

Summer 2012

LifeDate

A quarterly journal of life issue news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH
OUR CHRISTIAN
CITIZENSHIP



Join us at the Westin Chicago Northwest Hotel
in Itasca, Illinois, August 3-4 for 2012
Lutherans For Life National Conference!

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Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-
motivated voices For Life.

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"Why Is the World So Dumb?"

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



The youth group joined the adult Bible class I spoke to recently in South Dakota. They sat in the front row which impressed me as there was no indication their leader "forced" this upon them! After the study on the God-given value of human life, I handed these young people the fetal models I had used as illustrations. They seemed to enjoy touching them and passing them amongst themselves.

After awhile nearly everyone left, except one girl. She's the one who asked the question. She remained in her seat holding the twenty-week baby in her lap. Tears flowed down her cheeks. I sat down beside her to inquire what was wrong, but before I could speak she asked it, "Why is the world so dumb?" Her sobs replenished the stream of tears.

Here was a teenage girl angry at the world for its horrid treatment of the unborn. Here was a teenage girl, her tear drops falling on the baby she held, grieving for the unborn who would never be touched or held. I affirmed her right to be angry. I lauded her compassion. I tried to encourage her by the fact that God can use both her anger and compassion to instill in her a real passion for His gift of life and for upholding and defending it. Looking back I'm guessing He already had!

I'm not sure how much my encouragement helped her. I am sure how much her encouragement helped me! How

encouraging to see passion in this teen and so many others like her. I told this youth group, as I try to tell all the youth I speak with, that I am counting on them to translate their passion and energy for life into words and deeds that will influence our culture in a way my generation did not. I am convinced they will!

After something like this you think of those things you wish you would have said! Psalm 37 comes to mind. **"Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!"** (1) And then in verses 12-13, **"The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his**

teeth at him, but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming." We should be angry as the wicked of our age plot against the most vulnerable of lives. But we get nowhere if we just rage against the wicked and become preoccupied with attacking them. They are nothing but a "laugh" to God. He will handle them.

The Holy Spirit through David offers a more positive approach in the intervening verses.

For example, **"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday"** (5-6). We at LFL will continue to equip Lutherans to be "Gospel-motivated voices For Life." We will continue to help Lutherans apply the Gospel to the life issues and "trust in him, and he will act." After all, the Gospel is the most powerful and positive life affirming message in the universe! It changes hearts. It changes lives. It's just what a dumb world needs!



A Father's Worst Nightmare

by Kristi Burton Brown



I can't recall if I first heard about him through an e-mail or a phone call. But I know that when I spoke to him on the phone, he was desperate. A normal working father who already had three other children, he wanted to know if there was something he could do to stop his wife from killing one of their children.

Now, if I stopped here with the details of my story and let you ponder the paragraph above, you would understandably be horrified. Why would a mother want to kill her youngest child? Why would the father have to call for outside help to stop her? Do nightmares like this actually happen?

Yes. They do. All the time. But the detail I left out is that this father's youngest child was unborn. Although he and his wife had agreed to have this child—had both wanted this child—she changed her mind one day. And there was nothing he could do about it. Until a baby is born, a father has exactly no say and no rights in whether that child lives or dies. In the abortion issue, men are often treated as faceless, voiceless individuals.

Though I did what I could to help this father (I had a wonderful counselor talk to his wife and got a great attorney to help him), in the end, his baby was killed anyway. In a heartbreaking turn of events, the mother canceled her first abortion appointment only to schedule another one later on. The baby never

had a chance. This situation remains one of the most horrible and discouraging things I have ever been involved with in my life.

As a mere outsider, I experienced such a feeling of helplessness. I can't imagine what the father experienced. When I heard that the baby had been aborted, I felt responsible. Clearly, I hadn't said the right thing. Clearly, I hadn't done enough. What must the father have been going through when his wife broke the news to him? Though it's been a few years since this occurred, I'm sure the father will never get over the intentional death of his child, caused by the child's

own mother and his own wife. Can a more horrible thing happen to a loving father?

This father would never hold his tiny baby in his strong arms for the very first time. He would never watch her—if she was a daughter—dance in the grass with flowery shoes and a flowing dress. He would never cheer him on—if he was a son—in the final football game of

his high school career. This father's only memory of his child would be how hard he had fought to save its precious life.

I share this story (with changed and omitted details to protect the parties involved) as an illustration of the cruel silencing of men that is taking place in our society. Laura Peredo and Nancy Flanders have already written about why men should have a right to speak out for the lives of children, just as women do. How can the pro-choice side command men to shut their mouths when it comes to saving babies, but demand that they pay for the methods women use to kill those same babies?



In a cruel twist of fate caused by an attempt to elevate women to an “equal” place in society, the baldfaced lies of “it’s my body” and “it’s my choice” have silenced men. Legally speaking, men have zero rights. Fathers who want to protect their children have had their hands tied by the law.

A judge heard the case of the father who was trying to stop his wife from killing their child. And though I am told the judge wanted to rule for the father – you could see it in his eyes—he found no legal basis for doing so. The child’s mother was free to take this precious new life, at her whim and pleasure. (Now, I do think that a judge could find otherwise. In fact, different fathers bringing cases may be one of the ways to change the law concerning fathers’ rights.)

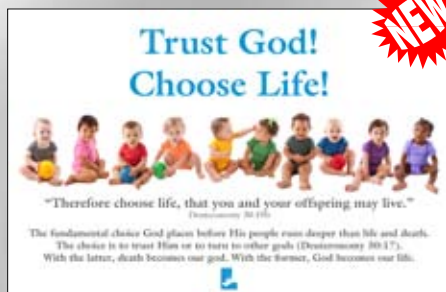
Please, fathers, don’t give up. While I can’t make specific recommendations on individual cases that I’m not familiar with, as an attorney, I would say that fathers in general should consider challenging the law if their wife/girlfriend/child’s mother wants to have an abortion. Her “right” to kill your child can be challenged in court. Speak out for your child. We can never be sure when a father will get in front of the right judge who is willing to change the horrible state of the law when it comes to fathers’ rights.

The baby is not the mother’s body. He or she is a unique individual. The baby’s life should not hang in the balance of the mother’s “choice.” If a father wants to stand up for the right of his child to live, his voice should be welcomed and listened to. He should be given the right to care for that child himself, if he is willing.

(Kristi Burton Brown is an attorney and stay-at-home mom. Source: LiveActionNews.org. Reprinted with permission.)

Life Sunday Can Be Any Sunday!

If you didn’t observe Life Sunday in January, don’t worry. Our materials can be used anytime. The main thing is the message!



Trust God! Choose Life! is 2012’s theme. The Christian view of “choice” differs greatly from the world’s view. We base our choices on being chosen. We have all kinds of materials to help share this message. Go the Store page at www.lutheransforlife.org to learn more!

For Life is a brand-new DVD that tells how LFL equips Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life! The study guide turns this video into a great Bible study too!



For Life features many extras including new interviews with those involved with LFL and those whose lives have been positively affected through LFL. Other extras include a new arrangement of the **For Life** theme song, *God Loves Life*, a powerful “Lullaby” video, and several promotional clips. (LFL1705) • **\$5.00 ea.**



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Citizenship, LFL, and Abortion



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Citizenship

Because of their importance, I keep my citizenship papers in my safety deposit box right next to my passport. Now don't misunderstand. I am a natural born citizen of the United States. I'm not talking about those kinds of citizenship papers. Being "natural born" also makes me by nature a blind and dead enemy of God, a citizen of Hell. But I have been naturalized and am now a citizen of Heaven, and I have the papers to prove it, my citizenship papers, my baptismal certificate.

