

LifeDate

Spring
2020



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

A Culture of Life

Popular culture is often not life-affirming and biblically friendly—but there are exceptions! Let's look at life-affirming movies, books, and more.



Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!

Inside this edition of LifeDate ...

page 3

From the Executive Director

A Culture of Life

by Pastor Michael Salemink

pages 4-5

Abortion/Post Abortion/Alternatives

March for Life 2020 – Lutherans For Life

Was There! by Michelle Bauman

pages 6-13

Worldview and Culture

For Life at the Movies

by Pastor Michael Salemink

To Save a Life by Lynette Auch

For Life at the Library by Pastor Michael

Salemink

Worthy of Praise by Virginia J. Flo

page 14-15

Family Living

Starting Life Conversations

by Stephenie Hovland

Before the World about Us

by Marie MacPherson

pages 16-17

Lutherans For Life Resources

pages 18-19

Life Thoughts in the Church Year

page 20

World News

pages 21-30

Spotlight on Lutherans For Life

Share the Life Message All Through the Year! / Word of Hope

Good Books for You(th)—and How to Find Them by Michelle Bauman

Symbols of Pleasure, Gifts from Above by Michelle Bauman

Celebrating Life in a Small Congregation by Deaconess Rachel Geraci

Blessed Again ... in Milwaukee

2021 March for Life/LAMBS – Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets/Estate Planning/Real Estate for Life/LFL on Social Media

2020 LFL Regional Conferences



Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life

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A Culture of Life

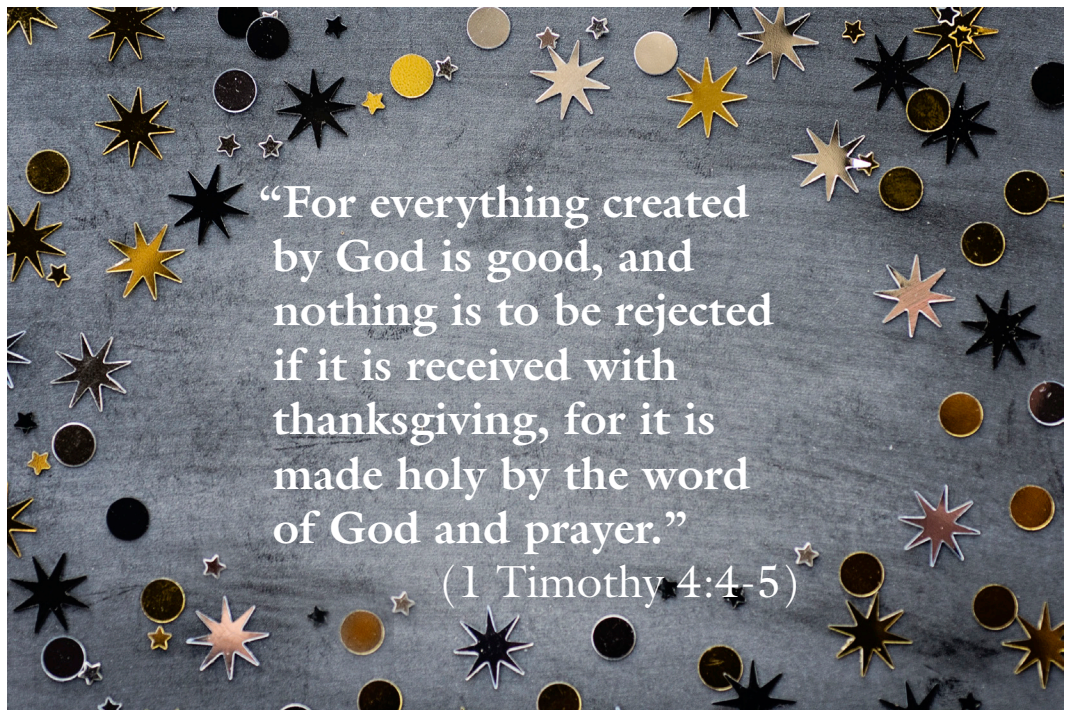
by Pastor Michael Salemink

Our Lord Jesus taught with familiar narratives. St. Paul the Apostle insisted, “**I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some**” (1 Corinthians 9:22b). Dr. Martin Luther the Reformer translated both the Scriptures and the worship liturgy into the congregation’s native tongue. Almighty God does not require us to ascend to heaven and learn His language. He brings Himself near and makes Himself known on our level. He incarnates among us.

Popular culture does not always affirm life. This society has its own songs and stories, vocabulary and rhetoric. It engages in common rituals and symbols, habits and outfits. And these more frequently give voice to the devil, the world, and our sinful nature than they do to the Law and the Gospel of God. Often it frustrates us in our efforts to speak the truth in love so that the message is heard and understood.

However, culture also offers opportunities. Our Savior reigns over—and redeems—all creation: “**The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world**” (Psalm 19:1-4).

Christians also communicate in songs and stories, rituals and symbols. We can interact with the minds and hearts of our neighbors on these familiar levels. We know their language, and we have artists and authors who can ensure the medium does not diminish the message. And this issue of *LifeDate* has some wonderful examples!



**“For everything created
by God is good, and
nothing is to be rejected
if it is received with
thanksgiving, for it is
made holy by the word
of God and prayer.”
(1 Timothy 4:4-5)**

March for Life 2020 – Lutherans For Life Was There!

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life, Lutherans For Life

Some are saying this year's March for Life in Washington, D.C., on January 24 was record-breaking. In fact, rough estimates claim over 500,000 people showed up. I don't know if that number is true, but I can tell you that there were more people present at the March than I have ever seen present in one place in my entire life.

Priests and pastors and parishioners showed up. Churches carried banners, and schools played in bands. Dioceses and districts strolled side by side. God's people intermingled, forming a beautifully diverse tide of humanity that ebbed and flowed down Constitution Avenue.

Some sang. Some chanted. Most held signs. Everyone smiled. This sea of 4Life witnesses was united behind one pressing purpose: **UPHOLDING LIFE**.

And mixed into this ocean of cheerful, life-affirming people were approximately 150 youth and adults who attended **Y4Life in Washington, D.C.** According to the students, the March and accompanying conference were more than impressive. They were inspiring. And for many, the entire experience was both life-changing and faith-affirming. "I loved the sense of community at this conference!" one participant said; "I truly feel like my faith was renewed this past weekend."

The free conference began Thursday evening and ended Saturday at noon. Students were able to spend time with other 4Life youth from across the nation while they made posters for the March, engaged in devotions, and reflected on how they could support life in their own communities. In addition to the March, high-school- and college-aged youth and adults learned about life issues other than abortion, issues that included teen suicide, physician-assisted suicide, euthanasia, sexuality, purity, and chastity. As created, redeemed, and called children of God, participants were reminded again and again that their lives matter and so do the lives of their neighbors.

