Witnessing For Life
Speaking the Truth in Love
What are the best ways to share the For Life message?

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves ...”
(Proverbs 31:8a)

A collection of classic For Life messages
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Lutherans For Life
Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

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**The truth is: Every life is precious to God.**

- Every life is the handiwork of God.  
  (Psalm 139:13-16)
- Every life is bought with a price.  
  (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- Every life God desires as His own.  
  (1 Timothy 2:4)

**The truth is: Abortion dishonors the preciousness God gives to life.**

- Abortion destroys over 3,000 such precious children every day in the U.S.
- Abortion destroys children in terrible ways.
- *Roe v. Wade* allows for abortion in all nine months of pregnancy.
- Minors do not always need parental consent to obtain an abortion.
- Women and men often deal with overwhelming regret following an abortion decision.
- At least 70 percent of those having abortions identify themselves as Christian.

**The truth about life needs to be spoken in love …**

- So people will see abortion as a spiritual issue, an affront to God.
- So hearts and lives will be changed.
- So forgiveness and love in Jesus Christ can be proclaimed.
- So Christians can influence our society.

**What can you do to speak this truth in love?**

- Promote Word-based education on abortion and other life issues in your congregation.
- Support women and men dealing with unplanned pregnancies.
- Support or start a local pregnancy center.
- Promote adoption.
- Bring the hope of the Gospel to those who have made wrong choices.
Speaking the Truth in Love—Or Mustering Only Mumbles?
by Pastor Michael Salemink

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! We shout this truth and hope together. At least we shout it together in worship. At least our hearts shout it even if our mouths don’t so much. At least our faith shouts it when our hearts don’t feel it and our minds forget it. Outside of our churches, on the other hand, we often muster only mumbles. Any quick visit to social networking websites or even a casual viewing of evening news confirms our culture has either lost or gotten lazy about the ability to speak truth in love. University protests, internet comments, controversial laws, presidential campaigns, and common conversations clearly display we don’t know how to disagree without disrespect anymore.

We’ve learned well the world’s lesson: “Given the choice between speaking the truth and being kind, choose being kind.” Relationships matter more than righteousness, don’t they? Remember the words of the Prophet Thumper in the book of Disney, chapter Bambi: “If you can’t say somethin’ nice, don’t say nothin’ at all.” But Christian Scripture suspects a false dichotomy. Do love and truth in fact operate in tension? Should one really trump the other? Can’t we speak truth and show love at the same time? A certain apostle advises, “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). And another apostle exhorts, “[L]et us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18).

So love and truth, even uncomfortable truth, do not exist in opposition but in concert. The one does not diminish but magnifies and completes the other. Love “rejoices with the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6b). Godly love certainly “explain[s] everything in the kindest way” (Luther’s Small Catechism, Eighth Commandment) but never uses “gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15) as an excuse to allow or offer false testimony. Love does (and says) what is best, not just whatever is easiest, until the beloved gets better instead of merely feeling better.

Of course, as Christians, we cannot help but speak (Acts 4:20). The Lord’s people speak the truth, and speak the truth in love, and speak the truth in love about life. Christ’s disciples speak the truth in love about life amid this culture of death. “We also believe and therefore speak” (2 Corinthians 4:13 KJV). With the prophet Jeremiah we acknowledge, “If I say, ‘I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,’ there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot” (Jeremiah 20:9). And with St. Paul we affirm, “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16b).

Yet even in this most important endeavor we do not despair. We take comfort from the Son of God’s own solemn promise: “I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict” (Luke 21:15 NIV), for “it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matthew 10:20 NIV). So when we speak, we do it as servants: “For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4:5 NIV). We enter conversa-
tion standing beside and not staring down. We claim no authority of our own over anybody, and we certainly boast no superiority to them, for “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:23-24).

We recognize right away our own sinful motives that might adulterate our interactions. We repent of desiring to be someone’s lord or trying to be the savior. Yet we also reject the temptation to stay ignorant and indifferent toward our neighbors’ situations so as to spare ourselves emotional turmoil. Our truth-telling and loving must meet their needs and not our own cravings for comfort, control, accomplishment, or equilibrium. We realize that, whether she knows it or not, or he likes it or not, even an ideological opponent—and especially a Christian brother or sister—comes to us as a beloved child of God for whom Christ died, rose, reigns, and returns. We speak the truth in love not to save face or to save ourselves trouble or even ultimately to save a relationship but to save a life from sin’s death and a soul from Satan’s hell.