That certificate testifies to the fact that I have been washed by water and the Word and that, in the name of the Triune God, I became a citizen of Heaven. I am now part of **"a holy nation, a people for his own possession"** (1 Peter 2:9). So I have two citizenships, one eternally more important than the other. Indeed, my allegiance to my natural born citizenship flows from the unnatural born citizenship of my baptism.

For the Christian, citizenship in one's country means more than passive obedience to the command to **"be subject to the governing authorities"** (Romans 13:1a). People who belong to Jesus Christ live their lives in, and in response to, their baptisms. We obey the laws of the land because that is how people redeemed in the blood of Jesus live.

We obey the laws of the land and strive for peace and order so that nothing hinders the spread of the Gospel. The spread

of the Gospel is our overarching mission. Working through the government is not one of the action plans under this objective. The purpose of the Church is to extend the Kingdom of God, not to establish a Christian government. We do this by calling people to repentance, proclaiming the Gospel, and administering the sacraments.

Bringing our influence to bear on our government and country, however, goes hand in hand with the spread of the Gospel. Jesus commands that we be "salt" in this world (Matthew 5:13) preserving and proclaiming His truth in a "truthless" society. Jesus commands that we be "light" in the world's darkness (Matthew 5:14) producing the "fruit of light" (Ephesians 5:9) and exposing the "unfruitful works of darkness" (11).

Here we can run into problems. In obedience to Jesus' words, we may charge into the world but leave our citizenship papers behind and behave as if we are not a people belonging to God. Our primary goal becomes changing laws and the government and the world and we lose sight of the life-changing goal of the Gospel. We speak condemnation in anger instead of the truth in love. We entrench people instead of engage them. We tarnish our true citizenship and run the risk of hindering the Gospel.

Lutherans For Life

The mission of Lutherans For Life (LFL) is to "equip Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life." We expand the concept of "voices" to include things like an educational voice, the voice of service and caring, the voice of forgiveness and restoration. Many kinds of "voices" are needed to uphold the



God-given value of human life. And yes, we include the “political voice.”

LFL is not itself a political voice. But if we carry out our mission we pray it will equip and properly motivate Christian voices in the public square. LFL wants Lutherans out there being salt and light. We want them engaging our culture and making a difference. *But* we want them properly motivated. We want them to take their citizenship papers with them. We want them to remember Whose they are and Who they represent. They are ambassadors for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How they carry out their ambassadorship in the political realm will vary. It depends upon things like gifts, abilities, and vocation. Some may be activists or lobbyists. Others may write letters to editors and government leaders. Some may sponsor voter registration events or work in campaigns or even run for public office. Perhaps it will be day-to-day conversations with fellow Christians or those in the work place. Of course, everyone can and should vote in a way that reflects our heavenly citizenship and the Word-based values that come with this citizenship.

Abortion

A closely related aspect of LFL’s mission is to help people see the magnitude of the sin of abortion. Abortion does not belong in a list of issues like health-care reform or Medicare or foreign policy. Abortion is not an “issue.” It is an affront to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Satan loves abortion. He uses it to destroy human life, and not just human life but human life created by God, human life for whom Jesus shed His blood on the cross, and human life that God desires to call into an eternal relationship with Him. Satan uses abortion to turn people from

the Lord of Life to the god of death to rescue them from their problems. Then he turns on them and uses abortion to wound and burden their hearts and lead them away from the hope of the Gospel to the hopelessness of their own despair. Satan loves abortion, it undermines the Gospel.

Therefore, our baptismal citizenship papers, while allowing differing views on how to fix the economy or Social Security or a number of other issues, do not allow for the support of abortion. Our baptismal citizenship papers do not allow for the support of candidates or legislation or regulations that support abortion. I’m not suggesting we become “one-issue voters.” I’m stating that abortion is not an “issue” at all in the political sense of that word. Candidates or legislation that support abortion or its euphemism “a woman’s right to choose,” become *disqualified* for Christian support. If they cannot uphold the fundamental right to life, if they cannot do better for fearful women than opening the door for them to the abortion mill, where they stand on the issues becomes irrelevant.

Many will continue to want LFL to be more of a political voice, especially in this election year. But being such a voice is not our mission. Neither is our mission to evangelize the world. That’s the mission of the Church. But if we are faithful to our mission to “equip Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life,” one of the results will be properly-motivated political voices. If we are faithful to our mission, one of the results will be evangelizing the world for central to our mission is our message—the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



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Shipping/handling applies to all orders.
Quantity pricing on select resources.

Purity Cannot Be Stolen

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.titus2-4life.org



Tara had been raped. She had been violated by a man who had no respect for her personhood or for her physical or emotional well-being. She felt dirty. Degraded and filthy. A sense of uncleanness rose up from the very core of her being.

Was she to blame? No. The man who assaulted and raped her was to blame. He, and he alone, was responsible for his behavior.

Tara took care with her dress and behavior. She didn't allow herself to be in places she knew were unsafe. Yet, one night, on her way home from the house of a friend, a man appeared from nowhere. He had evil on his mind. The deed was done. And she was left to grieve the loss the loss of something she considered of great value. The pureness of her identity was stolen away. Or, was it? Purity is not something that can be stolen. We, ourselves, can determine to give up our purity or consciously turn from a life of purity, but no one can steal this virtue from us. Purity, it has been said, is not so much of the body but of the soul. In Tara's eyes, much had been lost. But, in the eyes of God, Tara—who had not compromised her virtue—was still pure.

On Good Friday, Tara attended church with her family but she did not go home with them. Instead, she lingered in the quiet sanctuary. There, she asked:

“Why, God? Why did this have to happen? Will my future husband consider me spoiled? Will there be a wedding for one so shamed?”

Tara wept. Tears of sorrow quickly became tears of anger. Then fear. Had evil ruined her life? Thoughts began to swirl in her head. Strangely, Tara remembered a day in the kitchen with her grandmother. It was the place where lessons in cooking often turned to lessons for life. More clear than the image of her grandma's face were the words she often spoke: “Dear one, when you are in doubt, look to God's Word. It will not fail you.”



Tara sighed. Looked around. There was a Bible in the pew. She flipped through the pages with fumbling fingers, embarrassed that she felt so awkward with the book her grandma knew so well. Her eyes came to rest upon Psalm 25:20-21:

“Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in You. May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on You.”

Tara looked up to the Cross over the altar. Again, she heard her grandmother's voice:

“Tara, when you cannot find the words, God's Spirit speaks them for you.”

Now, more confident, Tara turned

the pages to Psalm 56:

“You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know, that God is for me. In God, whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (8-11)

Later, at home, Tara wrote in her journal:

Today, I am thankful for my Grandma who, years ago, reminded me that I can trust God with my life. I am angry with the man who hurt me. I will never forget what he did. But, I don't have to let this evil thing define me. The man did wrong. I did not. The man sinned against God. I choose not to sin against God by turning away from Him.

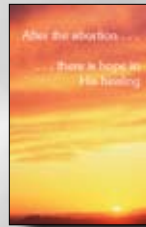
“Dear Jesus. Hold me close. Move me forward—out of darkness into Your light.”

A question remains. It is for the grandmothers of young women like Tara. Are we reminding our granddaughters that their identity is not shaped by what happens to them, but by the Lord Jesus who died for them?

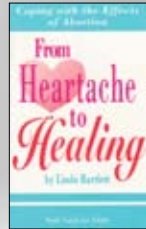


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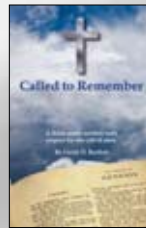
Resources by Linda Bartlett ...