It was a good weekend. Some might even say it was inspiring. And for some, like me, who saw just how passionate youth can be about supporting life, it was definitely life-changing and faith-affirming.

If you'd like to attend or financially support **Y4Life in Washington, D.C.**, next year, or if you would simply like more information, please contact me at mbauman@lutheransforlife.org.





For Life at the Movies

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Faith doesn't mean blind belief without any evidence. Rather, faith means particular past experiences influence future expectations. Faith means trust, and trust implies trustworthiness. The Heavenly Father earns and establishes our faith with His history of gracious overtures. Indeed, He has left evidences everywhere of His affection for humankind. As Romans 1:20 proclaims, **"For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made."** And Psalm 19:1a, 2a, and 4a affirms, **"The heavens declare the glory of God ... Day to day pours out speech ... Their voice goes out through all the earth."** Our Lord and God has put His fingerprints and footprints in time and space, most especially by the incarnation of His Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

His shadow and His signature fall also upon history and story. Any good story only gets its goodness from echoing and reflecting the great story of sin and salvation. Maybe a specific story doesn't explicitly feature God or the Gospel, but its themes, characters, and plotlines parallel those of fall and forgiveness, iniquity and atonement, redemption and restoration. Using narrative to teach eternal truths didn't originate with Jesus, but He did give parables a special place in communicating Christian grace and faith. So movies make a great way to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life. Here are a couple recommendations for experiencing life's sanctity with family or neighbors.

What would you add to this list?

1. **It's a Wonderful Life** (1946, PG): George Bailey's life gets repeatedly interrupted by other people's needs. He feels like a failure for never achieving his dreams. When he concludes everybody would be better off if he'd never been born, an unexpected intruder dramatically demonstrates how all human lives are inextricably intertwined.
2. **Horton Hears a Who** (2008, G): A Seussian elephant upsets the social order when he discovers a world of microscopic people living invisibly within a single flower. Though he risks losing everything by trying to help his skeptical friends hear the miracle, nothing takes away his cheerful enthusiasm that "a person's a person, no matter how small!"
3. **The Drop Box** (2015, PG): South Korean pastor Lee Jong-rak has a heart for children with disabilities. He and his wife build a baby-sized compartment into the wall of their home where unwilling parents can anonymously deposit impaired little ones to be cared for rather than abandoned to the streets. This documentary captures how much—believe it or not!—compassion and happiness enter the pastor's home and family through that small opening.
4. **Awakenings** (1990, PG-13): Dr. Sayers works with patients in a mental institution who are mostly unresponsive. Though the facility's staff has become somewhat callous, Dr. Sayers remains caring and persistent. His research leads

him to a miraculous medication that restores many of the residents to full consciousness and ability, but it soon manifests sinister side effects. Along the way, everyone involved learns that the worth of humanity can't be limited to their physical or intellectual abilities.

5. **October Baby** (2011, PG-13): A series of medical mishaps sends teenager Hannah delving into her past for answers. The secrets she discovers—including an abortion—leave her feeling utterly unwanted. Little does she know that faith and the love of family will follow her into her grief until reconciliation brings healing.
6. **Bella** (2006, PG-13): Waitress Nina gets fired for arriving late to work. Chef Jose becomes concerned and follows her outside. As he walks and listens, she shares her anxiety about being unexpectedly pregnant, unemployed, and alone. She intends to abort, and he accompanies her to the clinic. Can his generosity and tenderness persuade her toward adoption? Will her needs raise him above his tragic past? Is there anything that the delightfulness of family can't heal?
7. **Arrival** (2016, PG-13): Alien spacecraft descend around the world, and the American government enlists Louise, a linguist, and Ian, a physicist, to investigate. Their optimism contrasts with the skepticism of everyone else and enables them to decipher a powerful technology. Louise and Ian learn that even supernatural forces cannot achieve beauty apart from suffering, but that fleeing from grief also means losing goodness.
8. **Juno** (2007, PG-13): Casual sex results in flippant sixteen-year-old Juno becoming pregnant. Though abortion seems the obvious answer, she finds her experience of the clinic distasteful and begins pursuing adoption. But even that arrangement begins to unravel, and it will take the love of her family, the support of her child's father, a sense of humility, and a lot of humor to keep the situation from turning catastrophic for everybody.
9. **The Nativity Story** (2006, PG): This faithful dramatization presents the experiences of Mary and Joseph as they face her unplanned pregnancy. Though they encounter many more dangers and inconveniences than most, they receive parenthood as a holy calling. Herod's attempts to use death as a solution also wreak more havoc, but through it all the miracle of new life is worth it.



To Save a Life

by Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Philippians 4:8).

This verse of Scripture has been a treasure in our humble attempt at Christian parenting through the years, as this was often the “plumb line” when deciding what kind of media was allowed entrance into our home.

One of those media items was the film *To Save A Life* (tosavealifemovie.com).

Jake (Randy Wayne) has it all: he is good-looking, super popular, a high school basketball star and everyone’s hero; his girlfriend, Amy (Deja Kreutzberg), is the homecoming queen and all around “hottie.” Jake has the seemingly “perfect future” all planned out for himself—complete with a college basketball scholarship offer to Louisville which had been his life-long dream.

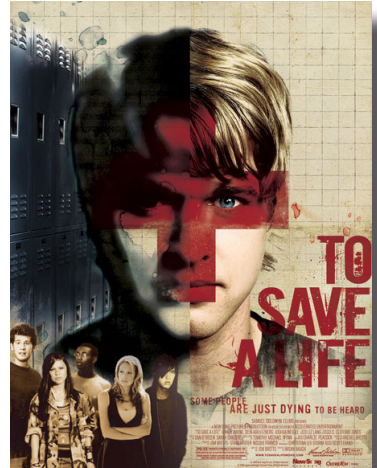
Jake’s life was perfect until Jake’s forgotten boy-hood best friend, Roger Dawson (Robert Bailey), committed suicide right before his eyes on the high school campus. *To Save a Life* opens at the graveside ceremony of his friend Roger.

Social politics of high school slowly pulled the boys apart. It seems Jake has everything and Roger has nothing—no friends, no hope, nothing but rejection. Roger doesn’t seem to belong in Jake’s—or anyone’s—circle of friends, and he’d had enough. He walks onto campus with a gun in his pocket and pain in his heart and makes a tragic move. Jake’s last-ditch effort doesn’t stop Roger, and it rocks Jake’s world.

Jake, distraught and looking for reasons for Roger’s suicide, is devastated about what he himself did not do. “Could I have saved him?” Jake’s feelings of guilt set him on a quest for answers. A compassionate stranger enters his life and offers hope from an odd place—a relationship with God. Would Jake be willing to forsake his popularity and his dreams to follow after truth? The repercussions of his decisions from that point on is the roller-coaster ride that becomes the rest of the film—a portrait of real life, believable from beginning to end.

