Great are the works of the Lord, studied
by all who delight in them.” (Psalm 111:2)

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

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Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life

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Leap for Joy

by Rev. Troy Tysdal

A few years ago, I was approached by a couple considering an abortion. They wanted a pastor's opinion, so I gave them one. I told them that God values life—so much so that He sent His one and only Son to be crucified for the sins of the world. The young couple seemed conflicted. “But, it's legal!” replied the young man.

About a year later, the governor of my state vetoed a bill requiring doctors to ask women seeking an abortion if they would first like to see an ultrasound. I watched on social media as several friends rejoiced over the veto—with one friend writing, “I've never been so proud to live in this state!”

These comments came from intelligent people, but intelligent people who have been deceived. The Scriptures tell us that it is God who knits a child together (Psalm 139:13), and even that the infant John the Baptist leapt for joy in his mother's womb when he first heard the voice of Mary—the mother of his Lord (Luke 1:44).

As the Church, we are created to stand against evil. We are created to speak truth... and forgiveness. The truth is that abortion ends the life of a human being, and we should be unwavering in our opposition to it. But that is not the end of the story. We have been given the gift of Christ, and the power of Christ can wash our sins away.

Perhaps that is the message you need to hear today—the message that all sinners need. Whatever your sin, no matter how big or how small, the blood of Jesus is enough.

May your soul leap for joy—for your Savior has come!

Rev. Troy Tysdal is director of communications and prayer for the Church of the Lutheran Brethren and serves as editor in chief of Faith & Fellowship magazine.



Ten Life-Affirming Science Facts

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Does science conflict with Christian faith? Does Scripture contradict the data? Can science falsify Christianity? The Gospel relies on historical events, observable evidence, and commonly accessible facts. If science could demonstrate Jesus never suffered under Pontius Pilate, wouldn't it effectively refute the Bible's entire message? **"And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain"** (1 Corinthians 15:14). An obstinate desire for human supremacy, even in denial of obvious and overwhelming proof to the contrary, this masquerading as "science," advanced by "experts," and eagerly accepted by the masses—this may constitute a rival religion to Christianity.

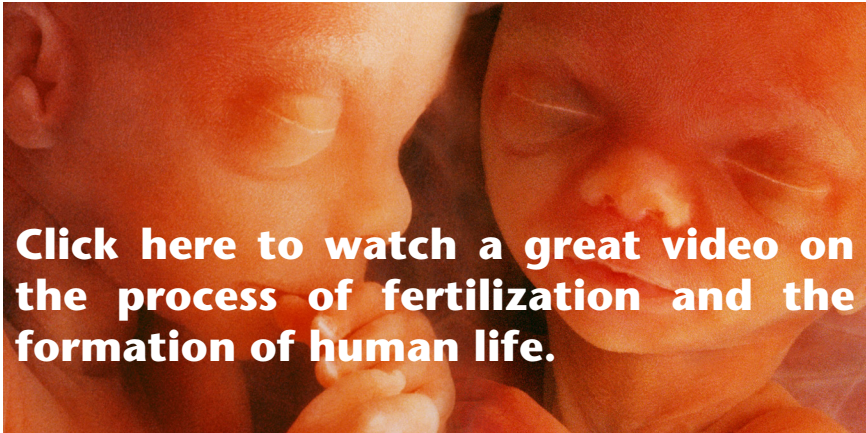
But science and our faith do not stand in opposition or competition. Indeed, science readily and regularly corroborates precisely what the Scriptures proclaim. Scripture is the source of truth, and science is the servant of it. Scripture defines the truth while science describes the same truth. Scripture reveals the compassionate Maker, and science marvels at the complexity of His creation. Scripture shows us the face of our Savior



and the heart of our Heavenly Father. Science traces His almighty fingerprints. These ten scientific discoveries affirm our belief in the sanctity of human life:

1. **The universe had a beginning.** In the 1920s, astronomer Edwin Hubble documented that other galaxies are moving away from our own. This indicates a single origin from which the galaxies exploded outward. Researchers further verified this in 1964 with the detection of cosmic microwave background radiation, a dimming invisible “glow” of the energy that occupies all outer space itself. And everything that has a beginning must have a cause greater than itself. Therefore, the universe testifies to a Creator!
2. **Efficiency implies design.** Ongoing investigation of the heavens, the planet we inhabit, and the human body has found these systems to be remarkably complex (lots of parts) and efficient (works well). They also interact effectively with each other. And they exhibit these characteristics to extreme degrees at every scale from microscopic to astronomical. The more complex, efficient, and cooperative a system is, the more likely it has a designer who formed and coordinated each of its components for a specific purpose. The universe’s parts all point to an intelligent and omnipotent Designing Mind.
3. **Life comes from life and species reproduce after their kinds.** Many experiments have disproven spontaneous generation (living organisms materializing out of inanimate substances), and every attempt at abiogenesis (balancing certain chemicals with certain energies to bring them to life) has failed. Our lives, all lives, as well as the very first lives, whether human or animal, reflect and embody the Living One who precedes and produces us. Only life can beget life, and so likewise every offspring of human beings is both living and human, even at the earliest stages of development in the womb.
4. **Jesus resurrected from death.** Historical forensics concludes that Jesus died from crucifixion, He was buried in a known location, His supporters and opponents found His tomb empty the third day after, and dozens of distinct individuals witnessed Him alive again on multiple occasions. Testimonies other than the writings of His followers validate these details. Unbiased examination of the abundant information available verifies that the disciples’ account best explains this incident, as every other hypothesis disagrees with the commonly acknowledged realities.
5. **Archaeological findings confirm the biblical record.** Investigators have uncovered thousands of sites, artifacts, and documents relating to Christian history since the middle of the nineteenth century. Every one has authenticated the Bible’s claims. In some cases, the unearthed articles substantiated places, persons, and cultural particulars that were unknown outside the Scriptures and of whose genuineness scholars had become skeptical.