For this reason, only the whole truth will do. We advertise and emphasize God as not only against sin and against death but also for life and for you, so absolutely for you that He takes you as you are and does not leave you there. Forsaking simple satisfactions and quick escapes for faith in the Savior’s ways finds gracious forgiveness, unconditional acceptance, and abundant everlasting life with Father-Son-and-Spirit’s household. When oncoming traffic approaches unsuspecting toddlers, we holler Law, even if it startles and irritates them, but only so that we may also whisk them into Gospel relief and refuge.

We not only proclaim the kingdom, we perform it. Our God always incarnates His Gospel like this. He always brings it in three dimensions. Our faith and salvation rest and rise in the Word become flesh. He who speaks to us also speaks with and through us. Love proves truth persuasive. Hearts trust truth most from those who provide groceries, clothes, comfort, home, and hope to meet needs, even when these needs appear only tangential to spiritual matters. Speaking the truth in love never just executes a task but establishes a relationship, one of patience and persistence—now tilling, now fertilizing, now planting, now pruning, now watering, now weeding, now shading, now waiting. Love without truth leaves only empty sentimentality, and truth without love just makes noise. Love never replaces truth but always reinforces it, embracing body and being as well as mind.

How we speak the truth in love affects as much as what truth we speak in love. We speak confidently but compassionately, cheerfully and sincerely, invitingly, not imposingly. We converse amicably and articulately. We interact winsomely, willing also to admit limits and investigate together. This offers us opportunity to stay educated and aware. We listen to the Word to know what to say, and we listen to the world to know what to say it about. Jesus never abandons us to speak the truth in love alone. He surrounds us with the communion of saints as our models and solidarity.

Please keep praying for people in need to hear and receive the Gospel message. And we invite and encourage you to continue preparing yourselves alongside us for every opportunity, great or little, that our Lord gives us to speak the truth in love.
The Truth of Life (A Classic Life Sunday Message)
by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Keeping truth alive is important. The eighteenth century poet, James Russell Lowell, wrote, “Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne.” If we forever lead truth up onto the scaffold, if we try to do away with truth or ignore the truth, then we will forever be clearing the way for wrong to ascend to the throne and rule the day. Keeping truth alive is important.

It’s important in the Church. Paul recognized that in his time. To keep from being tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, to keep that which is wrong from ruling in the Church, Paul says speak the truth, the truth of Christ and His Word. It’s important in the Church today. We need to speak it to one another, to help each other grow in the knowledge of God’s truth so we will not be so easily influenced by the latest falsehood. Yes, we need to speak the truth, but not in a way that condemns or condescends. Rather, Paul says, we are to speak the truth in love.

So often we only get that half right. We either forget the truth or we forget the love. Just speaking in love is not enough. Trying not to say anything that would offend or trying to be tolerant of false teaching so you won’t rock the boat leads truth to the scaffold and wrong to the throne. Just speaking the truth is not enough. Yelling and screaming truth at someone sets up walls of defense. Truth might as well be on the scaffold because it is never heard. Wrong continues to rule the day. But when we speak the truth in love, Paul says we “grow up”! We “grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:15b). Ignoring falsehood and wrong does not make the Church “one big happy family.” Lovingly confronting falsehood and wrong with the truth, on the other hand, unites us as the Body of Christ with Him as our head.

Keeping truth alive in the Church when it comes to the sanctity of human life is important. Of course, we stir things up a bit in the Body of Christ when we talk about the life issues, things like abortion and embryonic stem cell research and assisted suicide. These issues can be divisive. Some may think such things are political issues that we should not be talking about in the church. Some may think the opposite—that Christian participation and action are needed to influence society. Others might think they are personal issues and decisions, and we shouldn’t be judging. For some it may indeed be very personal because they have been involved in such decisions in the past, and it hurts to hear it talked about. So talking about the life issues in church can stir things up, but our purpose is not to divide. It is just the opposite. We desire to “grow up,” to be united more and more into our head, Jesus Christ. In an effort to do so, we take Paul’s advice. Let’s speak the truth of life as revealed in God’s Holy Word, and let’s speak it in love.

Every Life Is the Handiwork of God
The first truth of life is that every life is the handiwork of God. From the very beginning, it seems that God’s hands were involved in life. He formed Adam from the dust of the ground. He made Eve from one of Adam’s ribs. The word “made” literally means “to build.” So with the first two human beings, you get this picture of God
intimately involved with His hands, forming and building. That involvement continues in the biological process for procreation God set into motion. The Psalmist says that God “knitted” (Psalm 139:13) each of us together in our mother’s womb. Job and Isaiah talk about God shaping and forming us in the womb. Yes, the truth is every life is the handiwork of God.

