

Fall 2011

LifeDate

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

Equipping Lutherans to be
Gospel-motivated voices For Life!



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Lutherans For Life

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Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Where's that Voice Coming From?



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

I hear voices. No, not in my head, but real voices striving to uphold the sanctity of human life. I hear voices now and then that come from anger. To be honest, I've been such a voice a time or two. Christians get angry over abortion's death toll, over our country's devaluing of human life in stem cell research and assisted suicide initiatives. Christians get angry over their fellow Christian's complacency and silence. Such things should anger us, sadden us, break our hearts. But an angry voice does not bring about the desired change.

Voices that come from anger repel rather than engage people. Angry voices cause defenses to go up and even well-reasoned arguments go unheard. Angry voices make people think you are attacking them instead of their ideas. Angry voices perpetuate the myth that For Life people are angry people.

But I hear other voices too. The mission of Lutherans For Life is "Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life." We are not For Life because we live in a society that isn't, but because we serve a God who is. We are not For Life because life is precious, but because life is precious to God. Every human life is someone created by God, someone for whom Jesus Christ shed His blood, and someone God desires to call into an eternal relationship with Him. What God does that gives life value raises these issues far above the political and social and even the moral realms and places them right in the midst of our theology; and our theology of the Gospel of Jesus speaks to them in positive and powerful

ways.

A voice that comes from the Gospel is not a timid voice. It speaks the truth boldly and unashamedly. It speaks and calls wrong things wrong. It speaks and points people to what God, in Jesus Christ, has done about wrong things. It speaks to those within the church helping them connect the Gospel to the life issues. It speaks to those outside the church starting where they are in dealing with difficult issues and striving to connect them to the Gospel. It speaks, and in every situation, it speaks in love.

A voice that comes from the Gospel moves the speaker and the listeners to action. It speaks by helping those in crisis pregnancies make good choices and then helps them in real, practical ways. It speaks by showing active compassion to individuals and families dealing with chronic disease or terminal illness. It speaks by being with and mourning with infertile couples or those who have experienced miscarriage or still birth. It speaks through adopting children who are orphaned. It speaks by helping those with broken spirits because of sins against life know the unconditional and objective forgiveness won by Jesus on the cross. A voice that comes from the Gospel speaks in words and deeds.

A voice that comes from the Gospel strives to influence the culture with our truth and compassion. It strives to influence the culture through prayer vigils at abortion mills, standing in Life Chains, or participating in Marches for Life. It influences the culture through who we vote into office or by running for office ourselves. It influences by taking a stand against rulings and laws that devalue life.

Yes, I hear voices, Gospel-motivated voices For Life. I'd love to hear more. I'd love to hear yours.

Adoption, Identity, and Kung-Fu Panda



by Dr. Russell Moore

My shoulders tensed up, as I looked over at my sons, eating popcorn in the seats next to me. It's not that I didn't think there would ever be a film that might unearth some awkward and potentially traumatic family conversations. It's just that I didn't expect it would be *Kung-Fu Panda Two*.

In this animated film, there's an adoption subplot that I wasn't quite prepared for walking in. It turns out (spoiler alert) that the panda protagonist, Po, finds out that his goose father isn't his biological Dad. He was found, abandoned, in a turnip crate when he was a cub. Po discovers that there was an ancient prophecy that the wicked king would be defeated by a panda. The king sought to destroy, preemptively, all the pandas to ensure that his rival would never emerge.

The movie deals intermittently with Po seeking to answer the question, "Who am I?" It's through finding his place in the old prophecy that he discovers his identity, and comes to peace with who he is.

I winced, not because the movie addressed adoption, but because the old goose seemed to stammer, almost with shame, when he "admitted" that his son had been adopted. My shoulders relaxed though as the movie grappled in what I found to be a helpful and basically life-affirming way with what is one of the most often disturbing aspects of adoption.

Many (though by no means all) children who were adopted eventually ask the kinds of hard questions this film raises in the middle of all its fun and silliness. One might be haunted with "Who am I?" and "What if?" and "Why?" questions. In one sense, we all face those questions, regardless of our backgrounds. But, for children who've been adopted, there's often a special sense of helplessness in the face of them.

If social Darwinism were true, then these questions would be bleak. In that world, the question "who are you?" is primarily answered by genetic makeup. If you don't know your full biological background, you can never really know who you are. But, as those who've staked our lives on the empty tomb of Jesus, we know that's not the real world.

If you were adopted, there is nothing at all wrong with wanting to find out as much about your background as you want. There's nothing wrong with wanting to meet your birth-parents or other biological relatives.

That's part of your story. But the word "part" is really important.

If you know Christ, meditate on the providence of God in your personal story. You are who you are, and you belong where you are, because you are exactly where God intended for you to be, in order to become the person you are. Nothing happens to you by accident. All things, even mysteriously those awful things that God hates, fall somehow into a secret cosmic drama in which everything works together "according to the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11).

No matter how horrible your backstory, you are not a freak, and your life is no accident. Yes, genes are important. You have the genes God wanted you



to have. Yes, nurture is significant. You have the parents God wanted you to have. It's the interplay between the two that makes you who you are. Despite all the reductionisms of our age, we come to be the kind of persons we are by a curious combination of genes, upbringing, and free decisions. You are not captive to any of these.

And in your case, as in the case of all of us, God orchestrated all these factors to form you into the kind of person you are, with the kinds of experiences you have. Why? You might not know for thousands of years. If you're in Christ, God is preparing you to rule over the cosmos. He wants you to be who you are in Christ and to be ready for this reign.

This film was an entertaining two hours; and it really was entertaining. I would say "two thumbs up," but you might think I was making a joke about pandas, thumbs, and intelligent design. But beyond all the entertainment, I wondered whether the animated pain on the screen in front of us might have provoked some real pain in the people I love the most.

As we walked out of the theater, I prodded a bit, to start whatever conversation needed to be had. "What did you think of the movie?" I asked. "When he started throwing those cannon-balls," my sons chirped back, "that was cool."

They don't seem to have any kind of "identity crisis" at this point, but I sure do. Every minute of every day, I struggle with whether I am who I was on my own terms, what the Bible calls "the flesh," or whether I am who God has pronounced me to be in the gospel, a beloved child and heir.

And, as an animated panda I know might say, that's just awesomeness.

(Moore to the Point, 6/5/11. www.russellmoore.com. Used by permission.)

Abortion is the Number One Killer of Children in the World



**In the USA alone,
53,310,822 babies have been
killed by abortion since 1973.
The number grows every day.**

Source: National Right to Life Committee



**Every day, women and men
are left hurting
and grieving
due to an abortion decision.**

I Will Take your Sin

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.word-of-hope.org



Abby Johnson left her position as a director of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Texas because she couldn't hurt women anymore. She has documented many of her experiences in the abortion industry. Recently, Abby shared a story every Christian needs to hear.

A woman, visibly upset, walked into the clinic. Abby counseled her. Then suggested she go home to think about her decision. "She was insistent," Abby remembers. "This abortion must happen today." She asked if Abby would hold her hand during the procedure.

Sedation was given, but the woman "cried even harder." She "was shaking" when the abortionist walked in the room. "He did something," Abby said, "that left me speechless." The doctor walked over to the woman and took her hand. Abby recounts the conversation that followed.

"Why the tears?" he asked.

"I just feel really guilty about doing this," the woman responded.

He asked her why she felt guilty. She said, "Because I just know this is a sin." He paused for a minute and looked at

her. He smiled and said, "No. It is not your sin. It is mine. I will take on your sin. I commit the sin. Not you."