Many people who work with youth will tell you that a huge influence in their lives is “the movies.” According to Jim Britts, a youth pastor and writer of *To Save A Life*, “I work with troubled teens every day and see the severity of the poor choices they make. Movies are a powerful way to illustrate the consequences of making the wrong choice while reinforcing positive actions.”

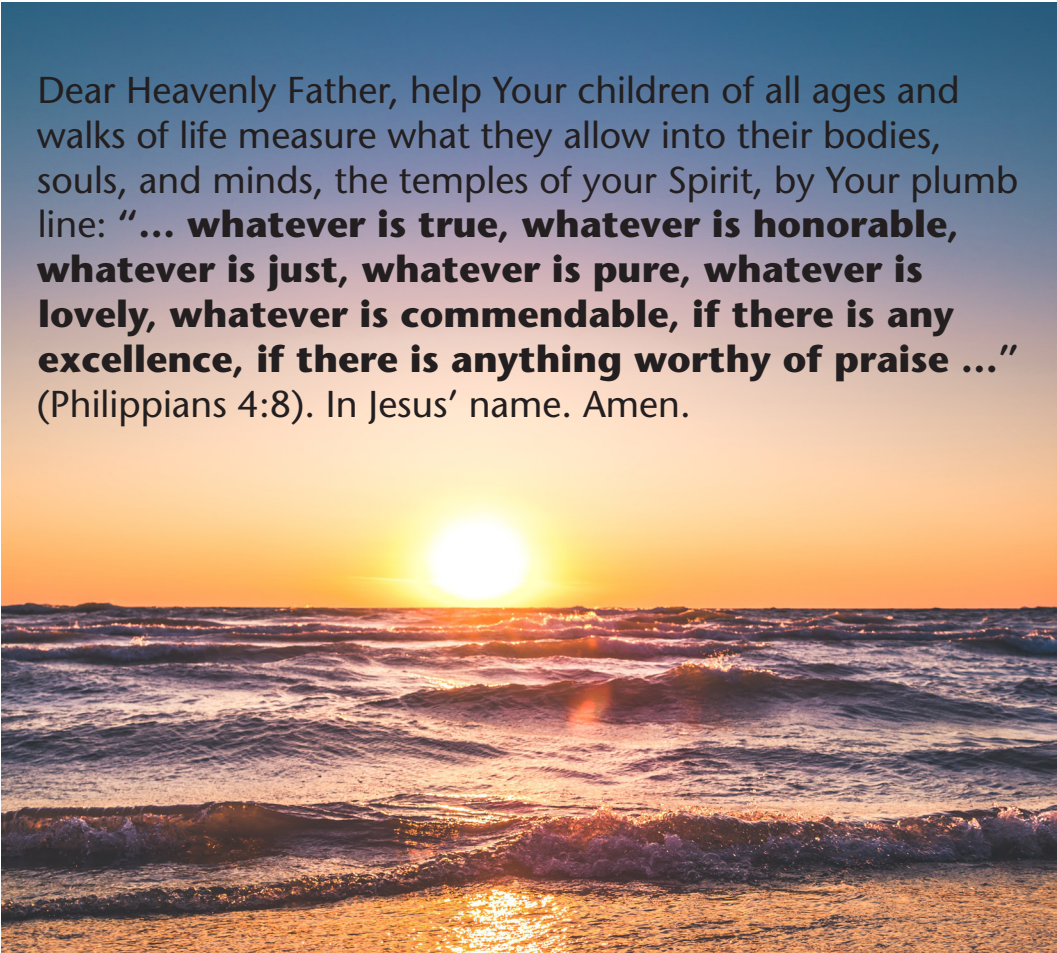
To Save A Life was born from a passion to reach young people with the love and security they so desperately need. Teens, young adults, and, yes, adults, are hurting



and facing challenges like never before, many that are very much life-threatening. For example, according to the American Psychological Association, in the United States suicide rates have increased by 33% from 1999 through 2017. Suicide ranks as the second leading cause of death for 10- to 34-year-olds and is the fourth leading cause of death for people ages 35 to 54. Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death overall (www.apa.org/monitor/2019/03/trends-suicide).

To Save A Life does not shy away from tough topics and serves as a springboard into a plethora of life-issues discussions: depression and suicide, teen sex and unplanned pregnancy, peer pressure, drug and alcohol use, bullying, divorce, relationships, and intense feelings like loneliness, rejection, frustration, stress, and the need to appear in control during times of personal pain and strife.

To Save A Life is rated PG-13, but this film can help parents, pastors, counselors, youth workers, and others point those struggling with life issues to a way out of their problems by following God's instructions. This film is life-affirming in numerous ways and, in my humble opinion, a useful tool for "equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life." My family had some lively educational discussions together after viewing this movie.



Dear Heavenly Father, help Your children of all ages and walks of life measure what they allow into their bodies, souls, and minds, the temples of your Spirit, by Your plumb line: **"... whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise ..."** (Philippians 4:8). In Jesus' name. Amen.

For Life at the Library

by Pastor Michael Salemink

Sometimes Gospel-motivated voices read children's books. Saving lives can be as simple as reading children's books. Think of it as inoculating the next generation against the devil's deceptions. Bedtime stories, Sunday school lessons, grandchild visits, chapel services and children's messages, commutes and car trips give you privileges no one else has. You fill and form hearts in early years with the sanctity of life. After all, "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." And the good Lord promises, "**Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it**" (Proverbs 22:6). These ones are my favorites:

1. **The Ugly Duckling** (I like Disney's version [Buena Vista Distribution Co., 1987] because it goes along with their cartoon.): Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale shows it doesn't matter what you look like or what you can't do, there's no such thing as an unwanted child. Our Heavenly Father and His holy household (as well as adoptive parents!) love everyone He has created, redeemed, and called—even when it seems nobody else does.
2. **Love You Forever** (Firefly Books, 2001): Robert Munsch captures the beautiful truth that every human being depends upon others, however old we are. A son grows to help and hold his mother – and his daughter—just as Mama loved him through all the stages and challenges of his life. Whether tiny babies or aging bodies, we are all blessed "burdens" to each other and all the more precious for it.