Maybe some of you have one of Great Grandma’s old quilts displayed somehow in your homes. It may be too ragged and thin to be useful. It may not even look all that good because of fading and tears and stains. Nevertheless, there it is proudly draped for all to see. You know the quilt’s value does not come from its usefulness or its looks. It comes from the one who made it. So it is with every human life.

**Every Life Is Bought with a Price**

A second truth of life is that every life is bought with a price. What if Great Grandma’s quilt, instead of being passed along, got put on the auction block when Grandma died? How much would you be willing to give for that quilt that always lay at the foot of the bed in that spare room; that kept you warm on winter nights when you visited; that, with a couple of chairs, made a tent for you and your cousins? I’m guessing you would be willing to pay quite a price. When you did, that quilt would be doubly valuable. Valuable because it was Great Grandma’s and valuable because you had to pay dearly to get it back.

Even though we are the handiwork of God, sin separates us from our Maker. He had every right to abandon us, to turn us over to “human cunning” and “deceitful schemes” (Ephesians 4:14). But the truth of life is God loved what He made with His hands so much that He was willing to pay dearly to buy us back. He paid the price by becoming one with us, conceived in a womb as
we were. He paid the price by becoming our sin on the cross. He paid the price by taking our punishment and suffering the forsakenness of hell. He paid the price and now we, lost and condemned sinners, are purchased and won through His innocent suffering and death. And it’s not just us. Jesus paid the price for every sin and for every sinner. Every life was bought with a price. Not everyone knows that, of course, and that is our task as Christ’s Church to share this Good News, but every life is a life for whom Jesus paid the price.

Let me pause here a minute to interject something. As I wrote earlier, talking about the life issues can stir things up. It can be particularly difficult for someone burdened with the guilt of a past abortion. There are over 3,000 abortions performed every day in our country. The majority of those having an abortion are Christians. That means there could very well be someone reading this who has made that decision. If there is, I just want you to understand that your sin, like all sins, was paid for by the blood of Christ. You, too, were bought with a price. Your life has value to God.

Every Life God Desires to Call as His Own
A third truth of life is that God desires a relationship, both now and forever, with those He created and redeemed. He wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowl-
edge of His truth (1 Timothy 2:4). He wants to adopt every human being, through faith in Christ Jesus, into His family, lead them, walk with them, and accomplish His purpose for each human life. It’s like when great grandma used to wrap you up in that quilt and hold you close. You felt loved and protected and safe.

Every Life Has Value
These three truths point us to a single truth—every human life has value. That value does not come from its usefulness or how it looks or how big or healthy or productive it is. The value of human life does not come from certain “qualities” we think it should have. The value of human life comes from the One who made it. Every life is the handiwork of God. The value of human life comes from the One who bought it back. Every life is bought with a price. The value of life comes from the One who desires to call us for His eternal purpose. The embryo in the Petri dish, the baby in the womb, baby Sally in the neonatal intensive care unit, Uncle Ralph in the Alzheimer’s unit, Grandma in the nursing home bed, you and me—we all have value because each of us is someone created by the hand of God, someone redeemed by the blood of Christ, and someone God desires to call according to His purpose.

The truth of life is that every life has value because of what God has done. It is a truth that raises the life issues way above being mere political issues and even above being just moral issues. When you destroy life at any stage of development, under any condition of health, you are destroying the blood-bought handiwork of God. You are messing with “grandma’s quilt.”
Growing in and Sharing the Truth of Life

The truth of life is that every life has value because of what God has done. That is a truth we need to understand here in the Body of Christ. We need to grow in that truth. For I’m afraid our silence about this truth and our failure to apply it to the life issues has helped it along onto the scaffold. When this truth is ignored, it allows the terrible wrong of the destruction of vulnerable human life to ascend to the throne and rule the day. More and more often in our society we turn to death as a solution to the problems of life.

We need to reverse that. The flow of influence needs to change. We need to be influencing society rather than being “tossed to and fro” and riding the waves of whatever our culture deems right. Our society desperately needs us to teach them how to welcome every life and to care for every life and to value every life. We can do that because we have a God who, through Christ, welcomed us, Who cares for us, and Who gives value to us.