6. **DNA identifies a human being.** The isolation of chromosomes has established that age, appearance, and ability do not qualify an individual for membership in a species or disqualify an individual from it. Zygotes, embryos, and fetuses possess the same genetic makeup that classifies adults as human beings and distinguishes them from all other creatures.



7. **A new human life commences at the moment of fertilization.** Ultrasounds and *in vitro* observations have ascertained the chemical and structural changes that take place as soon as sperm and eggs cells come into contact. The resulting zygote undergoes metabolism, respiration, multiplication, and response to stimuli which categorizes it as living. It also directs its own operations, recovers and repairs from damage, and develops toward a maturity which makes it an organism or being instead of a parasite or part of another.
8. **Human beings have exceptional properties.** Continuing increase in biological knowledge only solidifies our understanding of humankind's uniqueness. No other living thing exhibits consciousness, intelligence, emotion, communication, relationship, and morality that approaches the intricacy and intensity of ours.
9. **Female is distinct from and complementary to male.** Neurologists keep unlocking further secrets of the human brain. Every advancement reinforces the differences between man and woman as well as their indispensable contributions to childbearing and childrearing. Male or female involves chemical and physiological idiosyncrasies in addition to anatomical ones.
10. **Abortion has serious physical and psychological aftereffects for mothers.** Decades of studies around the world have chronicled how abortion procedures wreak havoc on bodies, consciences, hearts, and minds. Hemorrhaging, infection, infertility, increased risk for cancers, grief, PTSD (Posttraumatic Stress Disorder), promiscuity, substance abuse, and suicide occur more often than not after undergoing abortion. The Lord our God has made the bond between mother and baby both natural and sacred.

Will It Hurt? Pain Perception in the Developing Human

by Dr. Sheila Page

1. **The human body develops as a single unit, not in pieces, from the moment of conception.** It is important to realize that human development is not a series of switches being turned on or an assembly of pieces. *It is a dynamic continuum of differentiation and movement.*
2. **The beginning of the nervous system implies the beginning of function.** The idea that the function of the nervous system is added at some time after the development of its shape and structure is inconsistent with the observable order of development of all the other organ systems in the human. *The internal organs and the nervous system are functional at the beginning of their formation.*
3. **There are two definitions of pain: a subjective psychological one, and an objective basic scientific definition.** The basic scientific definition states that pain is a defense mechanism for the body that is directly correlated to tissue damage. It causes the individual to move away from a painful stimulus. *Repeated studies have shown that people feel pain at precisely the time that cell damage occurs.*
4. **Almost all pain fibers terminate in the lower brain centers (the reticular activating system and the thalamus).** Type C fibers, responsible for burning pain, terminate almost exclusively in the reticular formation. A very small percentage of Type A fibers will connect in the thalamus to neurons that travel to the cortex for the purpose of localizing pain.
5. **The fundamental unit of pain perception—the peripheral nerves, spinal cord, and reticular activating system—is completed as a unit between seven and eight weeks.** By 10 weeks, the motion of breathing begins and continues until birth, shaping and developing the respiratory system. The nervous system and the other organ systems are highly developed and functional. *At this time, trauma to the unborn child can cause pain.*
6. **All sensory receptors are denser in a baby than in an older child.** *They are very sensitive to their environment, and they are able to feel pain.*



Dr. Sheila Page is board certified in neuromusculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative therapy, is an associate scholar with the Charlotte Lozier Institute, and is a board member of Lutherans For Life. She was also a presenter at the 2019 Lutherans For Life Regional Conference in Grapevine, Texas.

Pressuring Doctors & Nurses to Support Assisted Suicide & Euthanasia

by Virginia J. Flo, Regional Director of Minnesota

If you are like me, you probably have always taken for granted that those who care for you in the medical profession always have your best interest in mind. After all, doctors have taken an oath to do no harm, and nurses have played a key role in caring for patients throughout life's continuum.

I am not a medical professional. I speak from a layperson's perspective. My bubble burst when I heard that many medical schools no longer require doctors to take the Hippocratic Oath to do no harm. Does that mean it's now okay to do harm? It became an issue when states began to legalize assisted suicide. Doctors prescribing lethal doses of medication to cause death would be defying that precious oath. So, it's been removed or watered down. Fortunately, we still have some schools offering it and doctors that do take the oath on their own as many still believe it is the right thing to do in their profession. Bless those who stand on the principle that good medical care requires doing no harm.

Until recently, major medical organizations have been very clear in their position statements about their opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia. Now, both the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) are looking at the possibility of changing their opposition statement to being neutral on this topic. This means they will let a patient do as they please rather than suggesting treatment that would not include killing themselves. If they enact this change rather than providing treatment for end-of-life issues, they will either support assisted suicide or euthanasia, recommend someone else to handle it, or step aside if a patient asks for it. In my opinion, recommending another doctor or nurse who will enact assisted suicide or euthanasia is the same as participating in it.