3. **I Loved You Before You Were Born** (HarperCollins, 2001): Anne Bowen describes a grandmother’s anticipating the arrival of a little one. Accompanied by Greg Shed’s warm paintings, the story echoes Jeremiah 1:5 and memorably relates what gifts the unborn—and the elderly—bring to our families. Listeners learn that love comes not from age, appearance, or abilities but from the relationships God places us in.
4. **Just Because** (Lion Children’s Books, 2010): Rebecca Elliott writes about her children, Toby and Clemmie. Toby thinks his sister Clemmie is the best, even though she doesn’t act exactly the same as some other sisters. By the time we realize Clemmie has disabilities, we’ve come to appreciate the very special bond between a brother and a sister, no matter what. Elliott’s illustrations are more than a bonus—they display the wonder and love of life through the eyes of a child.
5. **Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born** (Joanna Cotler Books, 1996): Jamie Lee Curtis (yes, the famous actress!) portrays the excitement of an adoptive mom and dad (as well as the loving sacrifice of a birth mother). The child’s tickled refrain (“tell me again about ...”) powerfully expresses how a lifetime together sanctifies even the ordinary and unpleasant occurrences. Whose you are, not where you came from or how you got here, gives every life meaning.
6. **I Love You, Stinky Face** (Scholastic, 1997): Mama, what if I were a big, scary ape? Would you still love me then? Lisa McCourt’s little one has all kinds of “what-if?” questions to test the boundaries of a mother’s love. Mama responds by assuring her child that no age, appearance, action, or circumstance can impair her devotion, which heroically adapts to all of her beloved’s needs.
7. **Now One Foot, Now the Other** (G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1981): Award-winning author and illustrator Tomie de Paola traces how Grandson Bobby helps Grandpa Bob learn to walk and talk again after his stroke—just as the elder had once taught the younger. It’s a touching snapshot of the privileges and opportunities we receive when we share in one another’s crosses, especially in the morning and evening of life.
8. **Green Eggs and Ham** (Random House Beginner Books, 1960): Perhaps the most familiar children’s book of all time, Dr. Seuss’s whimsical journey through a series of increasingly far-fetched scenarios lends itself nicely to an affirmation of life’s worth. Sam-I-Am’s friend loathes the thought of green eggs and ham because the dish comes in unfamiliar colors and uncomfortable locations—until he experiences it personally. Then his enthusiasm is relentless!

What other children’s books have given you and your family God’s love for life?

Worthy of Praise

by Virginia J. Flo, Regional Director of Minnesota & National Conference Director

What the world offers as a solution to an unplanned pregnancy is abortion. When someone is sick, elderly, or suffers with mental illness, the world offers physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. It becomes difficult to remain faithful to God's Word when we live in a culture of death.

As Christians we know that God can change a bad situation into something very good. Yet, all we seem to hear about are the bad things. I guess that's because unless it's extremely sensational it doesn't make the news for the day. Yet, what I consider real news comes with a touch of joy as our hearts are lifted up when we hear it.

For example, how about a mother who wasn't sure having a baby was something she wanted or could handle? Yet, something happens at that moment of birth as that new life appears and excitement fills the room. Whether the mother has a change of heart or sees that the child gets a loving home through adoption, this is a seemingly bad thing turned very good. Or, how about a terminal diagnosis when all seems lost, but a family comes together in support of the patient, and life seems better even though the future is unsure. Working through the illness may bring some precious days as things like baptisms, confirmations, graduations, weddings, and more family events become more meaningful when each day is seen as a gift.

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” (Philippians 4:8-9)

We need to look for the good rather than focus on the bad. My local weatherman shows pictures of people having a birthday often doing things that are just plain fun. These are generally very young or very old people who at both spectrums of life are enjoying it. He doesn't show people with glum looks on their faces—they are happy people! That's the news I like to see and hear. There is so much for which to give praise and glory to God in our world; we just need to be sure it doesn't pass us by.

I also don't think we do enough celebrating. A while ago our church celebrated with a couple who were married for 70 years. What a joy that was. We could



have just waited and gathered at one of their funerals, but someone thought it would be great to let them see old friends, at least those still around. And they found great joy in greeting new friends who didn't know them well but were curious about a 70-year marriage. I didn't see a frown in the bunch that day. Praise the Lord!

Do birthdays go by without mention? I like to be reminded of someone's birthday on Facebook as I would never have remembered all my friends' birthdays otherwise. Although sometimes I am not fond of social media, I do appreciate the birthday reminders as a special means to celebrate online. My church publicizes weekly birthdays and anniversaries, maybe yours does too. Greeting people and sharing a blessing for their special day brings as much joy to me as to those receiving it. Enjoy those special birthday moments God gives us through His creation and the gift of life.

Everyone has been gifted in some way or another. Those having the gifts may not even be aware what a gift it really is. Yet, when used in service to the Lord, it is worthy of praise.

I marvel at the quilters at my church who quietly meet regularly. I don't even know who they all are or what they do until once a year when they display their finished products on the church pews as they are dedicated for the mission for which they are intended. The gifts in the hands and hearts of those doing this labor of love are amazing. Yet, they keep their anonymity and find their Christian fellowship and acts of service reward enough.



May we be able to see God's hand in the little things in life that are really very big things worthy of praise and thanksgiving! To God be the glory!

Starting Life Conversations

by Stephenie Hovland

Recently, a friend asked me for a list of pro-life children's books. I immediately drew a blank—and then ideas flooded my brain. But not ideas for books that have an obvious bent toward life-affirming ideas. Instead, I thought of books, movies, and TV shows that had stirred life conversations with my students and family. I realized that I could view many books as “pro-life” that others would not, simply because I was looking at every piece of media as something to be consumed through a “For Life” worldview lens. And that can't be put into a simple list. Instead, let me explain it a bit.

When I read a picture book, I look at the illustrations and notice the value of the humans (or animals with human qualities). Many books show the value of babies before they're born because we anticipate them being cute newborns. I go beyond the potential cute factor and point out the humanness of the baby and how God values them when they are not yet born as much as when they are grown up. Children readily agree, and the idea of caring for unborn babies as much as born babies is an important concept for all people.

Many picture books and chapter books these days focus on human rights and social justice. I read those and confirm that all humans are loved equally by God, no matter their race, their job, their gender, or their age. That love leads us to action. When we believe in caring for the unborn, the disabled, and those nearing death, we may find ourselves wanting to change laws and hearts to see their value. That is a Christian worldview that many can understand.

I watch for little sayings in picture books because picture-book authors choose every single word with care. I watch for themes in novels and movies, and I point them out or help students notice them as well. I can see when the student understands. But then I may take it a step further. I share how the concept has shown up in my life or the community around us. Then the child has a more personal understanding. As they keep reading or watching, they really feel like they are experiencing what is happening in the movie or book and see how it relates to their worldview.

Sometimes what we read or watch may have a contrasting worldview. It could be one choice a character makes, how they live, or how a bad situation has encouraged them to continue in poor choices. Often I turn it off, but sometimes I use it as a discussion point. When the child realizes that we all have choices, including sinful ones, then he can also see that we have consequences. We may talk about the commandments, God's will for us, free will, and consequences. That's a life lesson we all learn, so why not guide them through it by watching or reading about someone else? It can give them some foundational thinking for the future.

As parents, relatives, friends, and teachers, we have opportunities to speak into the lives of the young people around us. I caution you not to make every single book, movie, or TV show a morality lesson. Youth and students will tune you out or avoid you, if you do. But do speak up, especially when your worldview lesson is Gospel-motivated. Learning that God forgives and loves each one of us is something that we can never hear too often.

