

# LifeDate

Spring 2014



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



## **Strong and Courageous – For Life!**

**Being “strong and very courageous” (Joshua 1:9b)  
For Life even in the midst of a culture of death.**

**Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!**

page 3

**From the Executive Director**  
Prepositions for Courage

pages 4-7

**Abortion/Post-Abortion/  
Alternatives**

Randall K. O'Bannon, Ph.D. and Dave  
Andrusko: Abortions Top 56 Million  
Since *Roe v. Wade*

Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb: Brave or  
Courageous?

pages 8-9

**End-of-Life**

Lori Trinche: A Journey Home

pages 10-13

**Family Living**

Linda D. Bartlett: Men and Women,  
Worship and Life

Ryan C. MacPherson: The Courage to  
Build a Compassionate Home

page 14

**World News**

pages 15-17

**Lutherans For Life Resources**

page 18-19

**Life Thoughts in the Church Year**

pages 20-28

**Spotlight on Lutherans For Life**

2013 Memorials and Honorariums;  
Abundant Life Giving Society; Life  
Legacy Society

Laura Davis: Y4Life in Washington,  
D.C. – An Update

Hilary Murray: A Newfound Awareness

Jim Schroeder: A Thank Offering to the  
Lord

Lori Trinche: God at Work in Life Teams  
and Chapters

Portals of Prayer

Thrivent

Upcoming Retirement

Thank You, Kay

No Offense Intended

pages 29-31

**From the President**

A New President for LFL

Diane E. Schroeder: Seasons and  
Transitions

Lynette Auch: Whom Shall I Fear?



# Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life.

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## Prepositions for Courage

by James I. Lamb



**“With”** is good, as in Moses’ words to Joshua, **“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes *with* you”** (Deuteronomy 31:6; emphasis added). But couple *with* with *before*, make God the antecedent, and you have a divine, prepositional combination bound to give courage as in, **“It is the LORD who goes *before* you. He will be *with* you; he will not leave you or forsake you”** (31:8; emphasis added).

“With” is good and the preposition with which we most identify. We say frequently, “The Lord be with you.” What strength and courage it gave Joshua to know that the LORD God Almighty walked with him as he entered the promise land to face enemies in fortified cities. What strength and courage for us to know that the same almighty God walks with us as we face the “enemies” in our lives.

“With” is good, but with “before” it’s even better! God gave Joshua strength and courage by promising to go before him. God would face the enemy before Joshua did. Rahab’s words testify to God’s “before” work. **“I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you”** (Joshua 2:9).

“With” is good, but with “before” it’s even better. Facing surgery? The Lord goes before you. Wondering about those tests? The Lord goes before you. Unplanned pregnancy? The Lord goes before you. Tough decisions about grandpa’s treatment? The Lord goes before you. Of

course, we do not have a Rahab to assure us it’s true. So how do we know? It sure doesn’t seem like it sometimes.

“With” is good, but knowing that the Lord went before us is our assurance of strength and courage. God faced our true enemies before we did. He sent Jesus to go before us and face Satan and sin and death. Now, in the name of Jesus, these “melt away”—Satan defeated, sin forgiven, death swallowed up in victory! Unlike Joshua who moved forward assured that victory *would be* won, we move forward with strength and courage assured that victory *has been* won.

“With” is good, but with “before” it’s even better! This is especially encouraging for sometimes weary, life-affirming Christians. The battle seems so long fought and the enemy so entrenched. Logic, reason, and science have been abandoned for talking points, political correctness, and myths. In many churches the Truth of God has been abandoned or viewed as relative or changed to suit and salve the hearer. So let me say it again:

“With” is good, but with “before” it is even better! Be strong and courageous, the Lord is with you. Be strong and courageous, the Lord went before you before you were you. Be strong and courageous, the Lord goes before you everyday. His For Life work through you becomes clearer every day. Hearts and minds are changed. Our life-affirming younger generation inspires us all. More pastors connect the Gospel to the life issues. More educators teach our children to value every life. We have the most powerful and positive For Life message in the universe and nothing can stand against it! Be strong and courageous!

*Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb is the executive director of Lutherans For Life.*

## Abortions Top 56 Million Since *Roe v. Wade*

by Randall K. O'Bannon, Ph.D.  
and Dave Andrusko

Given the trends seen in recent national reports, National Right to Life (NRL) now believes that there have been over 56 million abortions since 1973.

One critical piece of evidence in that calculation arrived in November of 2013, when the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported its latest national figures. It was important to find out whether the drop in abortions for 2009 seen by the CDC—4.6 percent—would continue in 2010. If it dropped again, we'd have some confidence that the 2009 figure wasn't just some odd statistical aberration, that there really was some real and significant decline. It did.

As reported in *NRL News Today* (12/3/13), abortions for 2010 declined another 3.1 percent, according to the CDC.

We compare and confirm those trends with data from the Guttmacher Institute, the former special research affiliate of Planned Parenthood which publishes its own private study. Guttmacher, which surveys abortion clinics, hospitals, and private practice physicians directly, has higher and what are widely thought to be more reliable abortion numbers.

In early February, Guttmacher reported there were 1.06 million abortions in 2011. Not only had the number of abortions gone down, so, too, did the abortion rate and the abortion ratio.

The CDC publishes national totals of its own. However they have been missing data from several states, including the nation's most populous, California, since 1998, so their recent totals leave out hundreds of thousands of abortions. It creates a bit of a conundrum, because the new CDC data showing the trend doesn't really give a complete national count, while better national annual tally, from Guttmacher, is years out of date. Under the circumstances, the best one can do is to apply the trend from one to the total from the other and extrapolate. It's not ideal, but it allows you to produce a justifiable ballpark estimate.

Thus the 56 million+ figure comes from the mathematical application of the assumption that the Guttmacher numbers will roughly reflect the same declining percentage in the number of abortions that the CDC found.

### Long Term Trends Encouraging

The long-term trend is fewer abortions, and the number is down significantly from 1990 when the country saw 1.6 million abortions a year. As one measure of the impact your work has had, if the number of abortions had remained at 1.6 million, more than seven MILLION more babies would have died.

The publication of data from the CDC last November is good reason to believe there is a new major downward trend. The drop of 3.1 percent for 2010 was not as large as the 4.6 percent drop for 2009, but it is still considerable and the arrows are pointing in the same direction.

We obviously can't know in advance whether the numbers Guttmacher will

Since 1973:  
Over

56,662,169

abortions  
in the  
United States



publish later this year will show the same drop off. However, if those same percentages of decline CDC found were applied to the number Guttmacher reported for 2008, the number of abortions for 2009 would become 1,156,630. Likewise, for 2010 the number of abortions would be 1,120,775.

So far, so good.

If one assumes that the 1,120,775 number held constant from 2011 to 2013, the total number of abortions would be 54,972,980.

But Guttmacher concedes that it might undercount the number by three percent. Add that three percent and it yields a total of 56,662,169 abortions since 1973.

Despite the seeming precision, this is not an exact number. No such number is possible. There will always be missed abortions, missed abortionists. Adjustments, however careful, will always be imprecise.

But given the data we have, we feel it is reasonable to assume that we have now seen at least 56 million lives lost since Roe and are looking at topping 57 million sometime in the coming year.

We will, of course, revise our numbers accordingly when Guttmacher publishes figures from its latest survey. But unless the trajectory of those numbers wildly diverges from trends recently reported by the CDC, we expect things to remain within that 56 to 57 million range.

Of course, we all know that we are talking about more than just numbers or statistics. The blood of more than 56 million aborted babies represents an enormous stain on our national conscience

and a heavy burden on our hearts.