**Bless those who stand on
the principle that good
medical care requires doing
no harm.**



Once medical providers stop doing what is right in the care and treatment of their patients and succumb to pressures that support letting people kill themselves, whom do we trust? Ending someone's life is not a medical treatment. I think it's a good idea to talk with your personal physician about his/her view on assisted suicide so you know if you face end-of-life medical issues, then your medical provider will be there to help you through it until you reach a natural death. It is also more important now than ever that you have a medical directive that provides a power of attorney for healthcare to someone who shares your life-affirming beliefs so he or she can speak on your behalf when you cannot speak for yourself.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with several Christian nurses, and I asked their opinions on this topic, as we knew the American Nurses Association (ANA) was getting lots of input on their review of their position statement. These nurses had some strong opinions on why the position needs to remain in opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia. One of them said something that I think went right to the point. She said that it is important that nurses give their patients the care they need rather than what they want, as what they want isn't always in their best medical interest. She added that the people in their care are not customers or clients—they are patients. Once they become customers rather than patients, the nurse becomes a technician rather than a healer.

Here is what the current ANA position statement says:

The American Nurses Association (ANA) prohibits nurses' participation in assisted suicide and euthanasia because these acts are in direct violation of *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2001; herein referred to as *The Code*), the ethical traditions and goals of the profession, and its covenant with society. Nurses have an obligation to provide humane, comprehensive, and compassionate care that respects the rights of patients but upholds the standards of the profession in the presence of chronic, debilitating illness and at end-of-life.

Changing these words would be shameful as they speak clearly about an honorable profession that has been held in the highest esteem for many years. Although not all doctors and nurses belong to these professional associations, most people think they do, and, thus, they have a lot of influence in society. Changing their position statements to being neutral will send a message that they condone assisted suicide and euthanasia or don't care enough about their patients to protect them.

I am extremely thankful for the many doctors and nurses who stand firm in their opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia, although they are finding themselves being pressured to change their position. Please pray they remain firm in their For Life stance. May we also pray that those leading these powerful organizations would stand on the principles of their professions and keep their opposition position. May they boldly stand in opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia and provide the needed leadership to maintain the ethical standards their professions were created to provide to society and that the Gospel clearly proclaims.

Reach Out and Touch Someone

by Lynette Auch

David: His surgery was only supposed to include a short hospital stay and some rehabilitation time. Nearly five months later, and after repeated surgeries to clean out infection, David remained hospitalized—several hours from home. As we walked into his hospital room, his eyes lit up, and a surprised smile spread across his face.

Randy: He had suddenly been taken ill, which started him on a whirlwind of emergency-room visits, hospital stays, home health care, and several near-death occurrences. Feeling helpless, hopeless, and defeated, his wife told us that Randy was starting to plan his funeral. Our visit could well have been what the doctor ordered to lift his spirits and to offer prayers of healing for him.

Teri: When we walked into the intensive care unit to see a friend, the nurse told us that she was sleeping. As I was writing a note to leave for her, Teri woke from her nap, and, after seeing us through her door window, she started waving and motioning for us to come in. Even though she could not speak because of the breathing apparatus, we held her hands, prayed, and assured her of our love.

Society marvels at modern science and medical advancements—and so it should. God has given mankind the ability to understand and develop many good things. At the same time, humans also choose to use technology for destructive purposes which are neither God-pleasing nor good for those created in His image.

Science and technology will never be able to take the place of the presence, touch, or relationship of another caring human being. Just a short internet search will result in a wave of studies documenting the emotional and physical need for touch. But we don't need the internet or scientific studies to show us that.

“Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness’ ... So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them” (Genesis 1:26-27 NIV).



Notice the pronoun “us.” Just as God the Father is in relationship with His Son and His Spirit—the Trinity (three Persons/One God)—we too, being created in God’s image, were created for relationships.

God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit demonstrated their relationship throughout Scripture.

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. ‘Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?’” (Luke 2:49 NIV).

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased’” (Matthew 3:16-17 NIV).

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you ... And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began” (John 17:1b, 5 NIV).

Jesus demonstrated relationship as He reached out and touched people throughout His short ministry on earth. With His hands or His presence, He touched, healed, saved, and showed His love and compassion. Jesus taught and demonstrated how to fill the human need for touch and relationship.

“Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. ‘I am willing,’ he said. ‘Be clean!’ Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy” (Matthew 8:3 NIV).

“And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them” (Mark 10:16 NASB).

“Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva” (Mark 7:33 NASB).

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me’” (Matthew 25:34-36).

Perhaps some of you will recall the 1980s AT&T telephone ad slogan, “Reach out and touch someone.” Through God’s Word, Jesus taught us how to reach out and touch someone.

David, Randy, and Teri were all getting some of the best medical care that modern technology has available, but it cannot hold a candle to the touch and love of another caring human being.

Dear Heavenly Father, help us to let Your love shine through us as Your hands and feet reaching out and touching those in need. Amen.

Moms Embody Grace

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Moms embody grace. God gives each of us an immediate friend and automatic defender even before birth. This He does—and so does she—without our earning or deserving it. As much as daughters and sons bring His blessings to their parents, so much also do mothers mediate His mercies to their little ones.

But free doesn't mean cheap, not for God and not for moms. Motherhood costs a woman almost everything. No longer may she live for herself alone. She lends out her very flesh, not to mention her time, attention, and energy. Most often it amounts to hard work. Sometimes it hurts—because of the brokenness of the whole world, because of the fallenness of every child, because of her own sinfulness.