Her crying stopped. "It was bizarre," remembers Abby. "Did he really think he was committing a sin? How could he do it if he really thought that? Did he think he was taking on the sins of these women by helping them obtain abortions? What a heavy burden to bear. It was hard for me to process—it still is."

Abby carried her own burden while working at Planned Parenthood. She remembers thinking that "if I died while I worked there, I would probably go

to hell ... I was so unsure of who God was or what His 'will' actually meant ... I was completely misdirected."

As compassionate as the abortionist



in Abby's story sounds, he, too, was misdirected. None of us can be a scapegoat for another's sin. No other person can be a scapegoat for our sin. There is only one Scapegoat. He is Jesus Christ.

Abby needed Jesus Christ. She is the mother of two aborted children. Her abortionist was guilty, but so was she. Abby has repented. She laid her sins at the foot of the Savior's Cross. But, what about the Church? Some Christians, observes Abby, say, "Shame on the abortionist." Others say, "Shame on the women who have abortions." But, "you know what? Shame on us!"

I remember when I first became involved in Lutherans For Life. I read about Dr. Bernard Nathanson who co-founded the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). He explained how important it was for Christian churches to stay silent on the issue of abortion. On the speaking trail, I remember how often I heard Lutheran parents, grandparents, and congregational leaders defend abortion. At last count, 25 of my friends, relatives or acquaintances have shared their abortion decisions with me. All are Christian. Many attend regular Bible study or sing in the choir. Some are wives of pastors.

Abby says, "Shame on us." I guess I've been saying something similar for many years. Lutheran women's groups serve in countless mission fields, but forget the mission field of mothers who aborted their children. Congregations offer every possible support group from drug abuse to divorce; from weight loss to grief counseling. But the grief suffered after abortion—by the one who performed the procedure and the one who chose the procedure—is ignored. The Church is silent. In our minds, we justify. Rationalize. Excuse.

Satan wants us to remain silent. "It's none of your business," he whispers. "Besides, does God really say that abortion is so wrong—considering the circumstances?" But Jesus stands with His arms outstretched to block the way. "Don't do this thing and sin against God!" After the abortion, He remains close to both the abortionist and the mother who aborted her child. His arms are open and welcoming. "Come to Me and I will forgive the guilt of your sin." Jesus Christ invites—compels—His Church to do the same. He wants us to speak up. Warn. If the deed is already done, He compels us to speak again. Expose sin. Help the

sinner to confess and then approach His throne of mercy and grace. To do nothing—to remain silent—is to participate in deception. Share the sin. Perpetuate the horror.

When I am restless, anxious, and burdened by guilt, I must look to no one but Christ. My doctor, pastor, or husband cannot take on my sin. But, "I will take your sin," says Jesus. No matter what we have done (or failed to do); no matter if we've chosen, performed, or defended an abortion, we need to acknowledge our sin. **"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise"** (Psalm 51:17). With His forgiveness, Christ sets us free to move outward into the lives of others—with hope.

Grace Kern, director of Word of Hope, visits daily with women who've been held prisoner to lies and excuses. Grace does not take on the sins of these women, but she tells them of Jesus who took on the sins of the world. Throughout the year, I meet with women in the church who have been held prisoner to lies and excuses. I do not take on the sins of these women, but tell them of Jesus who sacrificed—once and for all.

"Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name!" (Psalm 142:7)

For more information about Word of Hope or its mentoring ministry, Titus 2 for Life, please call Grace Kern at 888.217.8679 or Linda at 641.648.3785.



Hurting from Abortion?
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Abortion Abatement – Keep up the Momentum

by Chuck Colson



During the Clinton years, 56 percent of Americans described themselves as pro-choice, while only 33 percent of us self-identified as pro-life. But in just a decade and a half, the numbers have completely shifted. According to the most recent Gallup polling, pro-lifers edge out those in favor of legal abortion by 47 to 45 percent. Half of all Americans agree that abortion is morally wrong.

And the news gets even better. Following a ground-breaking Nebraska law last year that bars late-term abortions because of the risk of fetal pain, five other states have passed measures outlawing nearly all abortions after five months of pregnancy. Legislatures in Kansas, Alabama, Idaho, Indiana, and Oklahoma this year have enacted abortion bans after 20 or 21 weeks. The laws allow for exceptions when the mother's life is at risk or she faces severe physical impairment.

I guess we shouldn't be surprised, but liberal activists are shocked. AP reports that late-term abortion laws "have emboldened anti-abortion activists, angered abortion providers, and will likely make decisions all the more wrenching for women affected by the late-term bans."

Not one word about the protecting the lives of babies or supporting the choice of pregnant women to save their own children.

Who is really on the side of women in this whole distorted debate? Well, most Americans aren't buying the line of the abortion industry. According to Gallup, "majorities of Democrats as well as most Republicans favor informed consent, pa-

rental consent, 24-hour waiting periods, and a ban on 'partial birth abortion.'" The respected polling agency says that 87 percent of respondents favor informing a pregnant woman of the risks of having an abortion.

Folks, in these contentious times, it's hard to get 87 percent of the people to agree that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west!

Responding to this pro-life groundswell, state legislatures in 2011 have passed more than 80 bills aimed at restricting access to abortion. That's up from 23 such laws enacted last year. These measures would variously ban abortions after the first detectable fetal heartbeat, specify which drugs and equipment abortion clinics must provide, require doctors to conduct a pre-abortion sonogram and describe the unborn child's features to the woman, or require waiting periods before an abortion.

Here is some more good news. According to the pro-choice Guttmacher Institute, forty-six states now allow medical professionals to opt out of abortions. Forty-three allow at least some institutions to opt out. Thirty-six require parental notification or consent for minors. Twenty-four require waiting periods, nineteen require counseling, and sixteen outlaw "partial-birth" abortions.

This whole movement shows us that we are able—if we're patient and persevering—to change culture, and it should encourage us in the battle over so-called gay "marriage."

The battle for life continues, however, so long as 1.2 million abortions are being performed annually.

We celebrate our gains, let's keep the momentum going. A pro-life party is appropriate—but not a vacation.

(From BreakPoint, 8/18/11, reprinted with permission of Prison Fellowship, www.breakpoint.org)

SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!

Our remaining stock of selected Life Sunday and Just For Kids inserts are on sale! Stock up now and save—and share the For Life message all year long! The Just For Kids inserts are a great way to share the For Life message with children. They are a great resource for Sunday school, VBS, children's coloring bags, and more!

Life Sunday Bulletin Insert Sale

- In Life, in Death, Abide with Me
- In the Hand of God
- Jesus Loves Children
- Just Imagine ... what will this baby be?
- Cherish the Children
- Good News For Life
- Life Under the Cross

Just For Kids Bulletin Insert Sale

- Good News For Life
- Welcome A Little Child
- Life Under the Cross
- Time To Speak
- Just Imagine
- In the Beginning
- Abide With Me
- Cherish the Children
- In the Hand of God

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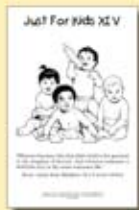
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TOTE BAGS (Plastic) 11" x 15"

To order go to www.cph.org!

SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!