So let’s begin right here. Let’s speak the truth of life more among ourselves, and let’s do so in love. Let’s educate ourselves, not just on the life issues, but on what Christ’s Word of Truth has to say about them. Let us pledge to grow together in this so that our Head, Jesus Christ, may be glorified.

Then let’s take this truth about the value and dignity of human life out there into our society and share it, boldly and courageously but always in love. By the things we say and the things we do, may we speak the truth of the value of each and every human life. By the things we say and the things we do, may we speak the truth about the Source of that value. Like Great Grandma’s quilt, the value of life comes from the One who made it, the One who bought it back, and the One who gives it meaning and purpose.
A Time to Be Silent – A Time to Speak
by Wayne E. Graumann

Have you heard the phrase “Open mouth, insert foot”? Has it ever happened to you? One of the problems we humans have with communication is that we don’t listen well enough, with the result that we sometimes say or do things that cause embarrassment. Years ago, a telecommunication company made funny commercials to sell its cellular phone by mocking the inability of people to hear clearly what is being said on competitors’ phone systems. In one such commercial, a grandmother puts baking flour all over her grandchildren because she thought her daughter had instructed her via the static-prone cellular phone to “flour the kids.” The daughter had really said, “How are the kids?” Silly, yes, but still illustrative of the truth that people don’t always listen as closely as they ought sometimes and, therefore, speak or take action that is not the most well thought out.

The writer of Ecclesiastes said that there is a time to be silent and a time to speak. What divine wisdom! Communication experts tell us that effective communication has more to do with listening, keeping silent, than with speaking. These experts tell us that if we listened to each other more, especially in the area of controversy, we wouldn’t say as many things that cause us to “insert the foot.” We also would not be so misunderstood when we speak because listening to others connotes that we care about them and value what they have to say. We Lutherans value life highly and oppose abortion vigorously. Yet it could be true that we are not “heard” or understood by individuals confronted with that choice in life. The old phrase, “They won’t care what you know until they know that you care,” is really true here. While important, it is not enough for us to only voice our opposition to abortion. We are called to make a difference in the lives of each person contemplating abortion by actively entering their world as we love them in their pain and confusion, as we encourage them with the hope that God gives to all who are called according to His good purpose and who walk according to His command, and, yes, by pointing them to the godly option of life. There is a time to be silent as we listen to and care for those in the process of making decisions which are not only wrong but also abhorrent. In so doing, we will make a real impact with real people.

“A time to keep silence … a time to speak.”
Ecclesiastes 3:7b
Today we reach out to all women who have had an abortion in the past and who live with silent pain and shame. This is a place where tears are understood and where healing comes with honest conversation, confession, and forgiveness in Christ.

Today we reach out to all men who contributed to a pregnancy outside of marriage and who encouraged and/or paid for an abortion. That burden is a heavy load that only Jesus can relieve.

Today we reach out to all those who have supported abortion politically and medically. We realize that at times you have believed that we have only shouted slogans at each other rather than reasoning with each other. We want to assure you that we value all life and sincerely want the best for all people.

As a Church, we want to listen to the pain and confusion, to the distress and fear, of those who contemplate abortion as a solution to the difficult situation in life that they face. And in listening, we want to show that we care, that we love, and that we are willing to go the distance to sustain life. We owe a debt of gratitude to all who in the name of Christ support and work in crisis pregnancy counseling and life centers. In so doing, they are listening and caring, thus making a difference.

And so, how are we to respond to the wisdom of Ecclesiastes, “a time to be silent, a time to speak”? As Christians, we are called to be silent before God and to listen to the voice of Jesus. Our Lord Himself said, (in John 10:27 NIV) “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” Our clear call is to listen to Jesus only—He is our Friend, our Savior, and our Redeemer! Other voices may call out to us, but we ignore them. Peter, the disciple of Jesus, said to Jesus, (in John 6:68, NIV) “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” Like Peter, when confronted with difficult choices, we go to our Savior and to no one else for answers. Jesus alone speaks and brings the comforting assurance of life eternal. To our young men and women today, to our teenagers and youth, we tell you that Jesus is the only voice to heed. When troubled and perplexed, especially when confronted with the choice between life and death in pregnancy, know that Jesus came to bring abundant life into the world. Hear your Savior’s voice and know that He will sustain you.