Certain cultural expectations can lay the weight upon particular ladies heavier than others. So, without diminishing our sincere celebration of all mothers, this year we offer our special appreciation for women who are affirming life's worth by enduring these extraordinary circumstances:

Single moms: You perform twice as much parental labor. You press on without the support and presence of the child's father and the one you perhaps once believed to be your beloved. You spare your child the brunt of the abandonment by bearing it yourself. Maybe that desertion happened before giving birth, and you bravely refused the intense internal and external pressure to use death as



Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise: "that it may go well with you and that you may live a long life on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3)

the solution and terminate your baby. Or maybe the forsaking took place after delivery and in the thick of caring for kids, but you prioritized your children's well-being over the health of your own romance. With you the Heavenly Father is well pleased.

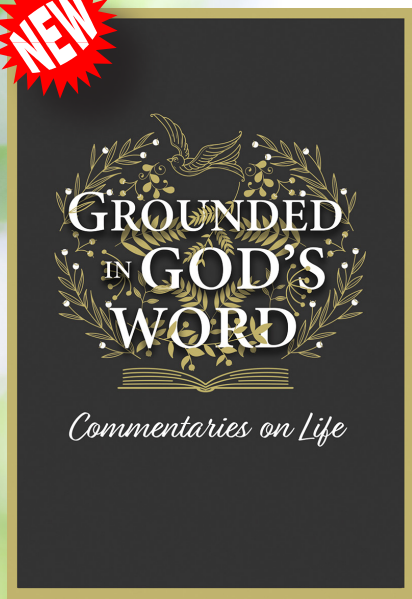
Stay-at-home moms: You forego financial advantages, occupational advancement, and, in many cases, your own vocational training so that you can devote your whole focus to managing family. You humbly immerse yourself in the less-glamorous tasks of domestic servanthood to enable others' productivity instead of your personal achievement. You may feel inferior to career women as you endure accusations of undoing feminine progress and assumptions that you have ample free time to volunteer. In your undivided devotion to raising the next generation, you testify directly to the preciousness of children. You shine like the sun in the kingdom of God.

Moms of large families: You stomach the ridicule of both strangers and brothers or sisters in Christ. You forgive the implications that you're uneducated or irresponsible. You strive to prove that the fifth child matters just as much as the first one and that the same Almighty Maker Who sends mouths also supplies the meat they need. You receive each one as an inheritance from the Lord regardless of the additional responsibilities. And you teach us not to treat anyone as an accident or an interruption to be "handled." Well done, good and faithful servant.

Moms who placed for adoption: You humbly acknowledged that your child required a different mom and home than you could provide. You insisted on what was best for the baby rather than settling for what was easiest. You underwent all the burdens of pregnancy and childbirth without collecting any of its benefits. You took up the cross of grief, one you carry daily if only silently and secretly, in order to save the life of one whom you may never even meet. Great is your reward in heaven.

Moms who conceived by sexual assault: You didn't get to choose and pursue motherhood. Having it violently forced upon you discolored much of its joy. The trauma left you with not only sorrow but also with great obligation. Nevertheless, you honored the Creator's call and determined to defend and to redeem the life of the tragedy's other victim. You declined society's demand that you penalize the child for the father's crimes, and you rejected their attempt to label you and your baby "exceptions." Angelic hosts rejoice to recite your story in their everlasting song.

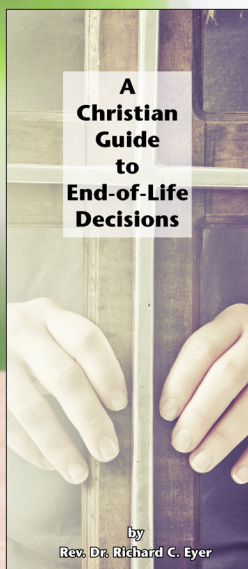
Ladies suffering infertility: You have the heart, mind, and spirit of a mother even if not the body. You do not despise children just because God has denied them to you. Your hands ache to hold your own baby, and yet you still use them to applaud the gift when granted to so many others. You hold motherhood before us as something worth suffering for. Yet you yield your holy desire to the Savior and wait with faith upon the good and gracious will of the Lord, reminding us all that the only identity more sacred than having a child from God is being a child of God.



Grounded in God's Word: Commentaries on Life

God's Word gives life. God's Word concerns life. Collected here are easy-to-read commentaries concerning topics such as moral worth, abortion, evolution, suffering, life-and-death decisions, biblical manhood and womanhood, and other sanctity-of-life issues. Grounded in Scripture, these relevant essays explore what is revealed in God's Word and discuss a wide array of topics pertaining to human life, God's grace, and His perfect love for us in Christ Jesus.

Item 124552. \$15.99 ea.



A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions

An updated edition of "A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions" is now available through Concordia Publishing House. Spiritual insight into end-of-life issues by Rev. Richard C. Eyer, who offers guidance in Christian decision-making and in being a faithful witness to God's presence in your life.

Item LFL801R. \$0.50 ea.



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

Baptism
Life Begins UNDERWATER!

Most of your growth before birth took place in a "bag of water" known as the "amniotic sac" filled with you guessed it, amniotic fluid! Growing inside your mom, you did **COOL, STUFF** as you floated around like an astronaut in space. You could

- do somersaults,
- swim (baptists mean—backstroke),
- travel north,
- lick your mom's (and recommended) after birth, and
- be safe and protected.