After the Abortion There is Hope in His Healing offers the hope of the resurrection to those who are struggling with an abortion decision. *Item LFL405B. \$1.00 ea.*



From Heartache to Healing encourages us to consider the ways in which the Church can minister to the needs of those who suffer abortion's effects. *Item LFL401BS. \$4.85 ea.*



Called to Remember – Men, in God's Story as protectors and servant-style leaders, the world becomes a safer place for women and children. *Item LFL302BS. \$2.00 ea.*



Not Alone is a wonderful devotional booklet for single mothers. *Item LFL901B. \$2.00 ea.*



Into His Loving Care is dedicated to all the mothers and fathers dealing with miscarriage or stillbirth. This booklet has been well received and makes an excellent and thoughtful gift for those who are hurting. *Item LFL902B. \$2.00 ea.*



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Two-Kingdoms Activism

by John A. Eidsmoe,
Colonel, Alabama State
Defense Force



As we endeavor to be good citizens and effective advocates for life, we often fail to consider the distinctively Lutheran contribution to church-state relations. Most of us vaguely recall that Luther distinguished the Kingdom of the Right (the Church) from the Kingdom of the Left (the State). But we tend to forget the significance of that distinction, and sometimes we fall into the errors and misinterpretations of later Lutherans.

Each of these kingdoms has its own role: “the one to produce piety, the other to create external peace and to prevent evil deeds. Neither is sufficient in the world without the other.” These two kingdoms complement each other.

By preserving law and order, the State makes it easier for the Church to evangelize and teach. By teaching godly virtue and moral character, the Church makes it easier for the State to govern. Biblically-informed Christians are the easiest people in the world to govern—and the hardest people in the world to tyrannize.

What did Luther really believe about the Bible, law, and politics?

Luther taught that God has given mankind two tools for understanding truth: reason (logic and evidence) and revelation (the revealed Word of Scripture). Reason is the primary tool for State matters, and revelation is the pri-

mary tool for Church matters.

But Luther never meant to say that reason and revelation are mutually exclusive tools. They can't be, because both are based on God's truth. The Scriptures themselves contain appeals to logic and to evidence. And when a pastor expounds the Word, he not only proclaims it, he uses reason and evidence to interpret and apply it.

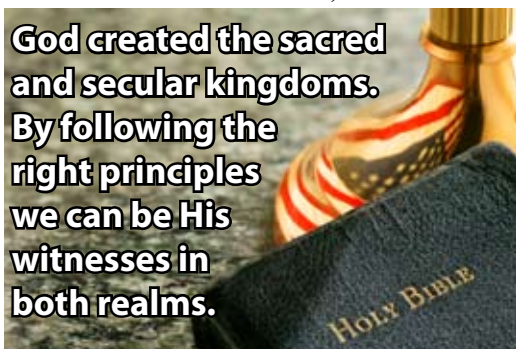
Nor did he divorce the Word from civil government. He did believe in natural law, but natural law overlaps with Scripture: natural law is the Ten Commandments. It is written in the heart of every human being by Creation. It was clearly and comprehensively put on Mount Sinai, finer indeed than any philosopher

has ever stated it. “Natural law, then, is created and written in the heart; it does not come from men but is a created Law to which everyone who hears it cannot but consent.”

However, only some of the Mosaic Law is binding today. The moral law is universally binding in all societies at all times in history, but other portions of the Old Testament Law are implementing legislation for Israel. Some of these laws may serve as good examples for other societies to follow (Deuteronomy 4:5-8), but they are binding only on Israel. Luther spoke of natural law (*gesetz*) and natural justice (*recht*), and much of the Mosaic Law is universal natural law and justice. But other portions of the Mosaic Law are *Sachsenspiegel*, laws unique to Israel that are no more binding on us than the laws of France are binding in Germany.

Luther equated natural law with the

God created the sacred and secular kingdoms. By following the right principles we can be His witnesses in both realms.



principles of the old Teutonic common law held by the Saxons of Northern Germany. Much of Southern Germany had been conquered by the Romans and had come under the influence of Roman law, but Northern Germany and Scandinavia still held to the old common law. Luther had studied law, and he shared the concern of northern common-law lawyers that the Holy Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church were trying to impose Roman law and Canon Law on the northern electorates. In December 1520, when Luther stood outside the gates of Wittenberg and burned the papal bull of excommunication, he also burned a complete set of the Roman Catholic Canon Law. The Canon Law, he believed, was in many respects at variance with Scripture, and just as important, God had delegated the function of laws and courts to the Kingdom of the Left, not the Kingdom of the Right. As he grew older, Luther softened his opposition to the Canon Law, saying that common law lawyers could benefit from the scholarly learning that Canon Law priests had developed and passed on through the ages.

Luther is often quoted (and misquoted) as preferring a prudent but bad ruler to a good but imprudent one. Here's what he actually said:

The reasonable question has been put whether it is better to have a good but imprudent ruler or a prudent but personally bad one. Moses here certainly calls for both: a good ruler and a prudent ruler. However, if both qualifications cannot be had, a prudent ruler who is not personally good is better than a good one who is not prudent, because a good one rules nothing but is only ruled—and

only by the worst of people. Even though a prudent but personally bad ruler may harm the good people, he nevertheless rules the evil ones at the same time; and this is more necessary and proper for the world, since the world is nothing but a mass of evil people.

Notwithstanding, Luther's ideal is the godly Christian prince: "A prince must also act in a Christian way toward God, that is, he must subject himself to Him in entire confidence and pray for wisdom to rule well, as Solomon did." However, "To be qualified to rule, it is not enough to be pious. A jackass is also pious. Ability and experience are required in order to rule. One may find a pious person who can hardly count to five. He who is to rule dare not lack reason, prudence, wit, and wisdom if he does not want to work great harm in his government; for government is subject to reason." (5)

The ideal ruler, like the ideal pastor, combines good Christian character and knowledge of the Word with wisdom and common sense.

As Christians, then, we can formulate our convictions about an issue like abortion by looking to the Bible and seeing what God's Word says about the sanctity of life and when human life begins. But when we enter the political arena, such as a political party convention or a legislative hearing, we need to be prepared to articulate our convictions in secular terms and backed by solid medical and scientific evidence. That way, even those who don't care about the Bible will have to deal with the truth of our position.

God created the sacred and secular kingdoms. By following these principles we can be His witnesses in both realms.

This article, with complete footnotes, can be found at www.lutheransforlife.org.

Could We Lose Our Religious Liberty?

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.titus2-4life.org



To some, this question may sound bizarre. What? Here in America? Lose our freedom of religion? No way! To others, the question may sound like a “conspiracy theory.” Just calm down, they may say. Don’t get bent out of shape just because of some minor differences of opinion on whether birth control and drugs that abort babies should be freely provided through medical insurance.

If you’ve been watching American trends, you will see two worldviews at odds. A secular naturalist worldview (which includes socialism, humanism, and atheism) diametrically opposes the Biblical worldview. Consider the following:

- The sanctity of human life has always been defended among people influenced by biblical thinking, but 30 plus years of legalized abortion in the United States has changed the way we view human life—in or out of the womb.
- Faithful marriage between one man and one woman has always been supported by any people influenced by biblical thinking, but U.S. courts are now ruling in favor of so-called “same-sex marriage.”
- Freedom of religion is the first freedom enshrined in the Bill of Rights written by founding fathers influenced by biblical thinking, but today we are told

that “sexual freedom trumps religious freedom” and that while we may have freedom to “worship” (a private practice), we shouldn’t publicly practice our faith during the course of our everyday lives.

Are we in danger of losing the right to practice what we believe to be true? Think about it.

- Religious organizations who believe abortion does not please God have been told their health insurance providers must cover contraceptive use (including drugs known to end the life of a baby before birth) and, therefore, go against their faith and conscience.
- States like Iowa where the majority of citizens do not believe in “same-sex marriage” must recognize the “right” of two women or two men to “marry” and, in states like California, the majority vote in favor of traditional marriage was overturned by a judge in favor of “gay marriage.”
- Parents who believe that children are entrusted to them by God are being told to obey the “state” and let schools teach students that homosexuality and “gay marriage” are “normal” and, if anyone speaks otherwise, they may be guilty of “hate speech.” Are all of these things—and more—indicative that our religious liberties are being removed?