Equipping the Saints Through the Word

by Kay L. Meyer
Director of Development



Jim was chairman of the Board of Education. I was chairman of the Board of Evangelism. At our monthly church council meeting some of the leaders would become frustrated with Jim. His heart was in the right place, but he was a babe in Christ, not a mature Christian. Once, he suggested that the council distribute a magazine to all of our members. Jim thought because the magazine talked about God,

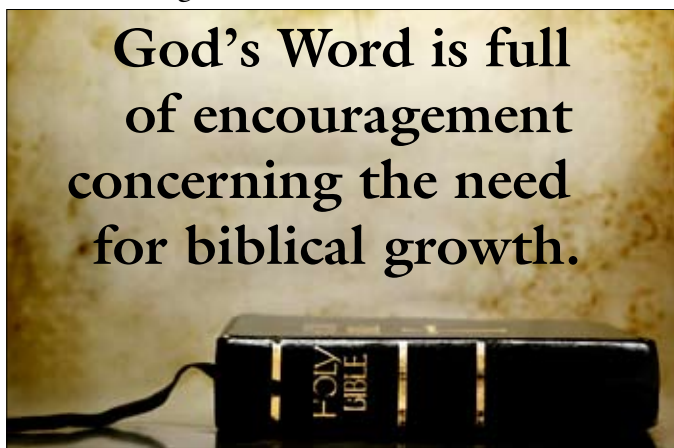
and it was free, that it would make a great resource for our members. The pastor and I explained to Jim that the organization that published and distributed the magazine

was a cult, not a Christian denomination. Of course, we didn't give the magazine to our members. Then over a three-year period I watched Jim grow from a babe in Christ to a mature Christian. How did this transformation occur? When he retired he began attending a weekly Bible study at his congregation and listening daily to quality Bible-based Christian radio.

God's Word is full of encouragement concerning the need for biblical growth. We shouldn't wait for retirement. It also shares warnings for those who do not grow up spiritually through the Word.

Growing up through the word helps us discern truth from error regarding spiritual issues. We will be able to discern that abortion is a sin and against God's Word. Yet, today, many who call upon the name of the Lord are not growing spiritually. This is one of the reasons so many people who call themselves Christians don't see anything wrong with being for abortion or for same-sex marriages.

God's Word warns us that infants (in the faith) can be blown about by every wind of doctrine. God's Word encourages us not to remain infants or babies in the faith. **"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the**



waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in

love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ" (Ephesians 4:14-15 NIV). As we read and study the Bible we will grow up into Him who is the Head, Jesus Christ.

God's Word tells us that when we are infants in Christ we are worldly, not spiritual (1 Corinthians 3:1-2).

The Bible says Christians can be babes in Christ, but encourages us not to stay babies in the faith. Baby Christians who only want milk and not meat are in danger spiritually! Baby Christians can be led astray to embrace false teachings and dangerous beliefs and can be led astray into dangerous sins. They can fall prey

to cults and the occult. They can believe there is nothing wrong with having an abortion. They can get involved in pornography and other sexual sins. Babies in Christ don't know what God's Word says so they can't discern good from evil.

God's Word also tells us that as we grow spiritually we will desire meat and not milk, and will be able to discern truth from error (Hebrews 5:12-14).

God's Word also encourages us to leave elementary teachings and move toward maturity. The elementary teachings about Christ are good, but there is more that we need to learn (Hebrews 6:1-3).

“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good” (1 Peter 2:2-3 NIV). Have you ever watched an infant drinking milk? He craves the milk. As he drinks he grows quickly. As we read and digest God's Word we too will grow spiritually.

So, Christian friend, have you seen yourself or someone you love in these verses? Where are you in your faith journey? Are you immature in your faith? Are you still in need of milk instead of meat? What can you do? What can churches do to help Christians grow up?

Individuals should confess their lack of growth and ask the Lord to help them set goals for spiritual growth. Pray “Lord, I've forgotten or been too busy to give You the time and energy that I put into other aspects of my life. Forgive me for my lukewarmness and help me grow in Your Word so that I desire meat and not milk. Send your Holy Spirit to encourage me and help me grow. In Jesus name. Amen.”

Churches need to offer multiple ways for people to grow. The following are a few suggestions:

Pray. Recognize that isolation is a

trait of today's families and can be detrimental to spiritual growth. Begin with prayer. Ask the Lord to help your congregation find new and innovative ways to encourage and equip members and to encourage them in their faith journey.

Bible Studies. Rather than just offering a Sunday morning Bible study, offer many ways for members to get into the Word. Why not offer a men's early morning Bible study, a women's early morning Bible study, a lunch time study, a daytime study for those who are retired or stay at home moms, and even an after work Bible study that people can attend before they head home? Encourage members to read the Bible at home too!

Church library. Having an updated church library with excellent Christian books is also important for congregations. Why not highlight one of these books each week in the church bulletin or newsletter? Encourage members to pick up one or two good books to read at home or on their lunch hour. Also include books for family devotions.

Website Opportunities. Promote on-line devotions and Bible studies for church members.

Promote Christian radio programs in the community. Over the years I have seen many immature Christians grow spiritually when they begin to listen regularly to quality Christian radio programs that focus on God's Word. So, churches can advertise good Christian radio programs for their members.

Join me in praying that Christians will take God's admonition to grow up spiritually through the word and Christian education seriously. And remember to proclaim that we are saved through God's grace alone (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Child Abuse

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

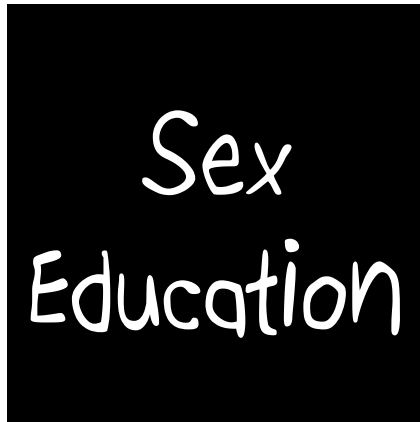


Why don't we just admit it? Child abuse is legal in this country.

We call it sex education. But in truth, it is child abuse. Modern sex education abuses children by stripping them of their innocence. It sexualizes our children. Comprehensive sex education incorporates sexuality into language, thinking skills, health, science, and life-style.

Educators and parents (consciously or not) put their trust in a child abuser named Alfred Kinsey. He is called the father of modern sex education. Children, he said, are "sexual from birth." Few people paid any attention to the fact that Kinsey used known pedophiles to experiment on children for the purpose of research. His twisted documentation made its way into textbooks. Homes. Churches. Those who share Kinsey's disrespect for life and the innocence of children stood ready to profit—to further loosen moral restraints.

Removing the innocence of childhood has created a flourishing market for retailers. The advertising industry. Pharmaceutical companies. Healthcare. Planned Parenthood. Who other than this government-subsidized monolith more unashamedly vies for the role of sex educator, pushes all manner of sexual paraphernalia, and then provides abortion services (for a fee, you understand)?



I haven't always used the term "child abuse" to describe sex education. It was Douglas Gresham, the step-son of C. S. Lewis who helped me see it for what it is. I had written Gresham to invite him as a speaker for Lutherans For Life. I happened to mention personal efforts to help my church understand the dangers of sex education. You are right to do so, he said, because "modern sex education is child abuse." Gresham knows what he's talking about. He ministers to women who've suffered sexual abuse and the loss of life through abortion that often follows years of abuse. I, too, have heard the painful stories of women who

became promiscuous after being exposed to early instruction in sexuality or blatantly sinful abuse.

For years, I traveled here and there speaking to boys, girls, and their parents. I did not explain the intimacies of sex, but rather the uniqueness of male and female. This was received as a strange and novel idea. Maybe

not surprising considering that moms and dads had been under the influence of Kinsey, too. I kept asking: Why would we want to teach our children about all things pertaining to sex before first mentoring them to be boys? Girls? On the path to biblical manhood. Womanhood.