Mom supplied your oxygen and other needs through the umbilical cord. Otherwise you would have drowned!

Confession
BIG SINS? Little sins?
IS there a difference? IN OUR EYES MAYBE, BUT NOT GOD'S!

ABORTION IS THAT KIND OF SIN.

Imagine how you would feel if you accidentally started a fire and burned down your neighbor's garage. What if his dog died in the fire? His daughter? The guilt would be tremendous.

Now imagine making a choice that results in the death of your own son or daughter through abortion.

At first you might feel relief that the "problem" has been taken care of.

But the guilt will come sooner or later, it will be unbearable. That's why many try to stuff it down deep inside, but it will come out.

The Creed
Life is special! You are special!

WHY???
Good looks?
1,000 friends on Facebook?
Great abs?
Sports hero?
Math genius?
Gamer extraordinaire?

Talented artist or musician?

WRONG!

Want to know the REAL answer? Turn this over!

Prayers For Life Based on the Lord's Prayer

Our Father
We dare call You Father because You adopted us as Your children (Galatians 4:6-7). Be with and bless all adoptive families.

Hallowed Be Your Name
May we keep Your name holy by respecting the value You give to human life (Psalm 84:5).

Thy Kingdom Come
Give us Your Holy Spirit that we might lead godly lives and make godly, life-affirming choices (1 Corinthians 6:18-20).

Thy Will Be Done
Hinder the evil plans of the devil who seeks to profane Your gift of life (Hebrews 2:14).

Sacrament of the Altar
Life Can Be Good!
You passed the test! You made the team! He smiled at you!

But Life Can Be Rotten
None of the above happens—ever!

And Life Can Be REALLY Rotten
Someone you love dies. Your parents divorce. A friend gets cancer. Where is God when life is rotten???

Guess what? You can't meet God! To find more, turn this over!

The Sixth Commandment
MARRIAGE is the place for **SEX**.

Sex is a gift from God (Genesis 1:27, 2:24-25). Marriage is a holy institution between a man and a woman, reflecting Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:32). Chastity is the choice of **Champions** (those created, redeemed, and called by God). That's your **Chastity** is also the positive choice **Champions** make to honor God inside and outside of marriage.

Inside marriage = faithfulness to your spouse. Outside marriage = choosing to love and honor your future spouse.

"Huh? How can I love my future spouse?"

Turn this over to learn more about loving your future spouse!

The First Commandment
Can death be a god?
YES!

When we turn to death to rescue us from our problems, that makes **ABORTION** and **ASSISTED SUICIDE** and **EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH** and **IDOLATRY!**

Why? Death becomes a god—the solution to an unplanned pregnancy, pain and suffering, and disease.

To find a much better answer, turn this over!

Item LFL1632

LifeMarks

LifeMarks is a set of seven bookmarks—recently updated—designed to directly apply the Bible's teachings on life as found in Luther's Small Catechism—and fit right into the catechism itself! This is a wonderful resource for confirmation, congregational, Sunday school, and home use!

Item LFL1632. \$1.00 ea.

Jesus Loves Me

and those with Down syndrome!

Lutherans For Life celebrates each unique human being as a precious blessing created, redeemed, and called by our Lord.

Jesus Loves Me and those with Down syndrome

While some global government officials boast of abortion rates approaching 100% for Down syndrome pregnancies, Lutherans For Life celebrates each unique human being as a precious blessing created, redeemed, and called by our Lord. "Jesus Loves Me and those with Down syndrome" shares two stories from LFL team members—along with an award-winning essay—that highlight the value of these precious brothers and sisters.

Item LFL146T. \$0.50 ea.

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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 7 – Pentecost IV (Proper 9C) – Our enemy has no answer for compassion. The Lord Jesus Christ has lifted and carried all our burdens. His saving love overcomes every power of sin and death. In life issues, we get to bear the crosses of brothers and sisters, neighbors and strangers (Galatians 6:2). And in the process we have the chance to show the sanctity we speak and share the blessings of life.

July 14 – Pentecost V (Proper 10C) – The Good Samaritan’s mercy didn’t lead him to end a life, even though the Jericho-going fellow lay before him half dead already (Luke 10:30). God Himself doesn’t snap His fingers to erase human ailments. Getting involved the way Jesus does and accompanying others in their hurts proves more costly and complicated than putting them out of our misery. But why settle for just arranging a funeral when we can gain a friend instead?

July 21 – Pentecost VI (Proper 11C) – Carrying a surprise pregnancy to term brings troubles. Safeguarding marital sexuality can detract from attractiveness. Enduring chronic pain sometimes interferes with social acceptance. Speaking truth in love may interrupt a lucrative career. Still, the Gospel life with Christ gives far more than it deprives. Peace in forgiveness, comfort from faith, joy in fellowship, hope of heaven – His words and ways never deny us these needs (Luke 10:42).

July 28 – Pentecost VII (Proper 12C) – The “my body, my choice” philosophy doesn’t deliver freedom. It actually enslaves you to self and sin, isolation and anxiety, and ultimately it demands death (Colossians 2:8). The crucified Christ Jesus brings God into our deadness to rescue from oppressive autonomy. Whoever hides behind His promise and waits upon His working is rising into an everlasting life.

August 4 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 13C) – Some folks are so poor that they only have money. This seems the case with Jesus’s rich fool (Luke 12:20). But who needs bigger barns when you’ve got neighbors? Sure, giving birth and raising children costs a lot. Caring for incapacitated persons also has a high price. Yet what better place to invest our energies and abundances than in priceless human lives like God does? We already own what rich folks are still saving for--community!