Followers of Jesus Christ have al-

ways—and will always—be different from the world. But, in order to “fit in” with the world, have Christians been silent? Compromised faith? Stopped putting their faith into practice? Atheists, humanists, and secularists all have a faith, too. It is faith in something other than the God “I Am;” in the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. They are passionate about their faith. They practice their faith wherever they are: in the schools, media, workplace, courts of law, and places within government.

Are Christians less passionate about their faith? Or, have we believed the lie that “your faith is a private matter between you and God”?

Jesus said, “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21).

We are to obey government except when it tells us to disobey God. Then, we must speak up and resist evil. We must use God’s Word to defend life, marriage, and family—the very foundation for civil society. When we are told to keep God’s Word “private” and not share it in the marketplace of ideas, then we have lost our freedom of religion. How, then, can we be “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13-16)?



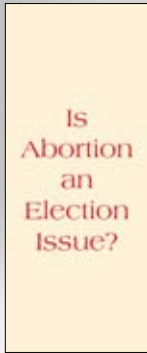
titus2-4life.org

Helping Christians make godly choices and to know that mistakes of the past do not have dominion over Christ’s people.

Speak Up For Life!

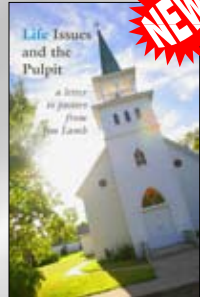
Is Abortion an Election Issue?

– So often we hear people who oppose abortion still talk about it as if it is no different than tax cuts or Social Security. It is much different. It is not even on the same plane! Abortion is a sin. Abortion is a sin against the Author and Giver of Life. That makes abortion a spiritual issue-not just an election issue. *Item 118T. \$0.50 ea.*



Life Issues and the Pulpit

– Author James Lamb, in this letter to fellow pastors, writes, “Addressing the Life Issues is the Responsibility of the Church and her pastors for they are spiritual and theological issues. The Church and her pastors have what it takes—the Gospel!”




Item LFL1629B. \$1.00 ea.

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LFL Statement on the HHS Mandate

Lutherans For Life stands firmly with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Roman Catholic Bishops, the Southern Baptist Convention, other Evangelical leaders, and other religious organizations in strongly opposing the recently-promulgated Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) rules requiring that religious organizations provide contraception and abortifacients to their employees.

The morality of contraception is not the issue. The issue is religious freedom as given by God and secured by the First Amendment to the Constitution. The proposed HHS rules directly infringe free exercise of religion by requiring religious groups to do what many believe God forbids them to do.

Not only Roman Catholics, but many others as well, oppose contraception; and many Lutherans oppose on religious grounds any so called “contraceptive” that in reality is an abortifacient in nature and could destroy a developing human being. These religious groups, and the many individuals who support them, should not be compelled to subsidize a practice they believe to be immoral and, in some instances, murder.

The Obama Administration’s “compromise,” by which religious organizations’ insurance companies will pay for contraception, is no compromise at all and is totally unacceptable. This is a matter of religious conviction, and that which we must not pay for directly, we must not subsidize indirectly.

The Administration’s offer of additional time for compliance reflects a gross misunderstanding of our objection.

This is not a matter of time; it is a matter of conscience and obedience to God. We cannot and will not disobey God, neither now nor later.

No one is compelled to work for a religious organization. Those who choose to do so are fully aware of the religious nature of the organization. Those who find the compensation package unacceptable are free to work elsewhere.

We urge the Obama Adminis-

tration to repeal these proposed regulations; we urge Congress to enact legislation requiring the repeal of these proposed regulations; and we will join with religious organizations who refuse to follow these regulations if they become law. Like the Hebrew midwives of Exodus 1 who refused to obey the Pharaoh’s command to slay Hebrew babies, as stated in Acts 5:29 and the Augsburg Confession, “We must obey God rather than men.”



The proposed HHS rules directly infringe the free exercise of religion.

Taking the logic of abortion to its ultimate consequence, two ethicists have argued that “killing a newborn could be ethically permissible in all the circumstances where abortion would be.” Alberto Giubilin, a philosopher from the University of Milan, and Francesca Minerva, an ethicist from the University of Melbourne, have made the case that since both the unborn baby and the newborn do not have the moral status of actual persons and are consequently morally irrelevant, what they call “after-birth abortion” should be permissible in all the cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is perfectly healthy. “We claim that killing a newborn could be ethically permissible in all the circumstances where abortion would be. Such circumstances include cases where the newborn has the potential to have an (at least) acceptable life, but the well-being of the family is at risk.” The article titled, “After-birth abortion: why should the baby live?” appeared online in the *Journal of Medical Ethics*. The authors highlight that the justification for “after-birth abortion” is based on the interests of the people involved, not those of the baby. (*LifeSiteNews*, 2/28)

There has been a huge increase in assisted suicide in Oregon and Switzerland, says a United Kingdom doctor. Peter Saunders, head of the Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF), said that the latest figures suggest that since 1998 assisted suicides have risen by 45 percent in Oregon and by 700 percent in Switzerland. Dr. Saunders argues that such increases are an inevitable result of legal approval of assisted suicide. (*Peter Saunders*, 4/15; *SPUC*, 4/16)



The leader of Britain’s oldest pro-abortion group has admitted that sex-selective abortion is a dilemma for the so-called “pro-choice” lobby. Julia Bentley, head of the Family Planning Association (FPA), wrote that she has “felt personally conflicted on the matter” and that “I don’t think there are simple answers to dilemmas of this complexity and I’m not afraid to say I certainly don’t have them.” Anthony Ozimic of SPUC commented: “Ms. Bentley’s admission proves that the pro-abortion lobby has no convincing answers to the scandal of sex-selective abortion.” (*Huffington Post*, 3/12; *SPUC*, 3/13)

A group of experts who met in Canada are claiming that dolphins are persons with the right to life. The experts are calling for recognition of their Declaration on the Rights of Cetaceans. Anthony Ozimic of SPUC commented: “The most commonly-accepted definition of person is ‘an individual substance of a rational nature’. Dolphins are not of a rational nature, unlike unborn children who have an innate rationality which develops with age. The proposed declaration shows just how far modern bioethics has become divorced from reality.” (*Metro*, 2/21; *SPUC*, 2/22)

A report by the United Nations suggests that India is the most dangerous place in the world for female children. Figures by the UN’s Department of Economic and Social Affairs suggest that from 2000 to 2010 there were 56 deaths of boys aged one to five for every 100 female deaths. Campaigners cite sex-selective abortion, infanticide, and deliberate neglect as part of the phenomenon. (*Telegraph*, 2/1; *SPUC*, 2/2)

New Insert for Father's Day!



A Father's Responsibility (Item LFL1114BI, \$0.10 ea.) says, "Dads can strive to be the best instruments possible ... out of the joyful and freeing knowledge that God is the one at work!"

The Handiwork of God DVD Bible Study and companion brochure

The value of human life comes from what God has done and continues to do! Life is His *handiwork*! He creates life with His hands. He redeemed life with His hands. He desires to call and hold each life in His hands. Understanding these answers gives us a positive, Trinitarian foundation for dealing with the life issues.

Both the **brochure** (Item LFL1007T, \$0.50 ea.) and the **DVD presentation with Dr. Lamb** (Item LFL1401DVD, \$5.00 ea.) are wonderful resources for congregational, school, and home use! **Note:** a free DVD study guide can be downloaded at both the CPH and LFL websites.

Spanish/Russian Resources!

Lutherans For Life offers several resources in Spanish and Russian (funded by designated gifts)—and more are on the way!