We also listen to the clear words of Scripture. The Bible is inspired, which means “breathed out” by the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures are completely true and dependable because their source is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when the Bible speaks, we listen. We listen to the words of King David, who wrote in Psalm 139:13-16 (NIV):

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”
Abortion/Post Abortion/Alternatives

Here God is clearly instructing us that we humans are His creation, especially when we are in the mother’s womb. Every one of those days, from conception to birth, was ordained by God’s creating hand. How could any of us think we could destructively intervene and overrule God’s creative work and put to death that which He has given life? No, we will listen to God in His written Word. In the New Testament, the recounting of Jesus’ birth brings us another word from God to which we listen. Luke tells the story in which the Virgin Mary goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Both women were pregnant—Mary only recently with Jesus and this by the power of the Holy Spirit and Elizabeth, six months along with John the Baptizer, who was the one designated by God to prepare the way for Jesus’ ministry. When Mary came into Elizabeth’s home, her six-month-old, preborn baby leaped for joy because the mother of the Lord was in his presence. This was not a “preborn baby kicking in the stomach thing.” This was faith produced by the Holy Spirit in the preborn baby. John the Baptizer, although still in his mother’s womb, was a living human being with faith in his Savior. We Christians are silent before God and listen to His Word. We believe the commandment, “You shall not murder,” which most specially means do not harm innocent life. We do not change that commandment to fit our needs or wants or concerns. We do not say that times have changed and, therefore, God’s commandment should change to fit the times. No, we are silent before God and let God and His Word stand!

There is a time for silence and there is also, as the writer of Ecclesiastes says, a time to speak. What are we Christians to speak? Only those things that are in conformity with that which God has given us in His Scripture. We sometimes may think like the Prophet Jeremiah at the beginning of his ministry. He said, “I do not know how to speak; I am too young” (Jeremiah 1:6 NIV). He was afraid that people would not listen to him. He said, “Who will listen to me … the word of the Lord is offensive to them” (Jeremiah 6:10 NIV). God told Jeremiah, “Tell them everything I command you; do not omit a word” (Jeremiah 26:2b NIV). Today, we have God’s Word recorded in the Bible, and we Christians are to speak that Word to the world. We are to tell the story of Jesus and His love for humanity, a love so deep that He willingly died on the cross to save people from the guilt and condemnation of their sins. This is what we can speak to those who are in shame and guilt because of an abortion issue in their past—“You have a forgiving God and a loving Savior—Your sin has been paid for, you are redeemed—God sees you through the Cross of Jesus. You can be free from your past. Bring your heavy burden to Jesus, and He will take it so that you can have rest and peace.”

We can speak to the world on behalf of those not yet born. We can honor life by word and deed, in how we raise our families, care for the aged, and respect one another. We speak loudly that we are pro-life when we live our lives in love one with another. In fact, living this way is absolutely foundational if our speaking out as supporters of pro-life issues is to have integrity.

We also speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves. The writer of Proverbs instructs us this way, “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.” (31:8-9) In our society, pre-born babies to the infirm
Abortion/Post Abortion/Alternatives

and aged are under attack. Life has become fragile for those not able to wield power for themselves. It has always been so in history. That is why God asks His people to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and to defend them. How may we Christians responsibly do this? Writing letters to our representatives and senators in Congress is one easy route for us.

Making sure you know where candidates stand on life issues is another way to defend the rights of the pre-born and elderly. And then vote pro-life. (Are you registered to vote?) Actively supporting pro-life agencies such as Lutherans For Life and crisis pregnancy centers by volunteer work and financial contributions is another way to support the weak and destitute. When God says “speak up,” He doesn’t mean just in your head and with those who agree with you. God means take godly action. A side note: breaking laws is not a godly option in supporting life. But taking no action is also not a godly option. Christianity is not timid religiosity—it is an active, living force because it has a living, active God. Jesus rose victorious from the grave that we might have life and have it to the full. We want all to experience this life. We do not sit back idly while the world imposes evil upon those unable to defend themselves. Now is a time to recommit to our Christian values, which are grounded upon scriptural teaching. It is a time to be silent and a time to speak!
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


*Item LFL801R. $0.50 ea.*
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.
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’ rich fool (Luke 12:20). But who needs bigger barns when you’ve got neighbors? Sure, giving birth and raising children cost 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 end 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 1:13a). 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.
Spotlight on Lutherans For Life

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

The Inclusive Old Pledge Is Still the Best Pledge
by Dr. Jean Garton

Note: While Memorial Day has come and gone, Dr. Garton’s words from 2016 are worth reading anytime.