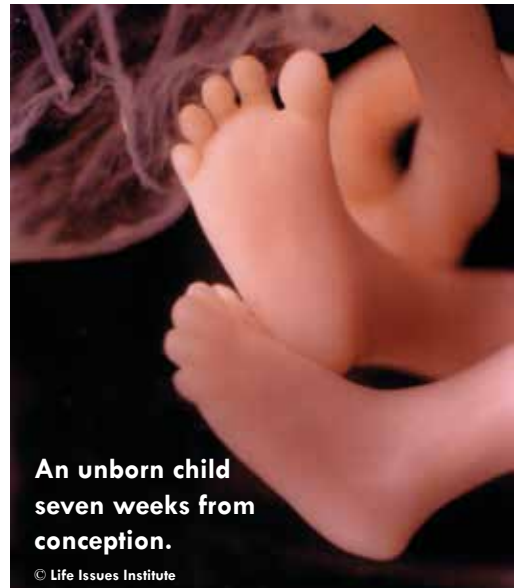
But these numbers also show us that our efforts have not been in vain. As noted above, if our nation had continued at the rate of 1.6 million abortions a year we saw in 1990, our cumulative total would have been approaching 64 million by now.

That would translate into approximately seven million more babies alive today than would have otherwise been the case. That is the equivalent to the number of abortions performed over a span of six to seven years—living human beings alive today because of you!

Of course the movement has a long way to go to return full legal protection to unborn children. But never underestimate the importance of what you, grassroots pro-life America, are doing.

What you do makes a real difference.

*Randall O'Bannon, Ph.D., is the director of education and research for the National Right to Life Committee. Dave Andrusko is the editor of National Right to Life News Today. Used by permission.*



**Each year:  
Over**

**1,120,775**

**abortions  
in the  
United States**

## Brave or Courageous?

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



He was not brave. “I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me” (Habakkuk 3:16a). But he did show courage. “Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us” (3:16b).

At the risk of offending English language scholars who know more than I do, I have always seen a difference between being brave and showing courage. I call upon Merriam-Webster for support. Brave is “feeling or showing no fear.” Courage is “the ability to do something that you know is difficult or dangerous.”

The seasoned and fearless captain *bravely* leaves the bunker, rallies his troops, and leads the charge. The soldiers, trembling in fear at what they know is ahead, *courageously* follow.

Habakkuk knew what was coming. God would send the Chaldeans to invade and punish His people (1:5-11). When Habakkuk complained about God using the wicked to swallow up those more righteous than they (1:12-17), God told him not to worry, the Chal-

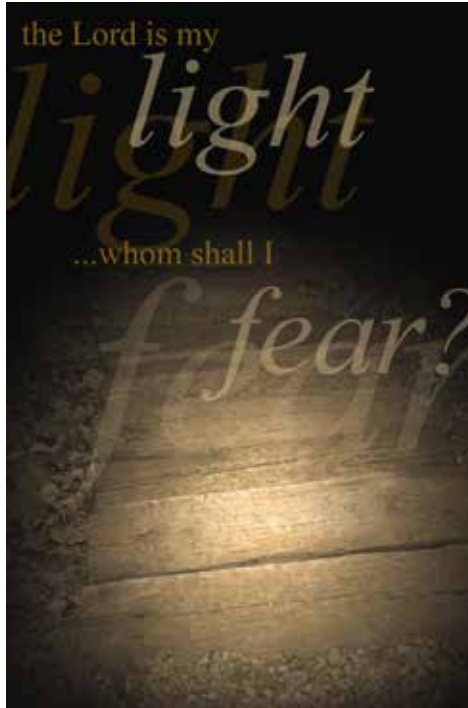
deans would get theirs too (2:6-20). The bottom line, however, was that war and devastation would come upon the land of Israel. Trembling in fear, Habakkuk courageously utters what are to me some of the most beautiful words in Scripture.

“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer’s; he makes me tread on my high places” (3:17-19).

Habakkuk anticipates complete desolation and that everything important for sustaining the life of Israel would be gone—no figs, grapes, olives, grain, sheep, or cattle. Then he speaks that grand conjunction of faith, “yet.” His

joy does not come from circumstances but from the God of his salvation. He finds strength, not in his own fearful and weak body, but in the Lord. His courage to persevere, to “tread on my high places,” flows from his God.