Newly in Spanish:

Real Love/Real Life •

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English: (Item LFL1615).

Spanish: (Item LFL615T-S).

\$1.00 ea.)



God's Word for an Unplanned Pregnancy

English: (Item LFL912B, \$1.00)

Spanish: (Item LFL912B-S, \$1.00)



Newly in Russian:

Abortion and the Message of the Church; Abortion – A Matter of the Heart; Called to Remember; The Secret Pain



Note: Russian resources are available only as PDF downloads on the LFL website.



Best Way to Order LFL Resources:

At www.cph.org or 800.325.3040.

Shipping/handling applies to all orders.

Quantity pricing on select resources.



Lutherans For **Life**
2012 National Conference
Equipping the Saints For **Life**



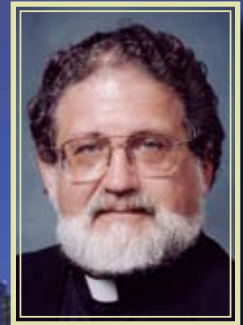
August 3-4, 2012 • Equipping the Saints For Life (Ephesians 4:11-12) will provide a variety of ways to become equipped "For Life" personally and also to learn how to participate in the equipping of others.

Mark your calendars! Come ready to *be* equipped! You will leave ready to *equip*! (*There's a youth track on Saturday too: Making Abortion Unthinkable.*)

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www.lutheransforlife.org

Note: June 30 is the deadline for Witness Book Sponsorships.

Speaking of the Inconceivable

– A Closer Look at Suicide’s Stigma



by Rev. Peter Preus

When my wife took her life, I wasn’t as straightforward as I might be. I’d rather say something about her depression than mention that disturbing word that starts with an “s.” I was affected in a major way by suicide’s stigma. Most people regard suicide as inconceivable. “How could he do such a thing?” they ask. The stigma of suicide does not operate by a sense of understanding or compassion. Rather it targets those who have committed suicide and those who have had thoughts of suicide.

Speaking of Suicide (An Inconceivable Death)

Like other stigmas, suicide’s stigma is created largely by fear. People hear the news of a suicide and they conclude, “No way could this happen in my family!” They determine they’re safe if they can judge that something was very off about this person. “He must have been mad ... from a dysfunctional family ... a bad person!” Suicide’s stigma is also created out of ignorance. Lacking an understanding of depression and mental illness, people object, “So, he was suffering from a bad case of the blues! That’s no excuse for killing yourself!” The uninformed believe they have the right to judge an individual for his inconceivable act, knowing little about the circumstances leading up to his death. Nowhere is such condemnation more severe, perhaps, than

among those in the Church. “I doubt very much this person was a Christian! Why else would he commit the unforgivable sin? I think his faith was weak and he fell away! He wasn’t trusting God to get him through his difficulties!”

The truth is his suicide had nothing to do with “the blues.” He was suffering from a chronic case of hopelessness. He wasn’t crazy. He was ill. He wasn’t merely weak. He was in pain. It’s not that he lost his faith. He lost hope. Yes, he was a sinner. But he was also forgiven.

Speaking of Hopelessness (An Inconceivable Motive)

How do you relate with one who determines that suicide alone will put out the pain? You question: “How could he believe his life was beyond repair, that he should ‘end it all’ rather than trust that God will provide? It’s inconceivable he could feel this way!” But there’s a difference between despairing of God and His grace and despairing of life. To despair of life is to give up on life. Life’s blessings you deem

are irretrievable. There is no hope of living a rewarding life. To despair of God’s grace, however, is to give up on Christ and His forgiveness. You deduce: “What I’ve done is too terrible! I cannot be forgiven!” Despairing of God’s grace, in the end, consists of refusing to believe the Gospel.

Some families, following a suicide, fear the worst; that their loved one despaired of God’s grace. He concluded that help would never come. God was gone! In truth, he didn’t give up on Christ and the forgiveness of sins. He wasn’t lacking faith in the Gospel. He lacked hope in this life. His despair was created by se-



vere depression or, in some cases, delusional thinking.

To be sure, the one who despairs of life is not trusting as he should. However, God saves by grace despite one's struggles with unbelief. He places us in a *state* of grace through Holy Baptism and our hearing of the Gospel. Here God pledges to keep us in the faith. He will save us despite ourselves, and our proneness to sin. **"But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more"** Paul declares (Romans 5:20). Granted, the one who makes a conscious choice to reject Christ and His forgiveness forfeits God's grace. With regard to most suicides, however, hopelessness is the culprit, a hopelessness caused by depression or another form of mental illness. It's not that the Christian is rejecting God. In his weakness he has rejected the life God has given him. Yes. He's committed a very costly sin—but not an unforgivable sin.

Speaking with the Hopeless (Inconceivable Thoughts)

How do you help someone preoccupied with ending his life? **Begin by listening.** Listen to learn what is behind his despair. This way you may assure him you want to understand and help. When you do speak, keep the proper balance. Give him the Law *and* the Gospel. Many are reluctant to share the Gospel with those who are despairing. It's believed: "If I tell him he's forgiven of his thoughts about suicide, he may go through with his plan!" Regrettably, the alternative is to threaten him with hell, which may merely reinforce his suicidal thinking. He may determine he's a horrible person for thinking such thoughts.

Words of Law may be spoken to the hopeless, but keep it simple. "What are you thinking right now? What is God thinking about this? Will your family re-

ally be better off? Do you agree this is wrong?" Even if he listens, however, no words of warning will end suicidal thinking. The Law ought never serve as the last word. The Gospel may be his only hope. Talk about his pain. Assure him that it's a pain understood by Christ. Then remind and reassure him that faith is God's gift which He gives through His Word, and no illness can deprive him of God's gift. In the words of the apostle: **"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ... No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us"** (Romans 8:35-37 NIV). Next, relate to him a simple truth: **Major depression does not reflect a minimal faith.** It is merely symptomatic of the fact that each of us is conceived in sin. Finally tell him, "what you see isn't necessarily what God sees. You may think you're a hopeless failure. God says you're a redeemed sinner."

Even if you are able to encourage him in his faith, keep in mind that you may not succeed in altering his mood or his thoughts. Even the most qualified professionals may have little success in this regard. If you sense he's a danger to himself, it is time he be hospitalized.

Suicide's stigma is reduced when, in addition to being educated regarding depression and mental illness, people review the basics of the Christian faith. God in His grace rescues sinners from the consequences of sin. Being convinced of this, I'm no longer reluctant to tell people my wife committed suicide. If there is not time to visit about her struggles, I often say she died of suicide, resulting from depression.

(Pastor Preus is author of "And She Was a Christian – Why Do Believers Commit Suicide?" available at www.nph.net.)

Do You Hear What These are Saying?



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

Children cried out in the temple, “**Hosanna to the Son of David!**” (Matthew 21:15) Amazingly that upset the chief priests and scribes. “Do you hear what these are saying?” (16a). Yes, Jesus heard and delighted in it! He quoted Psalm 8, “Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise” (16b).

I mean no offense to any other group, but my two favorite groups to speak with are little children and seminarians. Most of the time I am able to tell the difference. (Seminarians are taller!) Recently my travels have blessed me with many opportunities to speak with—and listen to—little children.

As an extra bonus blessing, I received some thank you notes and art work from students who attend Mount Olive Lutheran School in Billings, Montana. I spoke to them about the value God gives to every human being from the moment we start to grow inside our moms. I used our set of fetal models. As you can read here, the babies won the day! (In an effort to be true to the original, we chose not to correct grammar! We are also featuring some of the artwork sent with the thank yous!)



“Thank you for bringin the babes in. They ar very cool.”

“The ruber babies where very cool. I never actually new I started that small.”

“Thank you for coming all the way from Iowa that was a pleasure. I liked the fake babies.”