Churches have failed the youngest generations. That's what happens when we are deceived. Fooled. The world stands before us, hissing, "Did God really say ...?" We look around to see new trends. Sophistication. Contemporary teaching. Then, we fall into doubt. We rationalize. And we play the game. The world wins when we are distracted from

our vocation of instructing children in purity to instead educate them in sex. So, along with others, I continue to encourage my church to please consider the source of modern sex education. To refuse to wrap Jesus around worldly opinions and trends.

This mother and grandmother has a sensitively in tune antenna. I sense, hear, and see that modern sex education is recruitment into sexuality. Therefore, it is child abuse.

Modern sex education:

- Is not anatomy class
- Fails to guard the innocence of children
- Breaks down inhibitions by placing boys and girls together in the same classroom
- Instructs children to be “comfortable with their bodies” (And so they are—with girls having no clue as to why two cups and a thong might attract un-gentlemanly attention.)
- Tempts children to believe they are, first and foremost, “sexual beings.”

When we believe that we are “sexual beings,” then it only follows that we have the “right” to be “sexual.” That we “need” to be “sexual.” And, in today’s culture, no one should deny “my rights.” No one should deny “my needs.” Well, here’s the truth that I will continue to proclaim: We are — first and foremost — human beings, made in the image of God and, although fallen from that image, we are called to holy living as a man or a woman. Equal, but different. Can you imagine how that changes the way we see ourselves and others? The choices

we make? The way we treat one another?

The media and the general public is angry when a priest sexually abuses a child. We should be. But where is our righteous anger when children fall under the tutorage of Planned Parenthood? SIECUS? LGBT and GLSEN-approved textbooks? Projects such as “It Gets Better,” the “bullying” program initiated by homosexual advocate and leading “sex-advice” columnist Dan Savage? (Warning: All of these sites are graphic.)

Children are not on this earth for our use. They are gifts from God. They are treasures of Jesus Christ. I stand on this truth as a woman. A mother. A grandmother. Try to prove me wrong. Take your case before the Creator. Question your reasons for defending sex education and the source of your information.

Educating children in sex is cruel. It is a far cry from a parent’s role to instruct sons and daughters in purity. Remembering our own mistakes, we may fear for our children, but comprehensive sex education does not protect young hearts, minds and souls. Instruction in purity does. It allows us to protect our children in ways we, perhaps, were not.

What can a parent do? For starters, teach boys what it means to be a man. Girls what it means to be a woman. There are only two sexes, equal but different. Teach respect for both. Resist falling for the lie that “experts” know better how to raise your children. Help children and teens set goals. Discuss the consequences of choices. Remind them that their bodies are not their own to do with as they please, but creations of God and valued at high price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

There is a time for everything. Childhood is a time for innocence. Therefore, keep the fence up and the gate closed.

All Alone

by Rev. Ken Klaus
Speaker Emeritus,
The Lutheran Hour



“If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.” Romans 14:8-9

While looking for stories for the Daily Devotions [e-mail], my eye was caught by the title of an article located on another web page.

The title said, “Man Dies All By Himself.”

Was the story about a forgotten movie star, or some homeless individual, or a hiker who had taken a climb beyond his level of expertise? Maybe this was the story of a hoarder who had been crushed by a falling pile of beloved possessions. It was the kind of title I had to investigate.

Clicking on the link produced a large picture of a hollow-cheeked old man. Above his head, in very large letters were the words “Man Dies All By Himself.” There was no article, nothing to explain the picture.

Then it clicked. The man who had died all by himself was Dr. Jack Kevorkian, the man who had helped terminate the lives of over 130 people—people who had incurable and painful diseases, who had no hope, no value, nothing to keep them linked to this world.

At least that's what Kevorkian said.

It's what many others believe.

Recently, a past executive director of Lutheran Hour Ministries went home to his Lord. Rodger Hebermehl was his name. Many of you knew him. Those who didn't missed the acquaintance of a special man, a gentle, Christian man, who loved his Lord and had a tremendous longing for the lost souls of humanity.

Over the last few years Rodger had suffered from an illness that he knew would end his life. Gradually the things he could do were diminished. Did Rodger say there was no hope, that he had no value or purpose, nothing to keep him here?



If you think that, you don't know Rodger. Allow me to share that when Rodger no longer could get around by himself, when limitations were many and opportunities few, he prayed he might share the Savior's story with a few more unbelievers. He prayed he might be used by the Lord to let them know the transforming power of the Christ.

He prayed the Holy Spirit might use him to bring a dozen people to faith.

May I tell you one other thing about Rodger? Rodger did not die all by himself. Yes, he had his loving wife Cassandra at his side and, yes, there had been many others with him during those last days.

But when Rodger left this life he did so in the company of Jesus who had redeemed him—the Savior he had considered it an honor to serve. No, Rodger did not die alone.

Because of Jesus, no Christian man or woman ever dies alone.

(From LHM Daily Devotion, 6/14/11. Used by permission. www.lhm.org)

A survey suggests that half of Dutch GPs have felt pressured by relatives to euthanize patients. The results of the survey of 800 family doctors was reported in an English-speaking Dutch news-website. Alex Schadenberg of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition commented: "It is important to note that the Dutch claim to have a strict euthanasia law, but the facts show otherwise ... The concepts of safeguards, choice and autonomy are only really only the slogans that the euthanasia lobby use." (*Euthanasia Prevention Coalition*, 7/29; *SPUC*, 8/1)

Father John Fleming, a leading Australian bioethicist, has expressed concern about the basis for a recent pro-life success. Two nurses were spared from participating in abortion after their lawyer argued that their Catholic beliefs protected them against discrimination. Fr. Fleming said the wrongness of abortion "is not based on a peculiar 'Catholic belief' about the beginning of life. It is based upon the scientific reality that human life begins at the beginning, at fertilization." (*John Smeaton*, 8/18; *SPUC*, 8/19)

Young British Christians are much more concerned about pro-life issues than elderly Christians, suggests a new poll. Two out of three Christians aged 18-34 surveyed said abortion and euthanasia were very important issues, compared to one in three Christians aged over 65. John Smeaton, Society for the Protection of Unborn Children director, commented: "This is encouraging news for the defense of the sanctity of human life. It shows that the pro-life movement has a promising future." (*Inspire Magazine*, *SPUC*, 8/23)

An Israeli court has allowed a family

to extract and freeze the eggs from the ovaries of their teenage daughter after she died in a car accident. Chen Aida Ayash, 17, lost her life August 3rd in a Jerusalem hospital. The family obtained the right to extract the girl's eggs in what is believed to be the first such legal decision of its kind in Israel and possibly the world. The court would not allow a request to have the eggs fertilized. The ruling raises concerns such as the inability of the deceased to give consent and the ethical dilemma of a mother giving birth after her death. (*Daily Mail Reporter*, 8/12; *CLR Life News*, 8/17)

Jharkhand state in eastern India is offering financial support to parents of female children in a bid to discourage sex-selection abortion. The incentives include free education and investments. There are a number of religious, cultural and socio-economic factors in India contributing to a prejudice against conceiving girls. (*Catholic Culture*, 8/1; *SPUC*, 8/2)

Alois of Liechtenstein, the hereditary prince of the tiny European nation, has declared his opposition to the depenalization of abortion, which is currently the subject of a popular referendum in his country. Alois made use of the national celebration of the principality on August 15 to state that, if the initiative is approved, he will "oppose" its ratification as a law, hinting that his father, the nation's sovereign, will refuse to sign it. Without the prince's signature, proposed legislation cannot enter into force in Liechtenstein. The Parliament of Liechtenstein has already registered its disapproval, with only 7 of 25 members voting in favor of a similar measure. (*LifeSiteNews.com*, 8/18)



Adoption Option Resources from Lutherans For Life

Order at www.cph.org.