We are not called to be strong and *brave* For Life. We are called to be strong and *courageous* For Life. We are not called to be fearless but faithful. Our enemy, death, is as ruthless and merciless as the Chaldeans. The champions of



death as a solution to the problems of life are relentless and legionary. And even though it seems sometimes that all may be lost and hopeless, YET, we rejoice in God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of life. We find our strength in Him as we live in the victory over death He has won and given to us (1 Corinthians 15:57). Even though we may be fearful, we receive courage from Him to tread on our “high places” and boldly speak up for and defend His gift of life. We do so in the face of misunderstanding, opposition, and anger coming sometimes from fellow Christians, members of our congregations, or members of our own families.

I received a note recently from one of our LFL leaders who had made a presentation on Life Sunday. After the service, a woman she did not know angrily confronted her pointing her finger in the leader’s face and railing about how mad she was and saying that not all women should have to have babies because of one mistake. The angry outburst lasted a couple of minutes, and then the woman turned and left not allowing any response. Typical of the compassion of LFLers, our leader wrote, “I was praying all the time she was speaking. She was obviously speaking from a place of hurt and anger from a personal experience or the experience of a loved one. This lady needs our prayers.”

This time of year I receive notes and phone calls from pastors who experience similar outbursts from members after a Life Sunday message. Members demand such a sermon never be preached again. They threaten to stop giving, go to another church, or never set foot in church again. No one, including pastors, likes such angry criticism. Many of you reading this have your own stories.

That’s why I pray Habakkuk’s mes-

sage will encourage all who take a stand For Life to be courageous in spite of their fears. We have the message, God’s message, that so many need to hear. There is so much fear that needs to be addressed. The pregnant teen fears what her parents might think. Her parents fear what others might think. An unplanned pregnancy causes fear about future plans. Post-abortive women and men fear others will find out. They fear God will never forgive. The chronically and terminally ill fear pain and suffering. Such fears are real and understandable. It can seem like all that gives meaning to life is gone. The temptation is great to listen to the world’s offer of death as a solution to so many of these fears. We offer the **“God of my salvation.”**

I remember getting a letter from a woman with an abortion in her past. She had received forgiveness and healing in Christ and pleaded that we do all we could to get this message out to others. She wrote, “God doesn’t fall off His throne when you have a problem. He’s there! His power is never weakened.” No matter how desolate things may seem, God remains on His throne. He rules, not with law and judgment, but with mercy and grace. We see this demonstrated, not in our circumstances, but in the cross. Helping those caught up in difficult situations see beyond their fears and find courage in the ever-present, ever-loving, and all-powerful Savior is the ultimate aim of LFL.

The next time you face some “high places” in your life and it seems like all is hopeless, you need not be brave and fearless. Remember the prophet with the funny name and the grand conjunction of faith, “Yet.” Rejoice and trust in the God of your salvation. Keep going in His strength with “feet like the deer.” That’s courage!

## A Journey Home

by Lori Tranche



It has been about three months since my return to Chicagoland. The time has been filled with many blessings as I continue to serve faithfully as your Mission and Ministry Coordinator and as part of a personal journey on end-of-life issues with two dear friends.

One passed into the arms of Jesus the week before Thanksgiving and the other the week before Christmas—both after long battles with cancer. It was a blessing to experience their strong witness of faith and the firm foundation that faith lays for calming doubts and freeing us from the fear of death. We know we have the gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ—and that is indeed good news!

In mid-November, my 96-year-old mom was hospitalized with severe pneumonia and diagnosed with congestive heart failure. Many prayers poured out. The Lord has decided it is not time to take her home and so she and we as a family journey together through the caregiving and receiving process, navigating the myriad of hospital and nursing center rules and paperwork, setting a plan for her care needs, and finding her a new home.

What a journey of both blessing and grief: Blessing in the closeness and comfort of our Savior as the Great Physician; grief in the loss of independence in her

daily tasks we so take for granted in our youth and in losing the comfort of home when home is no longer a safe place to live.

It has been a journey walking through hospital demands for DNRs, and waiting for hours for information that is only to be released to those with a Power of Attorney. How impersonal it has all seemed at many times, almost like those giving care no longer hear the calls for help and comfort and would rather just medicate the person away to a quick release from this life. How challenging it can be for caregivers when they are working full time and are called upon to care for a loved one full time. Any distance that separates

us makes the loved one seem as if a million miles away.