“Thank you for coming to Montana from Idaho. What are the baby’s made of? I hope you can come again.”

They knew the babies were not real, but they knew enough to call them **BA-BIES!** They knew they were like that once. And by the time we finished talking and touching and sharing, they knew why every human life was precious: **Created-Redeemed-Called.** (The same message, by the way, we share with seminarians!) Every human life has value because he or she is created by God, redeemed by the blood of Jesus, and someone God wants to call to be with Him in heaven someday.

So I ask you and I ask our culture, “Do you hear what these are saying?”



Life Legacy Society Members 2011

The Life Legacy Society was established in 2011. It recognizes all supporters who have notified us that they have put LFL into their will or estate. We currently have 46 individuals/families that have notified us they have put Lutherans For Life into their will or estate. Their names are below. If you have done this, but have not let us know, please do so. We encourage LFL donors to prayerfully consider putting LFL into your will or estate. If you need help with your will or estate, let us know—we can assist you.

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You can learn more about the Life Legacy Society by downloading this brochure at the "Give" page of LFL website.

If you would like a printed copy in the mail, please call 888.364.LIFE.

Equipping the Saints for Spiritual Battle

by Kay L. Meyer
Director of Development



Christian families, especially those that are committed to the Lord, His Word, and speaking up for life are in a spiritual battle. What does God's Word say about spiritual warfare? Why are we to keep our eyes on Jesus, the author and preserver of our faith? How do we learn to stand firm in the Lord? What critical armor and offensive weapons has God revealed to us in His Word? Let's take a look at how God's Word equips the saints for spiritual battle and helps us learn to live our faith, stand firm, and recognize and resist the schemes of the devil.

You and I are in a spiritual battle and need to rely upon God's power, the Sword of the Spirit, and prayer, so we can stand firm in the face of attack by Satan. This fact was made clear to me when I was the executive director of a national parent/teacher organization back in the 1990s. Our board of directors selected Josh and Karen to be our Parents of the Year. We received many wonderful letters recommending them for this special honor. The board of directors and

I expected them to come to our annual convention to receive the award, but they didn't attend. We later learned that these Parents of the Year had filed for a divorce. The board and I prayed for them. Later, I visited by phone with Karen and told her how sorry we were to hear of the pending divorce.

Months went by. Then I unexpectedly received a card from Karen. I called her and asked how she was doing. I also asked about the divorce process. She said, "Mrs. Meyer, my husband and I aren't getting the divorce."

She then went on to tell me how the Lord had helped her and her husband realize that they were in a spiritual battle and that Satan was the enemy. She said, "Up until the time we realized that we were in a spiritual battle, I thought my husband was the enemy.

And he thought I was the enemy. As we prayed and learned more about what God's Word said about spiritual warfare, we began to recognize that Satan would be happy if our marriage ended. So, we began to pray for healing from the Lord for our marriage. Unknown to us at the time, many people in our church and the school were also praying for God to heal our marriage."

After she had shared this good news, she asked, "Why didn't my husband and I



Therefore
take
up the
whole
armor of
God ...

know that there was a spiritual battle? No one in the Church ever told us.”

Christians, especially those who are committed to the Lord, sharing the law and Gospel with others, and standing up for the truth of God’s Word, must understand that Satan is the enemy and he wants to stop your work for the Lord. God has given us the spiritual armor and weapons to stand firm in the face of this attack. Of course, we know that Jesus has won the ultimate battle for us. But in the meantime, we still live in this sin-torn world. We are still sinners in need of Christ’s forgiveness every day. So, be prepared for battle and use God’s defensive armor and offensive weapons. Remember the Lord is with you.

Let’s take a look at Ephesians 6:10-20. The verses are all about Jesus and the saving-Gospel message. Ephesians 6:11 refers to the “schemes of the devil.” Did you know the devil has schemes? Here are a few: Satan uses deception. He is the father of lies. He deceives many into believing non-Biblical truths (John 8:44); Satan uses subtle means to get us to put family, job, material things, sports, entertainment, or power before the Lord; Satan wants us to doubt our faith or be confused about spiritual issues; Satan continues to place temptations of the flesh, materialism, the media’s negative influence, conflict, and family problems in our path. We must be strong in the Lord and stand firm in Him. To stand firm we must use God’s armor and his weapons!

“Therefore take up the **whole armor of God** ... having fastened on the **belt of truth**, and having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, and, as **shoes for your feet**, having put on the readiness given by the **gospel of peace** ... take up the **shield of faith** ... take the **helmet**

of salvation, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication” (Ephesians 6:13-18a).

I want to share just a few more verses from God’s Word, along with a few comments, that relate to God’s armor. (These verses would make for a great Bible study for your Sunday school or small group.)

- **Helmet of Salvation:** Acts 4:12; Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:14-15
- **Breastplate of Righteousness:** Psalm 111:3; Romans 5:6-8, 18; 2 Timothy 3:16; Titus 3:4-5. (We strive to live a righteous life. But, when we fail (which we will) we have a Savior who forgives us 70 x 7 and beyond!)
- **Belt of Truth:** Psalm 119:160; John 8:32; John 14:6; Ephesians 4:15; 1 John 1:8
- **Gospel of Peace:** Ephesians 6:15. I like this phrase: No Christ—No peace. Know Christ—Know peace.)
- **Shield of Faith:** Ephesians 6:16
- **Sword of the Spirit:** Matthew 4:1-10; Hebrews 4:12

There is much more I’d like to share, but this overview of these verses will give you something to think about, pray about, and study. May the Lord continue to keep you strong and help you stand firm in Him!

(This article was adapted from Family Shield Ministries educational program “Families—Use God’s Shield” written by Kay Meyer.)

Consider a Gift Annuity for LFL

by Jim Schroeder,
Christian Estate
Planning Counselor



If you are a senior friend of Lutherans For Life you may want to consider establishing a gift annuity. This form of giving helps you use your God-given resources to achieve financial security and make a future gift to support the mission of LFL.

Receive regular fixed payments now! You can establish a gift annuity with as little as \$5,000 in cash or securities. Your gift is made along with you signing a contract that entitles you to a lifetime of regular, fixed payments. If you wish, you may name a second person (usually your spouse) to receive these income payments after your death. At the death of the second income recipient (if one was designated), your gift annuity remaining value goes to LFL.

The amount of your payments is determined when you establish your gift annuity. Your payments are based on the size of your gift, your age, and the age of the person named as the second beneficiary, if you named one.

How a Gift Annuity works for you and Lutherans For Life: Here is an example of how a gift annuity works: John, age 80, and his wife Mary, age 80, decide to establish a Gift Annuity for LFL. They want to receive regular fixed income payments and make a gift to Lutheran For Life to support its mission after they die. They visit with me for assistance in es-

tablishing their gift annuity. I help them fill out their application and assist them in making their gift of \$10,000 for their gift annuity. Based on their ages, they will receive a gift annuity rate of 5.7%. That means that they will receive annual annuity payments of \$570 for their lifetimes. Since a portion of the gift annuity is a charitable contribution they will get an income tax deduction for the year they establish their gift annuity.

And, they enjoy even more tax savings! A little more than one half of their annual payment is tax free.

After John's death, Mary will continue to receive the regular payments from their gift annuity. After her death, the remaining balance of on their gift annuity will go to Lutherans For Life. Generally this is about one half of their gift amount. If they live longer than their normal life expectancies, Lutherans For Life will receive less than one half of their gift.

If you would like to find out how a gift annuity could work for you contact me at jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org or 515.490.7371. I can give you a personal written analysis that shows the exact amount of your gift annuity payments and the tax benefits of your gift.

Please keep in mind that once you establish your gift annuity, you may not add to or change the agreement. You may however make additional gift annuity agreements.