BOOKLETS

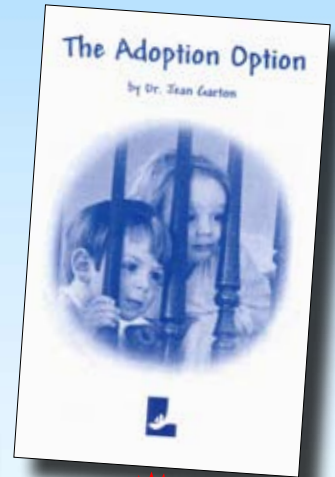
Adoption: Finding a Family for a Child explores adoption opportunities.

Item LFL503B.

\$0.50 ea.

The Adoption Option by Dr. Jean Garton.

Item LFL500B. **\$1.00 ea.**



BROCHURES

The Servanthood of Adoption –

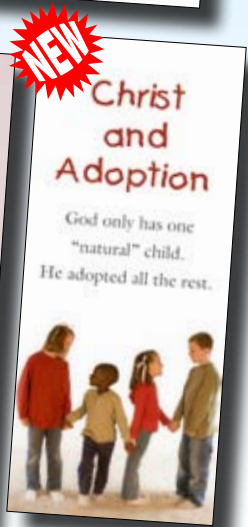
Item LFL501T.

\$0.50 ea.

Christ and Adoption –

Item LFL504T.

\$0.50 ea.



BULLETIN INSERT

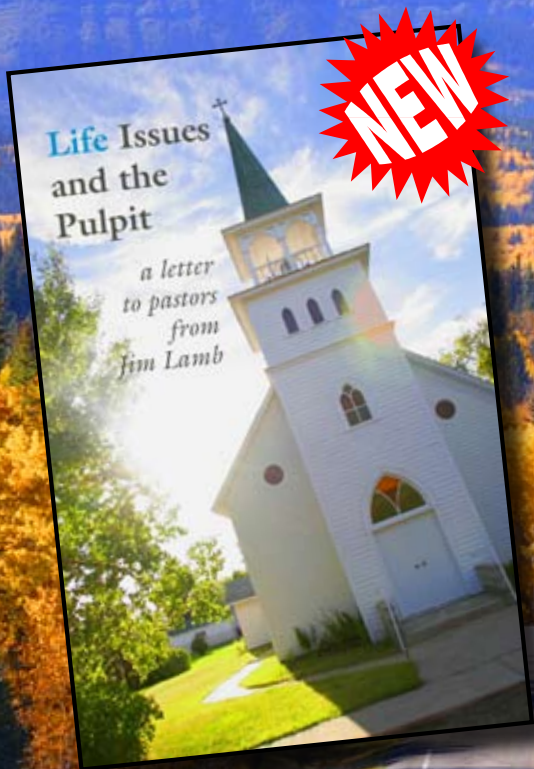
Welcome a Little Child.

Item LFL500BI.

\$0.07 ea.

November is
National Adoption
Month!





Life Issues and the Pulpit – Author James Lamb, in this letter to fellow pastors, writes, “I offer this as a brotherly discussion of matters of the heart ... Before you get started on this little booklet, I ask you to keep a few things in mind: The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the most powerful and positive For Life message in the universe! 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! One more thing: Lutherans For Life truly wants to help you!”

Item LFL1629B. **\$1.00 ea.**



Sizes: adult small-XL, \$10.00; adult 2X, \$12.00

Colors: Oxford Grey, Military Green, Lime Green, Sapphire Blue, and Tangerine.



To order call the LFL Life Center: 888-364-LIFE. *This item is not available through CPH.*

Shipping and handling applies to all orders. All orders must be prepaid. Quantities limited.

Front: LIFE – Living in Faith Everyday
Back: 1 Timothy 4:12



SPECIAL ORDER ITEM! LFL “LIFE” T-shirts!

Voices For Life



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

The Voice of Charmers

I love the way the King James translates Psalm 58:5, “the voice of charmers charming.” It couches the seductiveness of evil in soft, harmless sounding terms, and gives a lyrical picture of Satan’s seductive style. His voice is not satanic. His is “the voice of charmers charming.”

young into early sexual activity. When self-esteem is shattered and things are not as “safe” as advertised, they charm them into abortion. Just read the headlines. They hide statutory rape. They aid sex traffickers. They build massive, fortress-like slaughter houses. When states cut funding, they cut other services but not death. These charmed charmers feel good about their evil, unaware of whose voice they really are.

The voice of the Hemlock Society (Compassion and Choices) is “the voice of charmers charming.” They charm the



Satan hates life and loves death. He spends much of his time charming the virtues of the latter and charmingly devaluing the former. He deceives many into being “the voice of charmers charming.” He charms these unwitting accomplices into thinking they actually benefit life by peddling death.

The voice of Planned Parenthood is “the voice of charmers charming.” They are *summa cum laude* students, nearly as masterful as the master. They charm the

frail into thinking they have a duty to die and get out of the way. They advertise killing as a means of caring and tirelessly lobby for assisted-suicide laws. They speak of death as the compassionate relief of suffering and label this enemy of God “friend.” These charmed charmers feel good about their evil, unaware of whose voice they really are.

Christ’s people hear these kind of charming voices day after day. Satan uses them to charm us away from trusting in

the Lord of Life and point us to death to rescue us from our problems. So charming are his words that what he offers never seems like an idolatry, but it is. Satan would have us believe death is our god.

The Voice of the Church

The charming voice of Satan needs to be countered by the voice of the Church. That is part of LFL's mission, "Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel motivated VOICES FOR LIFE." We can learn some things about that voice from John the Baptist. Scripture refers to him as "the voice" preparing the way for Jesus (Isaiah 40:3). This camelhair-clad, bug-eating voice was not always charming. **"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"** (Matthew 3:7). He pointed people to their sin and called them to repentance.

But John's voice also pointed elsewhere. **"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"** (John 1:29). He pointed people to their Savior—the only one who could change hearts, forgive sins, and transform lives.

The Church emulates John in many arenas calling wrong things wrong, calling people to repentance, and pointing them to Jesus. The notable exception is the life arena. Fear drives this silence—fear of controversy, of offending, of becoming political. Charmer Satan loves this silence. It gives him another charmingly persuasive line, "You never hear anything about it in church do you?"

A woman with an abortion in her past wrote to us at the Life Center. "My heart's cry is to be a flashing neon sign to those who will listen, tell them of how the devil would like to steal from them. I want to give the devil a bad day! We must find a way to care for other hurting women who have been abused in this manner. Do what you can. Do all you

can. The people must hear."

Yes, the people must hear the voice of the Church. We have the most powerful and positive life-affirming message in the universe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our voice speaks of the fundamental value our Triune God gives to life. The Father creates human life intimately forming us with His hands. The Son redeemed human life, paying the price for our sins through His death on the cross. The Holy Spirit desires to call every human life into an eternal relationship with Him through holy Baptism.

From this foundation the Church's voice calls wrong things wrong. That which devalues and destroys human life is more than a social or moral problem. It assaults the Author, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of life. The voice of the Church does not uphold the value of human life because we live in a society that doesn't, but because we serve a God who does. We call wrong things wrong because they run contrary to the will of God for His people. We call wrong things wrong so people will recognize the charms of Satan and turn to the Lord of Life, not the god of death.

From our Trinitarian foundation, the Church's voice tells what God, in Jesus Christ, has done about wrong things. Failing to connect this Good News to the life issues can be spiritually harmful, for sitting next to that person in the pew who needs to hear that abortion is wrong, may be someone who was charmed into thinking it was right but now knows in her burdened heart just how wrong it was. She needs to hear the voice of the objective, unconditional, and complete forgiveness given in Jesus. Those who have sinned against life in particular need to hear it spoken directly to their sin. Otherwise the charmer's

voice sneaks in. “Forgiveness for what you have done? You never hear anything about it in church do you?”