August 11 – Pentecost IX (Proper 14C) – “We don’t have money to support this embryonic life. We don’t have stamina enough to maintain this elderly life. We need abortion and assisted suicide.” But He who sends mouths also sends meat (Luke 12:24, 28). Even with limitless resources, we couldn’t preserve a single sparrow. Only God can sustain or cease life. If He invites us into the privilege of providing for somebody, He Himself will ensure neither they nor we go without.

August 18 – Pentecost X (Proper 15C) – God’s Word about human worth from fertilization to final breath sometimes divides (Luke 12:51). Looking after the least of these may



set us against popular opinion, our own sense of reason, and even loved ones. But only the surgical sword of Gospel grace sets us free from calculating value by works. The Almighty's redeeming compassion slashes a path and builds a bridge to abundant, everlasting life—for us and every human being.

August 25 – Pentecost XI (Proper 16C) – A complicated pregnancy certainly qualifies as the day of trouble (Psalm 50:15). So does an incurable illness or chronic pain. Abortion and assisted suicide summon death to solve the difficulties. But He who possesses cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10) gives Jesus for redemption. He urges us not to settle for incomplete remedies, however immediate. Appeal instead all the way to the top: “Call upon me and I will deliver you.”

September 1 – Pentecost XII (Proper 17C) – Supporters of abortion suggest babies with disabilities are better off not being born. Advocates of assisted suicide also presume certain injuries and illnesses make life too burdensome. But Jesus calls us all fallen and helpless—and then rewrites His commandments to save us as sons and daughters (Luke 14:2-5). He receives “the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind” (Luke 14:13) as honored guests, and invites us also to celebrate the blessing of each one.

September 8 – Pentecost XIII (Proper 18C) – Philemon viewed Onesimus as a slave (Philemon 16). The Apostle Paul knew Onesimus as a brother created, redeemed, and called by their one Lord Jesus. A clump of cells? A blob of tissue? A tumor and a parasite? Vegetative or better off dead? Definitely not! A human being! A fellow member of our sacred race! A bearer of God's own image! Precious treasure, gift and privilege, just like you!

September 15 – Pentecost XIV (Proper 19C) – Paul confesses to some serious wickedness: “I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent” (1 Timothy 1:13). Abortion also belongs to this list of severe sins. Only His own even greater mercy compelled Christ Jesus to come into the world, bringing precisely the grace, love, patience, and eternal life that our evil deeds attempted but failed to obtain for us. He saves nobody but sinners and forgives even the foremost violences against life (1 Timothy 1:15).

September 22 – Pentecost XV (Proper 20C) – God “desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). Doesn't “all people” include every genetic member of our species?

Doesn't “be saved” mean live, from this time forth even unto forevermore? Doesn't “God desires” indicate not limited to a certain age or conditional upon a particular ability? And doesn't “come to the knowledge of the truth” motivate us to speak?

September 29 – Pentecost XVI (Proper 21C) – The rich man knew Lazarus's name (Luke 16:24) but refused to treat him as a human being (Luke 16:19-21). Categorizing Lazarus as a nonentity enabled him to “feast sumptuously.” When we neglect to speak for the unborn or the elderly, when we avoid getting involved in their survival, we join the rich man's callous carousing. But when we embrace them with our voices and our service, we take our place beside Abraham in heaven's festivities.



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).

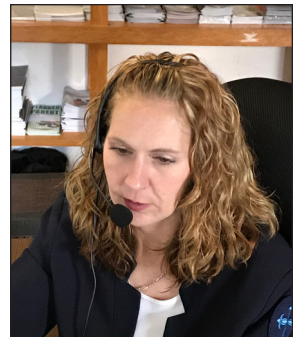
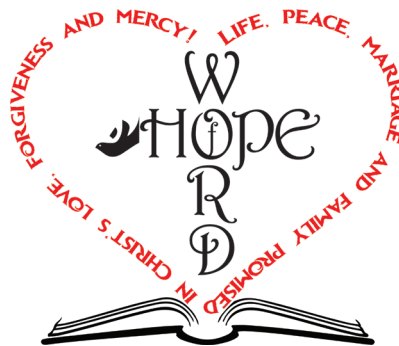
Check out “Life on the Web” on our Life Blog



www.lutheransforlife.org/life-blog

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: 60,942,033 abortions in America

Source: www.nationalrighttolife.org/news/2019/01/national-right-to-life-releases-6th-annual-state-of-abortion-report/

Being a Bulldog for Life

by Joanna Sherrill

This year I had the wonderful opportunity to become more involved in the For Life movement through my school, and I am now the president of our group Bulldogs for Life (which I invite you to check out and like on Facebook: www.facebook.com/Bulldogs4LifeCU). Here are a few things I wanted to share about the heartbeat bills and the For Life movement in general:

1. The heartbeat bills do not criminalize the women who get abortions OR women who have miscarriages. Only the abortionist himself/herself can be imprisoned—up to 99 years.
2. A common argument is that if we are For Life, we also must provide care for the women before, during, and after the pregnancy. For Life people do! That is the point of crisis pregnancy centers (CPCs). There are also many organizations that support single mothers and their children. Many For Life people are foster parents or adopt children themselves. Others donate their time, money, and other resources to help parents who foster children or are trying to become adoptive parents.
3. For Life people care about women as well and are not trying to take away their rights. We have compassion for women that are struggling or women that are victims of rape or incest. However, we believe that ALL life has value. Murdering the child does not solve the problem but adds further violence.
4. Most For Life people are very peaceful in their actions. When we pray outside Planned Parenthood or talk to women, we are not trying to shame them but rather offer them support and let them know that they are strong enough to be a mother. We also pray that their hearts may be changed and they will see the truth that life is sacred.
5. People who are For Life should not be attacked or ridiculed because of their convictions. Just like those who claim a right to abortion, we have freedom of speech—which is the beauty of living in the USA! (I come from a large family—13 children—and people have asked me if my parents know what abortion or birth control is. That is a wildly inappropriate thing to say and an insult to my family.)
6. If you are going to describe a fetus or unborn baby as a clump of cells, please open a textbook. The development of a baby is a beautiful thing to learn about, and I'm sure you will be amazed.
7. Please don't tell me "my body, my choice" is a reason to have an abortion. There's another body—another someone—within you!
8. Finally, all For Life people should support the new laws in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. We have been blessed to see the bravery of these states during our lifetime, and they need our support now more than ever.

Numbers

by Pastor Michael Salemink

I've noticed a lot of numbers lately.

- 1,524,039,000 abortions executed worldwide since 1921 (841,819,000 since 1970)
- 381,356,000 abortions in China since 1957 and 60,942,033 in the United States since 1973
- 926,940 children currently killed per year and 2,540 per day in this country
- 1,000,000 in vitro embryos currently confined to frozen storage
- As many as 8,500,000 frozen embryos destroyed or discarded in America since 1978
- 46 chromosomes at the quarter-second of fertilization
- Cardiac cells beating at 18-days gestation
- Pain receptors feeling and brain-wave patterns at week eight
- Viable ex utero at 21 weeks and forming memories at 29 weeks
- 97% of babies diagnosed with Down syndrome put to death before birth
- 49% of pregnancies to black women in New York City end in abortion (only 47% give birth)
- Fertility rate at 1.765 births per woman nationwide (lowest in 40 years and below the 2.1 births per woman necessary to sustain population)



It's about speaking truth, showing love. It's about changing a heart, saving a life. It's about reaching a person, planting a seed. It's about taking a chance, making a difference.

The digits are dizzying.

They have their usefulness in getting attention and gauging the scale. No one goes untouched by this culture encouraging the use of death as a solution to difficulty. Ultimately, though, the numbers become numbing and almost senseless. I've never met a million anythings. I haven't touched a hundred thousand anyones. I've never heard the cries of, never held the hands of, never loved, never lost that many at once. My brain can't wrap around these counts. A million is only a single figure to my mind, nine little lines (1,000,000). My heart doesn't deal in thousands or even hundreds. I have to live one moment before the next.

These matters shouldn't be just statistics.

They are not cases to be made with calculations and arguments to be won with amounts. Abortions aren't merely religious controversies or personal choices. Assisted suicides aren't simply political issues or complicated conversations.

They are people.

These realities involve people we know. These circumstances concern people we love. More importantly, they affect individuals beloved by and belonging to the Almighty Maker and Heavenly Father. These are souls whom God creates with His own hands, whom Jesus redeems with His own blood, whom the Holy Spirit embraces with His own voice. These persons He treasures forever. These persons He lends us as gifts to receive and privileges to rejoice in. They are experiences and relationships, identities and histories and destinies—each one.

Here's the way our Savior computes:

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance” (Luke 15:4-7).

One at a time.

Our mission and passion aren't about arithmetic. This Gospel of Life isn't for measuring. Jesus brings resurrection and forgiveness! Jesus means infinite worth, eternal grace, unconditional acceptance, universal purpose. This erases tabulation altogether and dispenses with data. It's about speaking truth, showing love. It's about changing a heart, saving a life. It's about reaching a person, planting a seed. It's about taking a chance, making a difference.

Our message and obsession are one conversation, one interaction, one moment at a time. We have one God and one Lord. We live one Gospel in one Body, same faith and same hope for all. This one is bigger than sixty million. This one is greater than a billion.

It's all about the one right in front of us.



MARCH *for* LIFE

The next March for Life ...

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2020

Lutherans For Life will be there!

marchforlife.org

www.lutheransforlife.org/event/1280253-2020-01-24-march-for-life-2020



ESTATE PLANNING – For advice on estate planning that can help you and Lutherans For Life, contact Jim Schroeder, Christian Estate Planning Counselor. Jim can provide you with personal assistance in working with your attorney and your other financial advisors in planning your estate. Contact Jim at 515.490.7371 or jim@iowadistrictwest.org.



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

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

- www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife
- twitter.com/ForLifers
- www.instagram.com/lfly4life



Also see:

- www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife
- vimeo.com/user4132928



LAMBs – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets

Through the skillfulness of some LFLers in Ohio, along with the Miami Valley Life Chapter, a new project entitled “LAMBs” (Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets) has been created. Although our world might tell us otherwise, children truly are a blessing. Therefore, Lutherans For Life would like to celebrate children, especially those families with a lot of them!

We would like to celebrate families that are awaiting the birth of their fourth or more child by gifting them with a homemade blanket. Do you know such a family in your Lutheran church? If so, please contact Rachel Geraci, our mission and ministry director, at rgeraci@lutheransforlife.org so that she can arrange for this gift to be sent to them. (Alternatively, you can fill out the form below and send it to Carol Houtler of the Miami Valley Life Chapter.)