Before the World about Us

by Marie MacPherson

“I will wait on the LORD ... I will hope in Him. Here am I and the children whom the LORD has given me! We are for signs and wonders in Israel From the LORD of hosts, Who dwells in Mount Zion.” (Isaiah 8:17–18 NKJV)

As a mom, I often find myself thinking of my children as a crowd of people instead of as individuals. It is so easy to group the children together, assuming them to be a force for evil (“Those kids are up to it again!”) rather than see them as individuals with strengths that God is developing to His glory to witness to and serve the world.

Amidst the terror and destruction of the land, Isaiah boldly confesses, at God’s command, that he and his children are signs and symbols to the world of the Lord’s goodness and mercy. As Christian families, we are also God’s witnesses to the world of Who Christ is and what He means. 1 John 4 drives this point home, encouraging followers of Jesus to be bold in abundant love to the unrighteous.

God sees every sin of every individual, both repentant and unrepentant, desiring that all come to the knowledge of the truth. He sees your children as forgiven individuals, created for a special purpose in this world. He forgives you for grouping kids together for mere convenience and often attributing to them sinful intentions rather than childish curiosities. And even if the world may choose to reject the signs and wonders of your family in its midst, He prepares you all to be witnesses to His love.

Our hearts let new-created be,
Our walk make pure and holy.
Help us offense and sin to flee,
And ever serve God solely,

So that our faith in Christ, our Lord,
May prove itself in deed and word
Before the world about us.
(*Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary 26:3*)

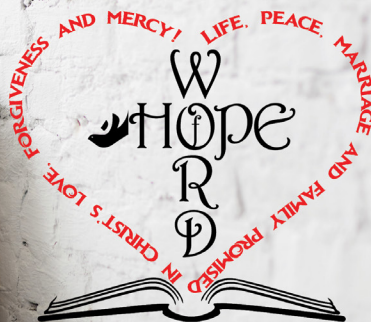
For Further Reading: Isaiah 8; 1 John 4:17–21

Mrs. Marie K. MacPherson lives in Mankato, Minnesota, with her husband, Ryan, and their six children whom she homeschools. She is author of The Story of Baby Shalom and Meditations on the Vocation of Motherhood (2018), editor of Mothering Many: Sanity-Saving Strategies from Moms of Four or More (2016), and a certified classical Lutheran educator from the Consortium of Classical Lutheran Educators (CCLE).





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an abortion, there is a
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tormented heart ... 888.217.8679



This new bulletin insert shares the mission, hope, and services of
Word of Hope – Item LFL41OBI. FREE

**Will It Hurt?
Six Facts
about 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.

Will It Hurt? – Six Facts about Pain Perception in the Developing Human

This 3.5" x 8.5" laminated handout shares six facts about pain perception in the developing human. The author, 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.

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Mother's Day and Father's Day Bulletin Inserts



"As one whom his mother
comforts, so I will comfort you."
(Isaiah 66:13a)



www.lutheransforlife.org



"As a father shows compassion
to his
children, so
the LORD
shows
compassion
to those
who fear
him."
(Psalm 103:13)



www.lutheransforlife.org

A Prayer for Mothers – This bulletin insert offers a beautiful prayer for mothers.
Item LFL1119BI. \$0.10 ea.

A Prayer for Fathers – This bulletin insert offers a wonderful prayer for fathers.
Item LFL1115BI. \$0.10 ea.

Faithful Fathers – This classic bulletin insert is back! (Limited quantities are available.) "Faithful Fathers" says to fathers, "Daily seek to be faithful to your vocation as father. You are important! Daily seek your faithful God's forgiveness. You are important to Him! He will bless and uphold you."
Item LFL1107BI. \$0.10 ea.



How does a carpenter teach
the One who made the trees?

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



Life Thoughts in the Church Year

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

You can find Life Thoughts based on the historic One-Year Lectionary at:
www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-thoughts-in-the-church.

April 5 – Palm Sunday – Not the form of a superhero. Not a sultan or celebrity. Not pretty, popular, or prosperous. God showed Himself to the world in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:6-7). He gave Himself as peasant, dependent, and embryo to begin with. He selected humble, gentle, fragile, mortal. This makes human life of every age, appearance, and ability precious—elderly, unborn, and the least of these too!

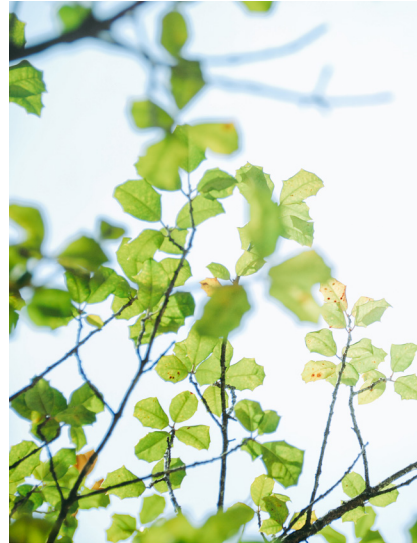
April 12 – Resurrection of Our Lord – Jesus’ bodily resurrection (Matthew 28:9) reveals as much about us as it does about God. What great majesty and honor the Almighty Maker hides (Colossians 3:3) in human flesh! And if He places such worth in a body broken by crucifixion, if He works such purpose in the rotting confines of a tomb, how much more can—will He!—do so in surprise pregnancy and in terminal diagnosis!

April 19 – Easter II – Conditions like cancer and dementia pose significant struggle. Pregnancies affected by poverty, disability, or sexual assault involve real difficulties. Abortion or physician-assisted suicide may seem like resolutions. Yet intentionally ending innocent life opposes God and will fail (Acts 5:38-39) to secure any ultimate peace or comfort. Instead trust, wait, and rejoice (1 Peter 1:5-6): God’s gifts and His works—even amid suffering—no one and nothing can overthrow.

April 26 – Easter III – Forgiveness, salvation, everlasting life: the promise is for you and your children (Acts 2:38-39). However these children come to exist; however long they are with us; however little, invisible, incapable, the Lord of Life makes no distinction about durations or locations. He who calls you also calls all the children His own precious treasure from fertilization to forever.

May 3 – Easter IV – Abortion views a little one’s weakness as reason to exclude her. Assisted suicide sees a patient’s need as an occasion for discarding him. The first Christians welcomed their weak and needy as opportunities for community (Acts 2:44-45). They learned from Jesus that a neighbor who lacked meant an invitation to lean in and share life. Are we too far gone to engage in the same with the least of these?

May 10 – Easter V & Mother’s Day – “Like newborn infants,”—gestating embryos, even—says 1 Peter 2:2. Aren’t we all? Helpless, dependent, rendered powerless by sin, but for the Savior’s grace. Yet protected, provided for, and precious (1 Peter 2:4)! Every member of our race embraced and cradled by a Heavenly Father Who loves even more than Mama. If motherhood manifests His compassion, how much more the babies dwell in their bellies!