In May, the United States again observed Memorial Day. First called Decoration Day, it is a date set aside in 1868 to remember the men and women who lost their lives in wars fought in the then short history of our beloved country.

While always a poignant day, it is also a grateful day. Together, as a nation, we remember the freedoms we enjoy because of the valor and sacrifice of the members of our military services.

Memorial Day is marked with parades, services of all sorts, singing of patriotic songs, and, of course, citizens reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those key words—With Liberty And Justice For All—have long been taken at face value. However, in practice today, they have been amended and revised and revamped.

There is the Pompous Version. With Liberty and Justice for All: that is, the perfect, productive, and planned.

There is the Elitist Version. With Liberty and Justice for All, except for those who are “inconvenient” or “unwanted.”

There is the Materialist Version. With Liberty and Justice for All, but not for the poor, dependent, or those whose existence some deem too costly to preserve and defend.

There is the Escapist Version. With Liberty and Justice for …. It all depends.

There is the Pro-Abortion Version. With Liberty and Justice for All women who have a right to control their own bodies and because a fetus is not a person and because a woman has a right to choose and because, and because, and because ….

It is an anti-democratic version of the Pledge that has become one, long run-on sentence that evades the Pledge’s core meaning.

But, then, there is the Pro-Life Pledge. It comes without exceptions but with quotation marks because the words of the Pledge are not ours to change: “With Liberty and Justice for All.”

Period!

That phrase speaks of an inclusive, not an exclusive, society. It is that great and historic truth to which Pro-Lifers pledge themselves.

Source: www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/2019/05/the-inclusive-old-pledge-is-still-the-best-pledge-3

“With Liberty and Justice for All.”
**Children’s Message**

LFL Executive Director Pastor Michael Salemink recently shared a children’s message at his congregation’s Chinese mission (Light of Christ, Olivette, Missouri) about how God creates, redeems, and calls every human life to be His own precious treasure—forever—no matter what age, appearance, or ability.

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**Poster Contest Winner**

LFL Lifelines, an LFL Life Chapter in Carver County, Minnesota, recently conducted its annual poster contest in area Lutheran schools.

Tyler, a sixth-grade student at St. John’s Lutheran School in Norwood Young America, is shown here with his winning poster.

Monetary prizes, ribbons, certificates, and “Precious Feet” pins were awarded to poster contest winners.
Letter from a Donor

Opportunities to witness For Life can happen anytime and anywhere. In May, we received a letter from LFL supporter Miriam G. who shared this story about a change of heart: “I had an interesting conversation last evening with a new friend, a 67-year-old man. He told me of a conversation he had with a young woman at the university here. She got him thinking with several things she said. The first was telling him that Planned Parenthood centers that do abortions have a lot of rescue calls. He had thought of abortion as mainly a woman’s issue and a decision to be just between a woman and her doctor. But she told him this is an issue for men too since they start the whole process of a new life! He is not a Christian, but he doesn’t like the idea of killing either humans or animals. He started thinking about the concept that life begins at conception and came to the conclusion that all abortion, no matter at what stage, is murder. I just sat and listened, saying very little, as he talked himself into his conclusion. He claims he’s a man of few words and doesn’t like to talk much, so I watched with a mixture of amusement and awe as he talked himself into his final conclusion while I kept my mouth shut. Once in a while, I apparently find myself on the same page with the Holy Spirit! In conclusion then, a prayer request would be giving God thanks and asking that He continue working in [this man’s] heart. He is divorced and has a daughter in college. He and the daughter seem to have influence on each other, so this may ripple out. Thank you for your ministry.”

More About Word of Hope

As a ministry of Lutherans For Life (LFL), Word of Hope is a unique 24/7 national hotline devoted to intervening on behalf of life issues and imparting the value of all human life as divinely created and redeemed by Jesus Christ.

Hotline callers are primarily men or women who have suffered for weeks, months, or years after participating in an abortion decision.

Many of the hurting people describe overwhelming guilt, depression, anxiety, nightmares, intrusive thoughts, unwanted memories, or other symptoms of post-abortion syndrome.

At Word of Hope, we respond to suffering with love, mercy, and confidential support, guiding each person toward reconciliation with God by the gift of faith in Christ alone.

For more information, visit Word of Hope at www.word-of-hope.org or call 888.217.8679 or email info@word-of-hope.org to get HOPE now!
Spotlight on Lutherans 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

Still to come …

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)
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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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.

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