Yes, the Church needs to be a voice in the life arena—unyielding but loving, condemning sins against life and consoling those who have sinned against life, calling to repentance and pointing to Jesus. Our pastors have what it takes to be this voice, our theology which articulates the Gospel so well. LFL seeks to equip pastors to be that voice and make the connection between the truth and grace of Jesus and the life issues.

Being the Voice

But those who hear this voice also need to BE this voice. The voice of the Gospel moves us into Gospel-motivated action. You can be a voice of *prayer* praying for our Church, our country, hurting people. You can be a voice of *service* reaching out to those who need an encouraging word, a helping hand, a comforting presence. You can be a voice of *education* helping others understand how God’s Word of truth and grace connects to the life issues. You can be a voice of *witness* pointing people to the true source of rescue. You can be an *activist* voice participating in Life Chains, Marches for Life, and prayer vigils. You can be a *political* voice practicing Christian citizenship and bringing your influence to bear through the political process.

To counter the “voice of charmers charming,” LFL will continue to “equip Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.” The more Lutheran pastors, educators, congregations, and schools proclaim that voice and put that voice into action, the closer we will come to LFL’s vision, “Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given sanctity of human life and influencing society to do the same.”

How to Manage Your Money by the Book

by Kay L. Meyer
Director of Development



Did you know that more than 2350 Bible verses deal with money or possessions in the Bible? Or that sixteen of Jesus parables talk about money or possessions? Jesus is concerned about how we handle our money. And, of course, handling money wisely is good stewardship.

Recently I read *How to Run Your Business by the Book* by Dave Anderson. It’s a great book with many excellent suggestions for Christians. One chapter is entitled *How to Manage Your Money by the Book*. The following summary is taken from this chapter. I hope these words encourage you, as they did me, to know God’s Word and learn to manage our possessions wisely.

Mr. Anderson, explains that money can be a competitor with God. We can make money our god. Yet, in Deuteronomy 8:18 we are told that the Lord gives us the power to get wealth.

God understands that money can corrupt us. Christians must be careful that once they obtain wealth they don’t forget about the Lord or not use the wealth that he gave them for good work in His Kingdom. Use your money wisely.

The chapter had many Bible verses, including the following:

“No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Luke 16:13).

“One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want” Proverbs 11:24.

“The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6)

Jesus watches your giving habits, according to the author. He watched the widow who gave all that she had and he watches you today. This reminds us that giving to God should be a priority in our lives. We should not give what is left over after everything else is paid. So when you tithe—tithing is usually defined as giving 10 percent of all your increase—remember you are doing it because of your love of the Lord.

“Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10)

Remember that God doesn't need your money. Rather He is concerned with the condition of your heart. Many Christians, who say they trust God, won't trust Him with their finances. Are you trusting God with your possessions? If not, prayerfully ask for God's forgiveness and begin doing so today.

If you're like me, you learned about God's word and our possessions as you read the above Bible verses. So, how are you using your money? I pray you are promoting and supporting organiza-

tions like Lutherans For Life, proclaiming the Lord of Life to those who don't yet know Him, and using the gifts God has bestowed upon you to proclaim His Word, promote Life, and transform lives.

Regardless of what you say is most important to you in life, how you use your money gives you away.

In other money matters, I recently read about possible rate increases at the post office on Foxnews.com.

With the United States Postal Service looking for ways to downsize because of losses, some nonprofits that rely on direct mail for support could become a new kind of charity case.

Legislation to restructure the money-losing Post Office includes a provision that would

eliminate reduced postage rates for non-profit mail. Non-profits currently receive a 40 percent discount on bulk mailings. If this change is put into law, this could cripple many non-profit organizations.

You can voice your concern about this bill by contacting Rep. Darrell Issa. The Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers is rallying its members to contact Issa and other lawmakers to make clear their opposition to this bill. We invite Lutherans For Life supporters to also let lawmakers know of their concerns for Lutheran non-profit organizations like Lutherans For Life.



Plans and Dreams for LFL



by George Munyon
Director of Operations

Wow, I can't believe it's been nearly a year since we started a prayerful and concentrated effort to write a comprehensive strategic plan for Lutherans For Life.

We categorized the plan into the areas of Equipping, LFL National Conference, Generations for Life, Teaching for Life®, Renewal for Life®, Resources to Equip (property, products, people), and Funding to Equip.

In carrying out the plan, there have been ups and downs, blessings and roadblocks, successes and setbacks. Yet, so much has been completed with the help of our ever-faithful God.

As of this writing, the plan has 215 action steps and 100 have been completed. Another 14 are ready to be implemented but are on hold due to the lack of financing.

Equipping: We are working hard to increase the number of speaking engagements by 50 percent by 2012. Dr. Lamb has been very busy going out and speaking whenever and wherever the Lord opens doors. We have worked on reaching more people through our website toward the goal of increasing visits by 33 percent by 2012. (Please visit www.lutheransforlife.org—don't forget to check out our online store and special sales!) We are working with Concordia Publishing House to increase the sale of our materials by 50 percent by December 2012.

LFL National Conference: We are working to increase attendance at the

2012 conference. (See pages 26-27 to read about our 2011 conference!)

Generations for Life (GFL): This is an area that has had many roadblocks. The bulk of the GFL team had to resign due to a number of personal issues. We are working hard to assemble a new GFL team and make adjustments to this part of the strategic plan to get back on track. Getting the younger generation involved in LFL and the life issues is critical to the success and even the survival of LFL.

Teaching for Life® (TFL): We are not where we would like to be with expanding TFL. Progress has been made, but we are behind. For Dr. Lamb, finding time to devote to this has been difficult. As he increases speaking engagements, it takes time from TFL. We are regrouping and looking at how we can address this issue.

Renewal for Life® (RFL): This has been the area where we have achieved the most success. We have completed 19 of 28 action steps from the original strategic plan. We completed a training pilot project and are making revisions and improvements based on the results of the pilot. We have also added our first RFL Regional Director—Jean Amundson of Texas.

Resources to Equip: This includes the areas of property, products, and people. As for property, we are researching the best way to utilize our current facility. We want to be good stewards—and that includes deciding if our current property is the best fit for LFL now and into the future.

Products: We are introducing new materials into our inventory—including new Spanish resources.

People: Our plan calls for the selection and hiring of an assistant executive

director no later than June 2012. The goal is to free up Dr. Lamb's time and provide the help needed to get back on track on areas like TFL expansion.

Funding to Equip: This is the most important part. If we do not have the funds, the strategic plan cannot be successful. We are working to expand our donor base, apply for more grants, do more fundraising events, and encourage our donors to increase giving. We are not just asking donors to increase their giving; we want to lead by example in the increase of giving. The Life Team is committed to increasing our personal giving to LFL in 2011. Through June we are at 80 percent of our entire giving in 2010. We expect to exceed our total 2010 giving by the end of this month.

It's not the amount that is important, it's the regular giving. I think of a donor who faithfully sends a card with quarters taped to it. What a blessing.

What is your passion? Is it to see Dr. Lamb out speaking more? Is it to see more new LFL materials and DVDs available? Is it to see our website become even better? Perhaps seeing people in need receiving help to attend our conference? Maybe you want to see more young people become involved in the life issues? Would you like to see the TFL school curriculum expanded? Or TFL confirmation expansion? Perhaps life issues taught in youth and adult bible studies? Or VBS? Or Sunday school? Does seeing RFL in more congregations with Life Advocates have a place in your heart?