May 17 – Easter VI – What best prepares us to defend the sanctity of life? Political strategy? Graphic imagery? Rhetorical formulas? Scientific citations? How about the hope we have in Christ our Holy One (1 Peter 3:15)—that our Lord is at work in every circumstance, even those life-and-death moments that seem most dark and desperate, bringing about not just survival but everlasting salvation, and always with His signature gentleness?

May 24 – Easter VII – “Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God,” who “settles the solitary in a home” (Psalm 68:5-6). He has not left us orphaned in our sins but has taken each of us for His own family. So we need not limit our enthusiasm for adoption only to addressing infertility. We can open not just our mouths but our hands, hearts, and homes, because children need them, and we have in abundance.

May 31 – Pentecost – “Remember not the sins of my youth” (Psalm 25:7a). Many post-abortive women and men have made the Psalmist’s prayer their own without us ever knowing. We don’t have to keep God’s Word to ourselves just because they do. Let

us instead rejoice with them that the Heavenly Father remembers them in His steadfast love and forgiveness, even those who have engaged in violence against life.

June 7 – Holy Trinity – God declares humankind embodies His own image (Genesis 1:27). He doesn’t extend this privilege to the great beasts, the mountain-tops, galaxies, or the angels themselves, but even the tiniest offspring of Adam and Eve—every “male and female”—has the honor. How magnificent it is when our witness to it as adults matches that of “babies and infants” (Psalm 8:2)!

June 14 – Pentecost II (Proper 6A) – The Lord finds human life worth saving even if it belongs to one who is weak (Romans 5:6) or evil (Romans 5:8). If He will have such as us for His “treasured possession” (Exodus 19:5) despite our profound impairments of heart, how can we decline to behold and safeguard the preciousness of another just because of some simply physical

shortcoming?

June 21 – Pentecost III (Proper 7A) & Father’s Day – Our nation goes to great lengths to protect her endangered landscapes and animals. Yet abortions deliver our children to death, and assisted suicides execute our elders (Matthew 10:21). Jesus categorizes these acts as persecutions against the Gospel. The comfort and courage we need come from knowing (childlike) and showing (father-like) how human lives from womb to tomb “are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31).

June 28 – Pentecost IV (Proper 8A) – Jesus says, “I have not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34b). Advocating the sanctity of life may mean living on that edge. Of course, Gospel grace and forgiveness aren’t for slaying adversaries but setting captives free. It sometimes feels like merely fetching refreshments (Matthew 10:42), but the reward of Gospel-motivated voices For Life is receiving even the least of these neighbors as treasures.



Western Australia (WA) legalized voluntary euthanasia, making it the second state in Australia—and the 19th jurisdiction in the world—to do so. The new legislation is expected to take effect in mid-2021. Yet, there are already calls for it to be relaxed to allow people with a mental illness and those who are “tired of life” to access dying under its provisions. Once enforced, WA’s Voluntary Assisted Dying Act will permit a terminally ill patient with a disease that likely will cause death within six months (or 12 months for neurodegenerative diseases) to end their life with a lethal “voluntary assisted-dying substance.” Critics of WA’s law said it was the least safe euthanasia regime to be enacted by an Australian legislature. “It’s verifiably the case that this is the most dangerous legislation that’s ever passed,” prominent anti-euthanasia MP Nick Goiran said. He stated there was no requirement for a medical professional or psychiatrist to be involved in a patient’s assisted death, meaning the lethal substance could be self-administered. (*LifeSiteNews*, *WA Today*, 12/9/19; *CLR LifeWire*, 12/12/19)

Abortions Worldwide in 2020

www.worldometers.info/abortions

More human beings died in abortions than any other cause of death in 2019, a new report indicates. A heartbreaking reminder about the prevalence of abortion, statistics compiled by Worldometers indicate that there were over 42.3 million abortions world-wide in 2019. The independent site collects data from governments and other reputable organizations and then reports the data, along with estimates and projections, based on those numbers. When contrasting the abortion numbers to other causes of death, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, traffic accidents, and suicide, abortions far outnumbered every other cause. By contrast, 8.2 million people died from cancer in 2019, 5 million from smoking, 13 million from disease, and 1.7 million died from HIV/AIDS. Deaths by malaria and alcohol are also recorded. Worldometers estimates about 58.6 million deaths worldwide in 2019, but that number does not include unborn babies’ abortion deaths. Unborn babies are not recognized as human beings even though biology indicates that they are unique, living human beings from the moment of conception and they die brutal, violent deaths in abortions ... Each of those 42 million abortions represents a living human being whose life was violently destroyed in his or her mother’s womb ... In most cases, the unborn babies’ hearts are beating when they are aborted, too. (*LifeNews.com*, 12/31/19)



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

Share the Life Message All Through the Year!

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

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

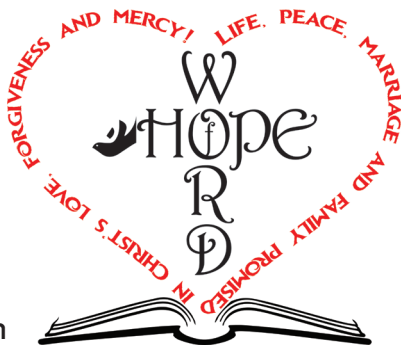
Check out “Life on the Web” on our Life Blog



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: 60,754,254 abortions in America

Source: www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/2019/11/abortion-statistics-united-states-data-and-trends-3

Good Books for You(th)—and How to Find Them

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

Dear Youth: I'm writing you this letter on the eve of Christmas Eve, and do you know what I'm hoping is under the tree for me?

Books.

Could there be a better gift? A better companion for your nightstand? A better friend to spend your time with while waiting for the dentist? I don't know about you, but as a bibliophile, I love everything about books - the smell of the pages and the font of the type; the dog-eared corners and the colorful dust jackets; the shape, and the size, and the weight of a tome in my hand.

Even more than the physicality of books, I love the stories. The allusions and the linguistic nuances, the rounding out of characters, the syntax and the diction, even the final paragraphs that bring the saga to an end—everything about books brings me tremendous joy.

Now I know that not all of you like books as much as I do. In fact, I'm certain that books might have been the last thing some of you wanted under your Christmas tree. But as a former English teacher, I have to believe that there's at least ONE book that's a PERFECT match for you. And as a professional matchmaker—I mean English teacher—you should know that I've paired up hundreds of students with the love-of-their-life books over the years.

So, when I was asked to compile a list of life-affirming books for youth a few weeks ago, I'm guessing you thought it would be easy for me. Am I right?

Ironically, it wasn't.

And it's not because those books don't exist; it's just that I desperately want them to exist for YOU. The truth is I want a perfect match.