Remember, your age at the time you establish your gift annuity determines your gift annuity payout rate. The older you are, the higher your rate. There is no cost to establishing your gift annuity.



Before I Formed You in the Womb I Knew You

Here is a wonderful life-affirming hymn recently written and sent to us by Rev. Alan Kornacki, Jr., pastor at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Campbell Hill, Illinois. This hymn would a wonderful addition on Life Sunday—or anytime.

1. Before I formed you
in the Womb I knew you.
Conceived in sin,
My Word of life still drew you.
Bought with a price,
you are My holy treasure,
Loved beyond measure.
2. Lo, your first parents
I made in My image,
But through their fall
that kinship they did damage.
I made a promise:
My Son would redeem them.
Thus I esteem them.
3. You are a temple
of the Holy Spirit.
You are My own;
the Kingdom you inherit.
You are My child
and I your holy Father—
I and no other.
4. All life is Mine;
I jealously possess it.
I gave you life,
and with My Word I bless it.
My Word shall
speak to unborn generations
Of their salvation.

© 2010 by Rev. Alan Kornacki, Jr.
11 11 11 5
Tune: HERZLIEBSTER JESU (LSB 439)

You Can Make a Difference For Life!

Please call (515.441.6571) or e-mail (kmeyer@lutheransforlife.org) if you would like to learn more about any of these giving options.

Your individual gifts provide for the annual and long-term needs of LFL.



Combined Federal Campaign:

If you are a federal employee or member of the US military (or have family or friends who are) designate “Lutherans For Life” when making your pledge! **The CFC identification number for LFL is 11508.**

Give online:

www.lutheransforlife.org

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Many banks offer electronic funds transfer from checking/savings accounts.

Matching Gifts:

Does your employer have a matching gift program? Ask them to include LFL as a qualified charity!

Planned Gifts:

LFL can provide info on trusts, annuities, and other plans. (Life insurance is a great way for someone who doesn't have large estate assets to make a significant gift. We would be glad to provide more information.) Consider including LFL in your will.

Online Shopping Rebate Program:

Check out iGive.com at the LFL web site.

Equipped and Encouraged

by Jerilyn Richard
Director of RFL



Lutherans For Life is truly blessed to have faithful, dedicated supporters—both those who give generous financial gifts and those who give of their time and talents. Our grassroots—those we call LFL’s “hands and feet”—invest much of their time to life issues. Some have been in service to the Lord for many years, and some are just beginning. ALL of them need equipping, and encouragement!

This past March, our wonderful state presidents had the opportunity to be “equipped and encouraged” through a Gospel-motivated workshop: two days in St. Louis (see below) of excellent training with Churches for Life president Pastor Doug Merkey. Pastor Merkey emphasized “ministry flows from relationships” and that first and foremost is our “relationship with Jesus.” He explained how walking in the Gospel is vital to a healthy ministry. “When grace and truth balance, ‘fruit happens’ as a result of being Gospel-motivated.”

We also learned ways to build a healthy, Gospel-motivated Life Team. Here is what a few participants had to say about the training (available to all our Life Teams and Life Advocates):

- “Helps bring into focus my specific role as a leader.”
- “Gospel-motivated focus—awesome.”
- “Recognize a successful team follows God’s plan, living in His grace. I am excited to share this Life Team vision with my board.”

Renewal For Life® offers more than just resources on a website. Our prayer is that we can come alongside you and your congregation to help you build a fruitful, Christ-centered ministry (Psalm 32:9; Ephesians 3:20, 21).



LFL’s national conference this summer will have a special emphasis on RFL! If you want to be equipped, encouraged, and motivated For Life join us in Chicago, August 3-4!



Back row (l-r): Anthony Horvath, LFL of Wisconsin; Karen Frohwein, LFL of Iowa; Kim Nessa, national LFL; Jerilyn Richard, national LFL; Mary Ann and Jonathan Anderson, representing LFL of North Dakota; Dale Olson, national LFL. Front row (l-r): Keith Alabach, representing LFL of Indiana; Jeanne Mackay, LFL of Kansas; Connie Davis, LFL of Michigan; Diane Albers, LFL of Missouri; Jean Amundson, LFL of Texas; Helen Lewis, LFL of Montana; Lynette Auch, LFL of South Dakota.

Jesus is the biggest and best reason of all to trust God! You can sing about it! You have probably sung this song many times. Go ahead and sing it today! Get your family and friends to sing with you.

Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide.
He has washed away my sin,
Lets His little child come in.



Life Thoughts in the Church Year are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life. **Life Thoughts** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*.

July 1 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – We actually find the full impact of today’s Old Testament reading, Lamentations 3:22-33, in the preceding verse. “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:” (21) Then the text begins, “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;” The prophet’s certainty of hope does not come in the midst of good times but in the midst of great despair (chapters 1-3:19). The hope given us in the death and resurrection of Jesus will never fail us.

July 8 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost – Power perfected in weakness? (2 Corinthians 12:9) Strong when we are weak? (12:10) How can anyone boast of such things? It is because of the sufficiency of grace (12:9). We have assurance that God does great things in our weakness because He did great things in the weakness of His Son on the cross. Thus, we should never doubt that God’s power is perfected especially in the weakest. Purpose and meaning, therefore, never diminish.

July 15 – Seventh Sunday after Pentecost – God used adoption to make us His own and guarantee us an eternal inheritance (Ephesians 1:5 & 14). Adoption, especially of the orphaned and vulnerable, must indeed be close to God’s heart.

July 22 – St. Mary Magdalene – On this day we commemorate Mary Magdalene, the first person to see and talk with the risen Jesus (John 20:11-18). When you remember that this grand privilege was given to a woman possessed by great evil (Mark 16:9), you come to realize that there is no evil, no sin too big that cannot

be cleansed. There is no sin that can keep us from the privilege of being in the presence of our risen Savior.

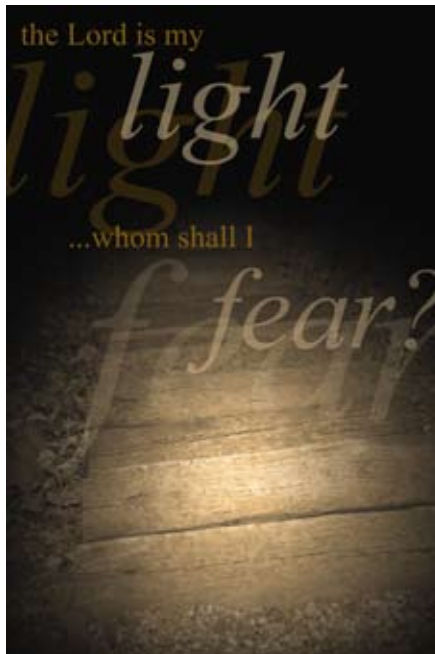
July 29 – Ninth Sunday after Pentecost – God “is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20). His ability to work in this way gives us hope in all our circumstances. A crisis pregnancy, a chronic disease, a loved one with Alzheimer’s—God works way beyond anything we could possibly imagine.

August 5 – Tenth Sunday after Pentecost – We can trust that the “Bread of Life” who gave Himself to satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul (John 6:35), will supply all that we need to support this body and life. Thus, even in the midst of great physical or emotional trials, we turn to the Bread of Life and not to our culture of death to be restored and satisfied.

August 12 – Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost – It is easy to imitate the culture and walk as they walk. But their way is futile and dark (Ephesians :17-18). We are beloved children of God and are called to imitate our heavenly Father (5:1). Walking in Christ’s love, we can bring understanding and light and influence our culture for good.

August 19 – Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Those who are “light in the Lord,” “walk as children of light” and have no part in the “unfruitful works of darkness” (Ephesians 5:8-11a). But the “fruit of light” (5:9) does more than avoid such dark works. It exposes them (5:11b). We do not do it arrogantly or angrily, but the Church is compelled to call wrong things wrong.