All of these areas are covered in our strategic plan. With God's blessings, and through your giving and your prayers, all these things will become a reality.

Many Companies Match Employees Gifts

Thousands of companies, both large and small, will match donations made by their employees to non-profit organizations.

The following are a few of the thousands of companies that will match funds for their employees.

Boeing Company, Budget Rent A Car, Dow Jones, Hallmark Cards, Home Depot, IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Keebler Company, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Allstate Insurance, American Express, AT&T, Bankers Life & Casualty, Charles Schwab, Conoco Phillips, Emerson Electric, Goodyear Tire, H&R Block, Lowes, Delta Air Lines, Enterprise Rent a Car, Farmers Group, John Hancock, J P Morgan Chase.

If you work for a company, ask if they will match donations to non-profits. Then include their special form when you send in your donation. LFL will verify the donation and return the form to the company.

What is the Purpose of the Church?

by Jerilyn Richard
Director of RFL



“[Christ], in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21 NKJV).

Every believer has a different need and looks for specific criteria within a congregation. This is one reason there are so many different denominations today. The Church is God’s dwelling place on earth. As believers we have high expectations for how our congregations should function. We so often expect perfection in a place filled with imperfect people. How do we bridge the gap from our expectation and our human sinfulness?



We are each called in a different way to serve the Lord within the Church, and deciphering what that calling is can be a challenge. Diversity in the Church can make our mission that much more difficult. We see this so often in the Church when it comes to the life issues. Not everyone in our congregation is “fitted together” with us on this issue. It is God’s desire for His Church to create unity in Him, so we can carry out the mission set before us.

Addressing the life issues can seem like a daunting task, especially when addressing them alone. We understand the challenge set before us, which is the reason Renewal For Life exists. We want to offer help to pastors and life advocates,

and when possible, life teams. We have worked with a number of congregations to help them implement the life issues in their church, and what we have found is that each congregation is unique. The mission is the same, but how this mission is executed, varies from church to church. Our mission is to “Equip congregations to be Gospel-motivated, enthusiastic, ongoing Voices For Life!”

One way for us here at LFL to do that is by offering Gospel-focused mentoring and training. We are excited to partner with Churches for Life (CFL) to help us provide that training for RFL congregations.

Here are the basics about Churches for Life: CFL specializes in equipping Life Teams and their leaders for long-term, Gospel-driven, fruitful ministry; CFL values personal relationships and recognizes that ministry flows

Renewal For Life

from them.”

Our desire for your congregation is to work with you and CFL to build the foundation in your church that is needed to serve the Lord of life to the fullest extent. For more information on how you can become involved in your congregation, please call the Life Center.



LIFE SUNDAY 2012

Watch for the Life Sunday 2012 flyer in the next issue of *LifeDate*!

Trust God! Choose Life!

“Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.” Deuteronomy 30:19b

Bulletin Insert

Sermons

Bible Study

Children's Message

Just For Kids Insert

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.



Lutherans For Life does not receive financial support from any church body. 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—and let others know about this unique opportunity! **The CFC identification number for LFL is 11508.**

Give online:

www.lutheransforlife.org

Automatic Bank Drafts:

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. Consider including LFL in your will.

Online Shopping Rebate Program:

Check out iGive.com at the LFL web site.

Adopted in Christ – LFL National Conference

Adopted in Christ was the theme as nearly 200 Lutherans gathered, August 5-6, from across the United States—with special guests from Australia—for the national conference of Lutherans For Life in Irving, Texas.

Dr. Russell D. Moore, author of *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families*, said in his Friday night keynote address, “If we as pro-life people can understand that



the issue of orphan care—whether that’s advocating for unborn orphans, or advocating for born orphans in the United States or around the world—is not simply stopping bad things from happening to children ... Instead, there is also a deeper issue here, which is that our advocacy for women and children who are under assault by forces so dark and evil that we cannot even contemplate it, can teach us and show us how to be the Church, how to embrace the Gospel, how to live in the unity of the Spirit—and we see something of what this looks like by what the Spirit is doing in the life of Joseph ...

“The Scripture says that when someone is adopted into the family of God, he or she is not some other kind of child. This person is now seated at the table with all the relationship to the Father ... with all of the inheritance that is received in Jesus Christ. We see that first

in the life of our Lord Himself when Joseph really and truly becomes His father through adoption. When we care for orphans, through adoption and foster care, and through other kinds of ministries to orphans, when we advocate for children whose lives are in jeopardy through abortion and through other ways, what we are recognizing is that we are doing so as ex-orphans ourselves who have been rescued through the Gospel. And we are also recognizing that when a child is adopted into a family there is a real family formed there. Our entire Gospel is at stake in that recognition because there is no such thing as an ‘adopted child,’ only children who were adopted. Adopted in the New Testament is a past-tense verb, not an adjective.”

Friday also featured a concert by singer/songwriter Heather Ruesch. Heather’s “Bella” story can found be at the 2011 conference page at the www.lutheransforlife.org.

Saturday morning included the showing of the award-winning film, *Bella*, followed by a plenary session

with Dr. Kurt Senske on *The Lessons of “Bella” – Affirming Life Via Our Own Personal Calling*.

Workshops, led by Jean Amundson with a panel of family members, and Jeannette Clausen, on *Adoption: Not First Choice, but a Choice of Love*, focused on different aspects of adoption. Col. John Eidsome discussed *Preachers and Politics: What Does the IRS Allow?* Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb explored *In Vitro*



ro Fertilization—Promise or Peril? And Dr. Kurt Senske lead a workshop on *A Picture of Possibilities—Strategies to Live Out Our Calling*.

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, LFL executive director, in his opening worship sermon, focused on the conference theme, based on Galatians 4:4-5. “Adopted in Christ—it is this relationship of having a God we can call Father, that moves us to be obedient to our Father who is God. Adopted in Christ—it is this relationship of having a God we can call Father that moves us not to just be against what our culture of death is for, but to be for what our Father who is God is for. That’s what is being expressed in LFL’s mission statement, ‘Equipping Lutherans to be **Gospel-motivated** voices For Life’ ... The relationship that God, who is our Father, established in Christ through adoption motivates us to be bold voices in the life arena. Neither our successes nor failures as His voices For Life have anything to do with attaining or maintaining our relationship with God as His children. He has taken care of that. We live in the midst of our victories in the For Life arena, in the midst of our defeats, in the midst of our frustrations assured of His love, His forgiveness, and eternal life ... God adopted you in Christ. You have a God who is your father. That is the assurance of His love for you.”

The 2012 Lutherans For Life National Conference has been set for August 3-4 at the Eaglewood Resort and Spa, Itasca, Illinois (Chicago area), under the theme **Equipping the Saints For Life**.

You can order audio CDs of the 2011 conference! Go to www.lutheransforlife.org/conference/2011-national-conference/ to download the form. The CDs are available exclusively through Blueprint Tapes, Clinton, Indiana: www.blueprinttapes.com.



(Above) Children’s message time; Heather Ruesch shares her music; conference friends Cheyenna Briggs and Alex Highby relaxing in the hotel pool; Joy and Rev. Norman Wurst, from Australia, attending their first US LFL conference. (Pastor Wurst jokes that he is the “wurst” pastor in Australia!)

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*.

October 2 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Paul states a fundamental source of value and motivation, “Christ Jesus has made me his own” (Philippians 3:12b). Having already paid the price for their salvation, Jesus desires to make every human being His own. What value this gives to life! What motivation this gives to live!