There are two things I need to know about you to recommend the right book. First, I need to know what you already like to read. We all have different likes and dislikes. Some appreciate a good mystery; others fall in love with romance. Some youth love dystopian novels—and others despise them. There are so many genres: historical fiction, action adventure, anime, sci-fi, and fantasy to name a few. And that's not even accounting for the classics, nonfiction, and self-help books. Our tastes in literature reflect our interests, our needs, and our desires; they are as unique as we are.

Here's the second consideration: your Christian conscience. Though we all know that there's literature outside of the fence or curb of God's Law, there is also, by God's grace, much room within the fence to pursue personal interests and enjoyment. (*If you're not sure what you should avoid, here's an easy test: Read it out loud to your mom. If even the thought of that act makes you squeamish, you probably shouldn't be reading it. And in case you're wondering, I still use this as one of my measuring sticks!*)

So instead of recommending a specific book, I'm going to list a few guidelines for finding life-affirming books and provide a smattering of examples, hoping that at least one of the books will spark your interest. Here we go:

First, we need to recognize that a life-affirming book isn't going to avoid sin. Good literature never does. But it should address sin and the human condition in a way

that is “true ... honorable ... and worthy of praise” (Philippians 4:8). It should recognize that life is inherently valuable, and even though the book doesn’t need to have all of the answers, it should have some of them. It should depict a battle between good and evil, whether internal or external, and despite hardship and destruction, life-affirming literature should ALWAYS end with HOPE. All good literature should point to a need for a Savior; life-affirming literature is no exception. So, where do we find these good books?

How about a Lutheran publishing house? Concordia Publishing House has many life-affirming and faith-affirming options. *Grounded in God’s Word: Commentaries on Life* by Lutherans For Life and CPH, *You Ask about ... Life* and *You Ask about ... Relationships* both by Tim Pauls, *Echo* by Jonathan Fisk, and *Sexuality Mentality* by Heather Ruesch are just a few of the books I’ve picked up recently that speak to youth of all ages. (And they’re good reads for adults too!) The books I’ve listed are all nonfiction, but CPH has a smorgasbord of fiction to choose from as well.

As I alluded to above, good, life-affirming literature doesn’t depend on genre; instead, it is determined by its timelessness and truths about life. Countless secular books, whether their authors intended it or not, speak about life in a true and uplifting way. *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd, *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett, *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose, and *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare are all great examples.

In addition to timelessness, a life-affirming book, as stated above, will always provide hope. That doesn’t mean that every problem is wrapped up neatly in a fairytale ending by the conclusion of the book or series; perfect endings don’t often ring true. What it does mean is that despite sin, death, and destruction, there is still hope for a better future. *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* by Rick Riordan, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand, *Les Miserable* by Victor Hugo, and *The Giver* by Lois Lowry are great examples.

Some books make it easy; they actually contain a Christ figure who affirms the value of life. Christ figures die so that others might live; their suffering is always sacrificial and unmerited, and their act reminds us of the hope we have in Christ. I’ve made a list of books with Christ figures (see note at the end of the article), but I’ll mention a few of my favorites here: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis; *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien; *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles; and my absolute favorite: *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens.

When literature recognizes lives are valuable, provides hope, and points to a Savior, it is indeed commendable. No book but the Bible does that perfectly, but there are many other books that can remind us of who and whose we are. Life-affirming books are gifts, and whether they were under your tree or not, I hope you find time to pick up at least one of them. Better yet, I hope you find your perfect match. (*For those who prefer viewing stories rather than reading them, I’ve made a list for you too! You can find it in the online version of this article.*)

Y4Life • Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

mbaum@lutheransforlife.org • 812.350.2732 • www.Y4Life.org

Symbols of Pleasure, Gifts from Above

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

Our lives are filled with symbols. They're printed on billboards and designed into logos, sewn onto clothing and emblazoned on monitors. Even without words, these symbols communicate their messages loud and clear. The smiling box on your doorstep promises instant gratification from Amazon. A crowned mermaid on a cup of coffee sings the seductive call of a Starbucks siren. Two golden arches towering over the interstate guarantee a full belly at the next exit.

Most symbols in the advertising world are meant to bring pleasure to our lives; they remind us of what we're missing, what we should be longing for, what we cannot live without. And because they're so good at what they do, we comply. We purchase. We imbibe. We fill our bellies with the things of this world.

And you know what? That's not always bad. Finding pleasure in life isn't always a sin.

**Gasp* What did she just say?*

I know, ... I know, ... I probably have some explaining to do. Hold on, this will only take a minute.

If you're like me, you've cautioned your children against instant gratification. You've told them that happiness isn't the primary goal in life and that plenty of hardships await them in the future. And like any good parent, you want your children to be ready for those difficult times. You want them to cling to Christ no matter how terrible those trials might be, confident that He will see them through.

And you were right to teach them those truths. You were right to prepare them for the hardships they will face. You were right to point them to Christ.

But I have to wonder if sometimes we faithful adults don't miss the forest for the trees. I have to wonder if sometimes we are so focused on the promise of eternal joys that we forget to notice the present joys God has prepared for us. Joys like the sunshine on a winter day. Like the boisterous burp of a baby in the pew on a Sunday morning. Like your child teaching you how to work your own smartphone. Like soap that doesn't chap hands.

We Christians don't often talk about finding pleasures in this world, but maybe we should.



The Bible certainly reminds us that God, our heavenly Father, is a great gift-giver. He desires to shower us with presents; He not only provides for all of our needs, He gives gifts in abundance. In fact, it's pretty clear that God created a world full of pleasure for His children. Psalm 104 beautifully depicts God's gift-giving in His creation—it's as if He's wrapped up the whole world as a present for His people, a present that provides both provision and abundance. The psalmist writes, **"You cause the grass to grow for the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart"** (104:14-15).

Not only does God gladden the hearts of His people through food and wine, but He also provides for us in other ways. We confess in *Luther's Small Catechism* that God provides "clothing, home and family, work and play, and all that I need from day to day" (p. 117). He works through our vocations to bless us with friends, family, and even material goods. It's clear that our heavenly Father takes pleasure in us, and He takes pleasure in providing for His children.

Now it's true, that even as we rejoice in the things of this world, we should steer clear of the carnal delights. We should run from the temporary pleasures sin brings and cling to what is good. Paul is serious when he writes, **"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things"** (Philippians 4:8). God certainly wants us to steer clear of evil.

But the freedom we have in the Gospel gives us many opportunities to find pleasure in this life. That Marvel movie you went to see with your teenage son? That was a blessing. That video game he plays in his free time? It's a gift too. The purse you ordered on Amazon? Merry Christmas. The coffee you crave? Happy Tuesday. And if McDonalds brings you bliss, well ... go for it. When we have eyes of faith, eyes that recognize these delights are gifts from God, then we realize that what we're missing, what we should be longing for, what we cannot live without, isn't Amazon or Starbucks or McDonalds. It's Him. And when we have Him, every other gift makes sense. Every other gift falls into its proper place. **"Every good gift and perfect gift is from above"** (James 1:17a).