Thank you for helping us care for your neighbor in this way!

“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward” (Psalm 127:3).

LAMBs – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets

Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? Wouldn't it be nice to gift them with a homemade blanket in celebration of this new life? Simply by filling out this form, Lutherans For Life, the Miami Valley Life Chapter, and other Lutherans from the state of Ohio will ensure that a blanket made with love will be sent directly to this expectant mother anywhere within the continental United States. There are no strings attached. As the Body of Christ, we want to use this as an opportunity to share the mercy that our Savior Jesus Christ first showed us on the cross.

Your Name: _____

Your Congregation: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Mother's & Father's Names: _____

Baby's Gender: Boy ____ Girl ____

Mother's Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Please send completed forms to: Carol Houtler/Miami Valley Life Chapter
7163 Pugliese Place
Dayton, OH 45415-1207



“He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms” (Isaiah 40:11a).

2019 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

“Did God Really Say ... ?”

www.lutheransforlife.org/conference

Grapevine, Texas

Living Word Lutheran Church – March 23, 2019

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Concordia University – April 27, 2019

Aurora (Denver), Colorado

Hope Lutheran Church – August 24, 2019

Rochester, Minnesota

Trinity Lutheran Church – September 14, 2019

Joppa, Maryland

Trinity Lutheran Church – October 19, 2019

San Francisco, California

West Portal Lutheran Church – November 16, 2019



Online Registration is Open!

“Lord to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

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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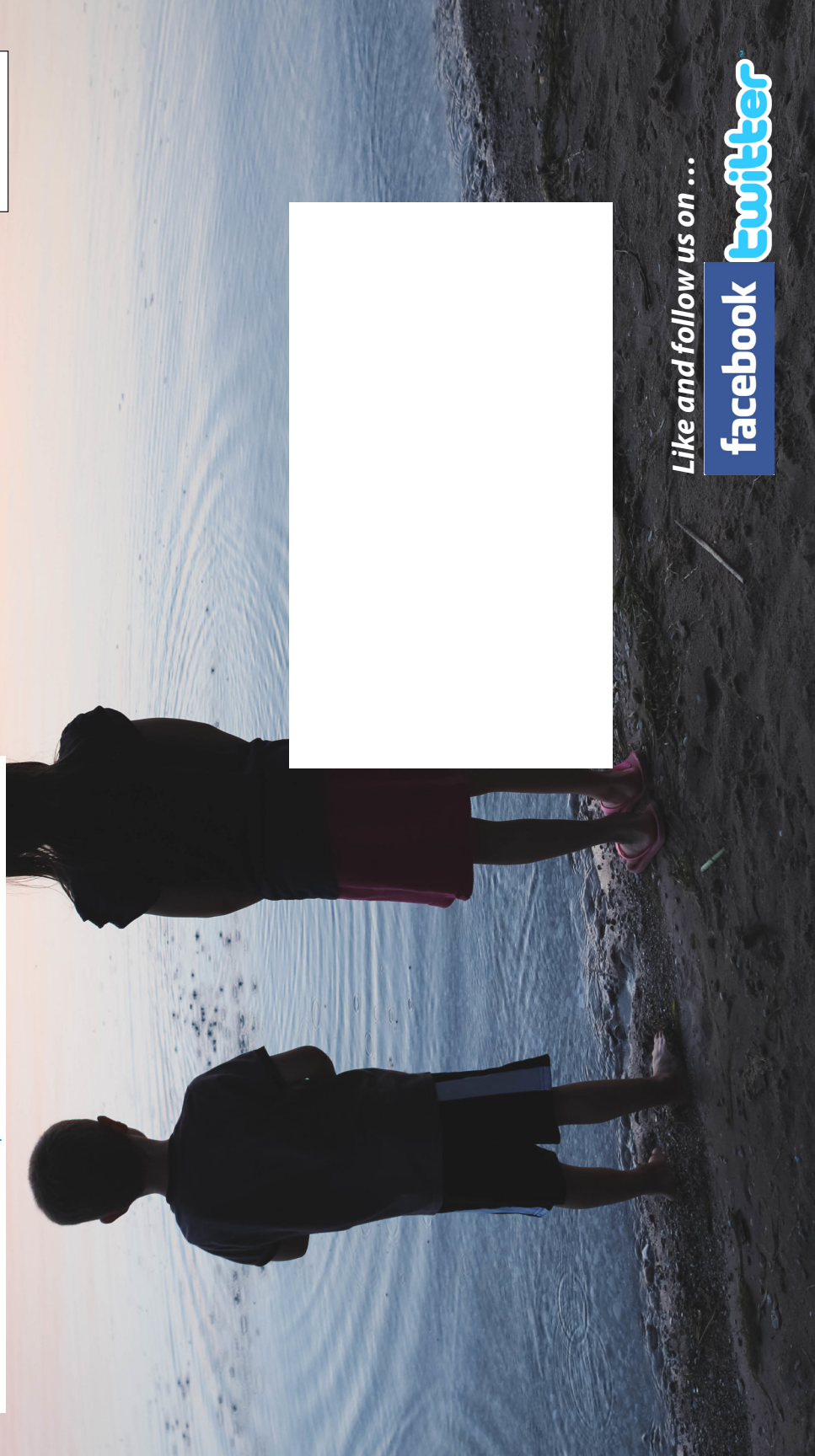
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