The journey has been a blessing in asking and receiving help from others. We as Lutheran Christians are often reluctant to do so. We are great helpers, but not so great



at times in receiving help when we need it. How beautiful it is when we can surrender and accept the help of our pastor or church family when offered a meal, a visit, a phone call, or helpful information on caregiver support groups or long-term care options. It has also been a personal eye-opener for me into the lonely and lost lives in our hospitals, rehab centers, and nursing homes—so many people alone and disconnected from family, church, and, it can seem at times, Jesus. It brings to mind 2 Corinthians 1-3:4: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be**



able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

What a blessing when we can be the hands and feet of Jesus to our loved ones and those who walk through similar circumstances. What an opportunity to share the Good News of Jesus in places often filled with darkness, sadness, and loss. What an opportunity to serve as ambassadors for Christ and to help encourage others through the journey. For me, this has been a time to become well-acquainted with advance directives and resources for obtaining care and to share this information with others. I did this recently in a *Hot Topics* series that addressed end-of-life issues and hospice. I also had the opportunity to speak at an elder care conference designed to give pastors, lay leaders, and family, both spiritual truths in living with dying, and practical resources to take with on the journey.

The Lord never wastes our sorrows. In each trial as a caregiver, I am called to give away a little more of myself, following Jesus’ example, and to be a blessing to others. Deuteronomy 31:6 reminds us to, “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

If you walk this journey, know you are not alone. LFL has many wonderful resources to help—and here are a few more:

**Advance Directives and Power of Attorney for Health Care:** *Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide and Health Care Decisions* by Rita L. Marker – [www.patientsrightscouncil.org/site/euthanasia-assisted-suicide-health-care-decisions-toc](http://www.patientsrightscouncil.org/site/euthanasia-assisted-suicide-health-care-decisions-toc); [www.christianliferesources.com/index.php/medical\\_directives](http://www.christianliferesources.com/index.php/medical_directives)

**Hospice:** [Issliving.org/in-home-services/hospice-care](http://Issliving.org/in-home-services/hospice-care); [www.caring.com/local/hospices](http://www.caring.com/local/hospices); [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org) (providing people with information and support when they are planning ahead, caring for a loved one, living with an illness or grieving a loss)

## End-of-Life Brochures

### A Christian Guide for End-of-Life

**Decisions** – Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer shares spiritual insight into end-of-life issues. *Item 801R. \$0.50 ea.*

**Euthanasia and the Christian** – What is and is not euthanasia? Who decides? *Item 800T. \$0.50 ea.*

**God’s Love in Human Suffering (or why I didn’t housebreak my cockroach)** by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb. *Item 805A. \$0.50 ea.*

**The Right to Die - Rhetoric, Reality, Response** examines euthanasia and our response. *Item 802T. \$0.50 ea.*

**Speaking of the Inconceivable – A Closer Look at Suicide’s Stigma** – A very personal reflection from author Rev. Peter Preus. *Item LFL920T. \$0.50 ea.*

## End-of-Life Booklets

**Before I Die – A Practical Guide for End-of-Life Issues** – Elizabeth Skoglund shares principles for the Christian at life’s end along with words of encouragement. *Item 809B. \$2.00 ea.*

**The Basics on Advance Directives: Thy Will Be Done** by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb. *Item 807B. \$0.50 ea.*

**Ventilators, Feeding Tubes, and Other End-of-Life Questions** by Karen Rehder, M.D. and Linda Bartlett answers tough questions for individuals, families, and pastors. *Item 800B. \$0.75 ea.*

## End-of-Life DVD & USB

**The Other End of Life DVD** with Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, takes a look at end-of-life issues. *Item LFL1409DVD. \$5.00 ea.*

**Educational Resource Manual – Digital Edition** – This credit-card sized USB drive features PDFs of many of LFL’s Bible studies, booklets, and brochures. Also included are several life issue video files. *Item LFL1607USB. \$15.00 ea.*



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

## Men and Women, Worship and Life



by Linda D. Bartlett

Often, after leading a Titus 2 Retreat, I am asked if I will say a few encouraging words to the husbands and male members of the sponsoring congregation or group. This is important to me. As an ezer, a helper by creation and nature, it is natural for me to want to help and encourage the very men who are so different from me. It has been said that male and female are the two eyes of the universe. I believe both are needed for a proper perspective.