Celebrating Life in a Small Congregation

by Deaconess Rachel Geraci, Mission and Ministry Director

Trinity Lutheran Church sits on a hill overlooking the fields of northwestern Missouri. Established long before our grandparents or even great-grandparents were born, Trinity is over 160 years old, founded by immigrants from northern Germany. With such a rich history, you would think the church would see many visitors on Sunday morning, asking to tour the facility, participating in worship, eventually joining the church. There is even a plaque outside issued by the state of Missouri claiming Trinity as an official historic site!

Despite the draw to such a point of interest, membership is low in the eyes of the world. With fifteen faithful in attendance on Sunday morning, it's easy to get discouraged wondering, "What are we doing wrong? Where did all the folks go who used to diligently make their way to church on Sunday? Has God forsaken us?" Yes, you could credit it to the fact that the church sits on an unpaved, dirt road, "off the beaten path." You could say it is because it's located in the middle of rural America where population numbers are declining rapidly every day. But neither of these explanations are encouraging, nor do they give an accurate picture of what is actually happening.

In all reality, such adversity can be attributed to what Christ promised His disciples many centuries ago:

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you ... If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin" (John 15:18, 19, 22).

The world hates sin, or more accurately, the world hates the *thought* of sin. When a woman hears that it is sinful to put the financial needs of herself before the needs of her unborn child, she cringes. When a paraplegic hears that taking his life into his own hands is ungodly, he shouts out in unbelief. Sin makes folks uncomfortable, angry in fact. And the Church talks a lot about sin. In today's post-modern "I'll see things the way I want to" world, it is much easier to stay away. Hence the decreasing numbers in our churches throughout our country.



Christ's Church continues to bring the message of new life into each and every heart. And that is a beautiful thing!

But that's exactly why our churches are relevant, why Trinity has stood for over 160 years, and why, God-willing, it will continue to stand for many years to come. Christ goes on to say this later in John: **"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33). Yes, Christ our Lord has overcome sin in this world, bringing reconciliation between the guilty sinner and the Almighty God. Our sins are no longer counted against us. The post-abortive mother no longer needs to feel the weight of guilt from her previous actions. The man who failed a suicide attempt no longer needs to grieve the selfishness of what seemed "so right" at the time. Rejoicing in what Christ did for them on Calvary, they join with all members of the Body of Christ in saving others from their own selfish desires. To reveal the gifts given all lives created by God, redeemed by Jesus on the cross—that is why Trinity continues to stand!

I've often wondered what a "Life Team" at Trinity might look like. With fifteen regular attendees, it can feel as though each person's time and talents are already quite spent. But life ministry truly isn't about raising thousands of dollars for the local pro-life candidate or spending countless hours serving soup at the community homeless shelter. Instead, life ministry is about walking together, bearing one another's burdens, and celebrating the lives God has given us. Life ministry is assisting the mother who is struggling in the pew with her "busy" preschooler. Life ministry is encouraging the father whose unbelieving wife just left him. Life ministry is visiting the sick and elderly, preparing meals for the grieving, celebrating with the newlyweds. Christ's Church continues to bring the message of new life into each and every heart. And that is a beautiful thing!

10 Ways to Be Life-Affirming in a Small Congregation:

1. Build strong relationships with church members and encourage one other as you go through difficult times.
2. Visit those who are hospitalized and the homebound.
3. Form a "Funeral Meal Committee" to comfort families during their time of grief.
4. Provide respite care for members who provide homecare for their loved ones.
5. Drive a single mom to and from her OB appointments and take her out to lunch afterward.
6. Take group field trips to a pregnancy care center and homeless shelter.
7. Pass around a petition after church that promotes local pro-life legislation.
8. Invite a pro-life speaker to a church function to speak on current issues.
9. Collect canned goods to donate to the local food pantry around Thanksgiving.
10. Send greeting cards to members to celebrate birthdays, Baptisms, weddings, anniversaries, etc.

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

Blessed Again ... in Milwaukee

Y4Life Teams are active and well in Lutheran high schools as well as on Lutheran college campuses. Concordia Wisconsin has a thriving **Y4Life Team** that engages with students on campus and people in the community. Bonnie Egger, a member of CUW's Students for Life group, shares information about one of their successful service opportunities:

In the thick of the undergraduate semester, schedules fill and assignments pile high. Members of the Students for Life group at Concordia University Wisconsin, however, make time to volunteer and help uphold life, even at the busiest times in the semester. This November, twelve members of the school's life team spent a Saturday morning volunteering at **Blessed Again Resale**. Blessed Again is an LCMS affiliated thrift store in Milwaukee that donates their profits to **A Place of Refuge** (www.aplaceofrefuge.org), a local home for women facing crisis pregnancies.

Blessed Again does not lack merchandise, thanks to generous donors in the area, but the influx of donations makes organizing, pricing, and shelving items a tall order. The extra hands that morning helped speed the work of sorting through donated items. After three hours with some of the group pricing and arranging shoes and some pricing toys and cookware, hundreds of new items were out on the shelves and ready for purchase to benefit A Place of Refuge.

What Students for Life at CUW loves about volunteering at Blessed Again is how multifaceted its work is. The donations to A Place of Refuge are, of course, an enormous contribution to the For Life cause. On top of that, though, by selling toys, cookware, furniture, and clothes for all ages at very low prices, the store enables families in need to purchase things—even necessities—that they might not otherwise be able to afford. They are able to reach hundreds of people and support them in caring for themselves and their children.

Because of this, Students for Life has worked over the years to develop a strong relationship both with Blessed Again and A Place of Refuge. The group also hosts a baby shower each spring for the moms who live at A Place of Refuge, which allows them to meet the women and children for whom they work and pray.

It's exciting to hear about how the students of CUW's **Y4Life Team** engage in service activities that directly benefit the lives of others in their community! We pray God's continued blessing on their service. If you'd like more information about how to start a **Y4Life Team** at your Lutheran college, please contact Michelle Bauman, Director of **Y4Life**, at mbauman@lutheransforlife.org.





MARCH *for* LIFE

The next March for Life ...
FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021

Lutherans For Life will be there!
marchforlife.org

www.lutheransforlife.org/event/1743714-2021-01-29-national-march-for-life-washington-dc

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 the form at the link below, the Miami Valley Life Chapter 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.



www.lutheransforlife.org/article/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets



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
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- www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife
- twitter.com/ForLifers
- www.instagram.com/lfl4life

Also see:

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



2020 LFL Regional Conferences

From Invisible to Indispensable



West Fargo, North Dakota – August 29
Bethel Park (Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania –
September 26
Peoria (Phoenix), Arizona – October 24
Orlando, Florida – November 14

www.lutheransforlife.org/conference



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, Life Chapters, and Life Teams 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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