August 26 – Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Ephesians 5:22-33 calls for godly, Gospel-motivated wives and husbands. The Holy Spirit gives a picture of two servants trying to outdo one another in their service to each other.



We know this picture often gets blurred in the context of sinful reality. Nevertheless, striving to be such godly servants of one another will help keep this vital component of our society strong and influential.

September 2 – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost – The battle to preserve the God-given sanctity of life in our country is not a battle against political forces. It is a battle against the “spiritual forces of evil” (Ephesians 6:12). But we are well equipped for such battles when we wear the “whole armor of God” and wield the “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:10-17). It is not a matter of winning a victory, but sharing a victory Christ has already won.

September 9 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost – The “For Life” message of Christians is empty if it is not followed by deeds of compassion. We fall short if we help a young woman choose life and then fail to support her in that choice. We do not say, “Go in peace” (James 2:16); we go with her and walk beside her.

September 16 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – “I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24b) Who cannot identify with this tension? All Christians live on this teeter-totter. We bounce up and down between faithful and faithless countless times daily. This should give us empathy and a loving manner when confronting others with their sin as we realize how much we all need the grace and forgiveness of God in Christ.

September 23 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost – Whoever receives a child, receives Jesus (Mark 9:37). Whoever receives anyone, especially the vulnerable and needy, receives Jesus. It would seem to follow then that if we reject a child, if we reject the vulnerable, we reject Jesus. May God preserve us and our nation from the latter and renew our zeal to do the former.

September 30 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Scripture calls for patience in suffering and reminds us that God can make it purposeful (James 5:10-11). The cross of His own Son assures us of this truth. Our society increasingly deals with suffering by killing the sufferer and then calls it compassion. They desperately need to hear about the compassion of the cross.

The Consequences of Roe v. Wade

54,559,615

Total USA abortions since 1973

Based on numbers reported by the Guttmacher Institute 1973-2008, with estimates of 1,212,400 for 2009-2011. GI estimates a possible 3% under reporting rate, which is factored into the total.

Source: National Right to Life, 1/12



“Unless we recognize that each individual is irrepeatable and valuable by virtue of simply being conceived human, we cannot begin to talk about human rights. This includes the right to be born ... True justice should be for each human being, visible and invisible, young and old, disabled and able, to enjoy fully their right to life ... color, sex, intelligence, economic circumstances, physical or mental disability should not be used as an excuse to deprive a person of life.”

Dr. Margaret Ogola, award winning author, medical doctor, human rights advocate, Kenyan pro-life humanitarian

The Real War on Women—Abortion

by Diane E. Schroeder

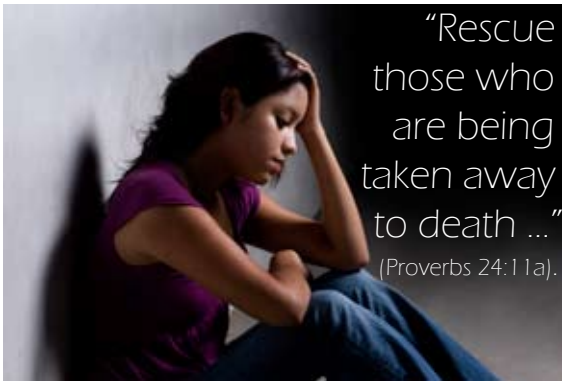


It began with the HHS mandate that employers through their health insurers must supply contraception and abortifacients to their employees. Religious organizations were not exempt. This caused a firestorm of opposition from Roman Catholic bishops, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Southern Baptists, and other evangelical leaders which claimed that their religious liberty was being infringed on by the government. On the other side, those in favor of the ruling quickly coined this defense of religious freedom a “War on Women,” claiming that free access to contraception and abortion would limit women’s freedom.

The truth: A real “War on Women” began almost 40 years ago when the Supreme Court ruling *Roe v. Wade* ushered in abortion on demand. We were told that women needed abortion, that they needed to be free from the shackles of motherhood and child bearing—they needed to be able to compete on an equal level with men. The “sexual revolution” needed abortion because there needed to be no consequences to sexual activity. So, the baby had to go! It’s 40 years later. What really happened?

26.5 years; with males it is 28.7. Cohabitation is on the rise with an increasing number of non-marital births. *(Cohabiting couples are more than twice more likely to break up than if they were married.)*

- Correspondingly out-of-wedlock births are at a record number. More than half of births to American women under 30 occur outside marriage. In my home state of Illinois, out-of-wedlock births in 1973 (the year of *Roe v. Wade*) were 18 percent of total births. In 2009, they were 41 percent.
- Many men feel they no longer need to carry any responsibility for the child they have created. Abortion gives them freedom to abandon the mother of their child. Abortion law tells men they have no say in the outcome of any pregnancy, so they



have responded by taking no responsibility in a pregnancy. Many men refuse to support their baby’s mother if she chooses to have the baby. *(And then are those men who say, “I will support any decision she makes”—as if all decisions*

were equal.)

What has been the result of these seismic demographic shifts? Women and children suffer. Researchers have consistently found that children born outside of marriage face higher risks of falling into poverty, failing in school, or suffering emotional and behavioral problems. Marriage provides increased wealth to households, stability for women and children, and two parents to share the load of parenting. And we haven’t even mentioned the emotional and physical aftermath of abortion on women and men. Physically, abortion leaves women

- Marriage rates are way down. Only 51 percent of Americans 18 and over are married. The average age of females for a first marriage is

with a higher risk of breast cancer, infertility, and pregnancy loss. Emotionally, abortion can leave both men and women with enormous grief and guilt. Men are emasculated by being unable to protect and provide for their children and women fail as nurturers. Abortion has created a legacy of pain, anger, bitterness, and grief. So much for freedom!

What can you do about the so-called “War on Women.” Cardinal Dolan of New York, commenting on the HHS mandate gives us a clue.

“The Catholic Church wants its people to be a player in American politics. Twenty-eight percent of the population of the United States are Catholics, OK? And the Catholic Church, through them, you bet, wants to have a say in the direction of our beloved country. To think that there is a Berlin Wall between one’s religious convictions and one’s political activity is crazy. It’s ludicrous. It’s not only non-Catholic, non-Christian, non-biblical, it’s also un-American.”

Yes, you can help protect women and provide for children through supporting the work of pregnancy centers, educating on the aftermath of abortion, and getting your church involved. But, you also have a responsibility to exercise your religious convictions as part of Christian citizenship. If you think abortion is none of your business, you are wrong. Abortion grieves your God and touches everyone. Let your elected officials know where you stand and why, encourage legislation that protects the unborn and their moms and dad, and vote in accordance with your religious convictions that are based on God’s Word and the value of life He gives each and every one of us. Speak up!



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

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran congregation 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 witness, from a biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

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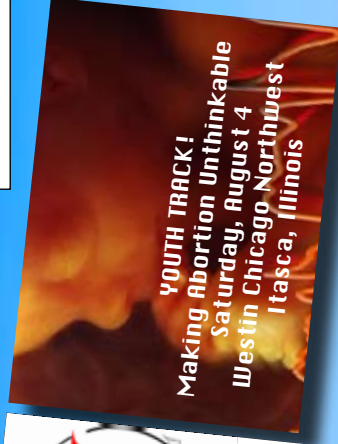
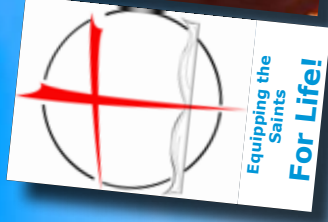
LFL has 12 state federations, 123 local chapters, 149 Life Ministry Coordinators, and 81 Life Advocates in the United States.

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