Before I encourage the men to be the good stewards and defenders of life that God calls them to be, I apologize to them for the folly of women. The feminist movement baptizes in the name of humanistic narcissism. It pits women against men and places children in harm's way. But Christianity baptizes in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It clothes even an infant girl in the righteous robe of Christ, washes away sin, begins to work a good conscience, and makes her an heir of The Promise. Daughters of God in Christ do not have to demean or compete with men in order to be persons of influence.

Radical feminism has done great harm, in particular, to boys. Insisting that "equal means being the same" has left girls more vulnerable and boys deprived of godly manhood. To deny that boys learn, process, and respond differently than girls weakens society and hurts us all. It shows in the modern classroom. Almost twice as many boys as girls struggle with completing regular schoolwork and behaving in the way school systems want them to

behave. Boys are almost twice as likely to repeat kindergarten as girls and more than twice as likely to be suspended. The majority of school dropouts are boys.<sup>(1)</sup> In my lifetime, I have witnessed powerful advocacy for girls but little desire to understand or respect what boys need to thrive.

Most disappointing to me is the Christian community. Barna surveys found that a higher proportion of adolescent boys and men are leaving or not participating in church life compared to girls and women. Sunday school, day school, and catechism classes seem to have forgotten (or dismissed) that boys and girls learn and grow differently. In his book, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, David Murrow documents that boys and men don't really think the church has anything to offer them. I do wonder sometimes if contemporary worship actually causes men to drift away. If God's divine service to us is diminished by attention to our praise of Him, time in God's House may become insignificant by men who are wired very differently from women. Women may be "moved" by praise songs and emotional presentations, but are men?

Not long ago, following Vacation Bible School, I overheard one of the teachers say that the boys came to life when singing *Onward Christian Soldiers*. Their lips moved during the rhyming and repetitive praise songs, but their voices raised and their feet marched when singing about spiritual warfare, gallantry, and defense of all things noble and good.

In *Raising Boys By Design*, authors Gregory L. Jantz, PhD and Michael Gurian write:

For faith to be relevant, boys and men need to see it as a part of their action-oriented heroic quest—a wholehearted, sold-out-to-Jesus

continual submission of the will to one greater than self. Boys seek a valiant spiritual quest, fraught with challenge and filled with purpose, sacrifice, achievement, and honor. Males want to connect with a God who is experiential, to have a personal encounter with Jesus that is so compelling they will grab hold of faith and hang on tight as their lives go forward. Through such faith they will find their true identity, not just as a man but as a Christian man.<sup>(2)</sup>

Jantz and Gurian speak about a faith that must be muscular. As the mother of sons, this resonates with me. I wanted my sons to respect and defend women, but not become one of us. Just as I am uplifted by the support and wisdom of other women, so men are strengthened by their healthy band of brothers in work, study, play, or service. From boyhood, men need to engage in problem solving, decision-making, and wrestling with the tough issues of life on behalf of the women and children they are called by God to defend. If you remember, Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord (Genesis 32). Jacob's hip was put out of joint during the encounter. Martin Luther said that through faith, in the struggle of the cross, one learns to recognize and experience God rightly. A man learns, through times of difficulty as well as times of blessings, that God's Word is living and active; it can be trusted in all circumstances.

God calls boys to guard the purity of girls. He calls men to defend the lives of women and children. It is likely, in this sinful world, that boys and men will be bruised when they do battle for the lives of others and to the glory of God. It is for this reason, I believe, that men (like women) need the Divine Service. The lit-

eral catechesis in the Divine Service, week after week, prepares a young man not to be passive, but to be engaged in the real world. It allows him to confess his sins, receive absolution, and remember the cleansing work of his baptism. It speaks the timeless Word of God in Christ. It renews him with the strength and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The Divine Service is not the boy or man doing something for God, but God doing something for boy and man so that they, in turn, may do something good for girls and women.