October 9 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost – Christ’s people need to beware of the cultural influence that says death is our friend, a source of help and hope. Death is our enemy and should be treated as such. Our only source of help and hope is Jesus who has “swallow[ed] up death forever” (Isaiah 25:8a).

October 16 – Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – We follow our Lord’s admonition to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s” (Matthew 22:21b). But life does not belong to “Caesar.” Life belongs to God. As citizens of God’s kingdom in Christ, we are compelled to strive for change in a government that sanctions the destruction of innocent human life.

October 23 – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – The second greatest thing a human being can do is to love his neighbor (Matthew 22:39). Remember, those

not yet born are neighbors too.

October 30 – Reformation Sunday – The objective declaration of righteousness that comes through faith (Romans 3:19-28) offers a powerful truth that can be freeing to those who have sinned against life. It does not depend upon seeing ourselves as righteous or feeling righteous. It depends upon the already accomplished work of Jesus on the cross.

November 6 – All Saints Sunday – Who would claim as his children reprobate and rebellious renegades? God did! That’s

the kind of love He has (1 John 3:1). Not only so, but He also declares us holy children, saints washed in the blood of Jesus splashed upon us in the waters of holy Baptism. Declared like Him now and destined to be like Him when He returns (3:2). Living as saints on our way to sainthood! What a hope-filled way to live!

November 13 – Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost – “The

LORD will not do good, nor will he do ill” (Zephaniah 1:12b). This reflects the complacent, lukewarm attitude found among some of God’s people today. But God’s wrath over sin is not something to be complacent about. He will return in judgment. We who “are not of the night or of the darkness” (1 Thessalonians 5:5b) must not tolerate the deeds of darkness, but expose them. At the same time, we point to the hope of salvation we have in our Lord Jesus Christ (5:9).

November 20 – Twenty-third Sunday



after Pentecost – Perhaps we could include in the “least of these” (Matthew 25:40) those our society so often labels “better off dead”—tiny embryos, unborn children, the frail elderly, people with severe disabilities.

November 27 – First Sunday in Advent – We have a Father Potter! We are the work of His hands (Isaiah 64:8). An ordinary potter would discard vessels that became flawed. Our Father Potter loved the work of His hands so much He became a vessel Himself—a flawless one—in order to redeem the work of His hands. Imagine, He who could “rend the heavens and come down” (64:1), instead came down in the womb of a virgin! What value this gives to the work of His hands.

December 4 – Second Sunday in Advent – In the prophecy concerning John the Baptist, God says, “Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned ...” (Isaiah 40:2a). “Speak tenderly” is literally, “speak to the heart.” No other

message can speak to matters that burdened the heart like the Good News of the coming Messiah.

December 11 – Third Sunday in Advent – We have a God who can sanctify us completely and keep our “spirit and soul and body” blameless (1 Thessalonians 5: 23). Think about the impact of this message upon those harboring “secret sins,” like the sin of abuse or abortion. They need to hear it applied to them.

December 18 – Fourth Sunday in Advent – What can possibly give more value to human life at the moment of conception than the words of the angel to Mary, “And behold you will conceive in your womb ...” Our Savior became a single-cell human being as part of the price for our redemption.

December 25 – Christmas Day – “[T]he goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared” (Titus 3:4). And look, it’s a baby!



Here’s how you can keep life issues before your congregation!



Life News bulletin inserts help keep your congregation informed on life issues every month! Order at www.cph.org or call 800.325.3040.

Truly For Life

by Diane E. Schroeder



I work at a CareNet pregnancy resource center in the Chicago area. Within the four Illinois counties we service, 5,000 abortions take place every year. Scared, afraid, and desperate pregnant women come into CareNet looking for help, guidance, and unconditional love. Many are young with no support and afraid to tell their parents about their pregnancy. Abortion seems logical, easy, and a way out of their desperate situation. For many women, CareNet is the last stop before the abortion clinic. Unfortunately, many of these women are Christian. The following is a letter written by one of our CareNet counselors to an evangelical pastor of a large church:



“At my work we provide pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, material goods, post-abortion Bible studies and abstinence education in high schools. My job is to basically be a friend and an advocate for any women in a crisis pregnancy. Unfortunately, my job is often terribly heartbreaking. Many of my clients choose to abort and in all trimesters. Many of my clients have had previous abortions and are very broken over them. It’s not uncommon for me to hear things like, ‘I had an abortion five years ago and I think about it every day and I will for the rest of my life.’ I’m not shocked anymore when a client tells me they have contemplated suicide due to the guilt

they feel. A large number of the men and women I meet with are Christians who come from church-going families and many times it is those clients’ parents who pressured them to abort. I wonder how churches could have better prepared them to make a biblical decision when faced with an unplanned pregnancy. I have often thought, if we really believe that the unborn are dying and men and women are being wounded, why is it that I am 22 and I have never heard a sermon about the value of the unborn? I believe the Bible has a lot of truth about the unborn and how we should protect and value them. I think Christianity is all about making broken lives whole and there are a lot of broken families and people broken by abortion. I just want to ask you what you think is the best way for the church to address the value of the unborn and the subject of abortion to make a difference?”

If we as the Church were doing a better job equipping our people to make God-pleasing decisions in difficult circumstances, these young, pregnant Christian women would not be knocking at CareNet’s door. If we as the Church were reaching out with truth and compassion to the young women and men in our midst who are caught in an unplanned pregnancy these desperate women would not be sitting in our counselor rooms.

Abortion is a horrible act that impacts Christian women and men severely and our people need to be warned to stay away from it. At the same time we have

to show “love in action” and tell our young people that we as fellow sinners are here to help them. The fact is that when we as the Church fail to speak the truth and offer compassion, we push our young men and women to the abortion clinic.

Our job as the Church and For Life Christians is to make sure that our Lutheran men and women never need to walk into a CareNet. It’s not that they will never make mistakes because we all do, but they need to know that, for them, abortion is never an option. We can make such a difference in our own church and community.

Lutherans For Life exists to equip our pastors, lay people, teachers, and professional church workers to handle unpleasant life situations, whether pregnancy, disease, suffering, or end-of-life issues. Our people need to know there is a way to handle these difficult situations that is pleasing to God. If our people do not hear this message of truth and compassion from their church, they are vulnerable to the voice of the culture that says death is the answer to life’s unpleasant situations. When we choose to handle these situations with truth and compassion, we become voices for life. So don’t become frustrated because it seems as if our task is overwhelming. We can be Voices for Life in a thousand little ways.

What does it say to our neighbor when in our own families we care for our elderly, become foster parents, adopt children, care for the handicapped, or carry through with an unplanned pregnancy? What does it say to our community when in our churches we care and pray for each other, offering families respite care, visit nursing homes, or provide for the needs of pregnant women? It says that we are truly For Life because we are living it.



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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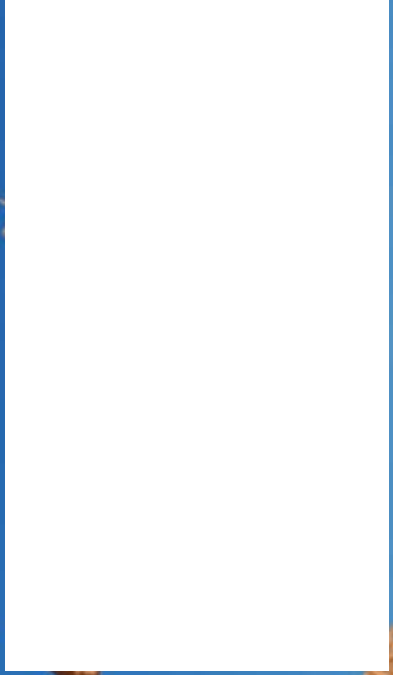


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