As for me, I will continue to resist the foolishness of some women. I have no reason to desire the place of a man or covet the responsibilities he has been given. I do, however, have my own role to play. It is my belief that I can best help men defend the sanctity of life, protect women and children, and, ultimately, serve God by loving their neighbor as themselves when I encourage my husband, sons, grandsons, and brothers to put on their armor. To grip the Sword of the Spirit. To stay alert. To gather with all the saints and persevere.

War rages. It is not against flesh and blood but powers and principalities. It is a spiritual war for our very souls. I, for one, need the courage and commitment of men who are prepared for such battle. Men who do more than praise God, but receive from Him training in righteousness, zeal for good works, and the power of self-control. Divinely served by a mighty God and with marching orders in hand, a man is equipped to bring order out of the chaos of sin.

(1) Gregory L. Jantz, PhD, and Michael Gurian, *Raising Boys By Design* (Colorado Springs, CO: Waterbrook Press, 2013), 12-13.

(2) Jantz and Gurian, *Raising Boys By Design*, 195.

*Linda D. Bartlett is the founder of Titus 2 for Life (titus2-4life.org).*

## The Courage to Build a Compassionate Home

by Ryan C. MacPherson



Ten eyewitnesses testified what they saw and heard: a people strong and mighty occupying the land; the Israelites would be foolish to invade. But two other men decided the matter differently—by faith, not by sight. God had promised this land to the Israelites, and they would possess it. Because Joshua and Caleb were in the minority, with the crowd following the other ten scouts, God postponed His promise for forty years. After that time, God exhorted Joshua, “Be strong and very courageous” (Joshua 1:7). It was time to claim the Promised Land.

Godly courage often appears foolish by worldly standards. Godly strength appears weak. What the world sees, and what Christians believe, do not match up. **“For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men”** (1 Corinthians 1:25). This paradox applied in the days of Joshua. It applied most profoundly when Christ triumphed in the very moment that He appeared the most defeated—on the cross. The same paradox applies also to the daily lives of Christ’s

followers.

The world sees foolishness and weakness, but those who live by faith in Christ have the courage to be compassionate in all circumstances. Being strong and courageous in the Lord, Christians recognize that their vocation is not a lifestyle they chose for themselves, but rather the calling they receive from God to serve others in their midst. For example:

A man whose wife gives birth to a child with Down syndrome enters the vocation of fatherhood for a child with special needs.

A woman whose mother suffers from Alzheimer’s disease discovers that God

now is calling her to be “mom” to her own mom.

A financially challenged couple would be foolish by worldly standards to have another child, but with God as their provider they

joyously receive His gift of a new life.

As heirs to the kingdom of heaven, Christians have the entire universe at their disposal. They may look poor. The odds may appear insurmountably against them. But the people of God are strong and courageous in the Lord, clinging to the promises God has proclaimed to His saints throughout the ages. With David, the church sings:

**The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?**

**The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ...**





**Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!** (Psalm 27:1,14)

Christians do not permit the lifestyle modeled by the world to limit their compassion, but rather they imitate Christ, who willingly gave of Himself to serve others. When the world cries, “inconvenience—not now, that’s not my job, no, not for me,” imitators of Christ say, “Heavenly Father, not my will, but Thine be done.”

Compassion that is courageous in the Lord takes many forms. For some, it means changing a diaper at 2:00 a.m. For others, it means re-arranging the house—perhaps building an addition—so that grandma can move in and be cared for by the family. It might mean providing baby clothes for the unwed teen who is pregnant. Or cooking a meal to bring to the neighbor who is recovering from surgery.

Whenever a need presents itself, don’t look at your calendar first—compassion rarely fits anyone’s schedule. Look to Christ. Remember His love for you. Recognize His calling for you. Receive, in the Holy Word and blessed Sacraments, His strength for you. Then stop at nothing to love your neighbor as yourself.

Forget about pursuing your own dreams, forget about living your own life, forget about the world’s “wisdom.” God equips His saints with the courage to live differently—the courage to build a compassionate home for service to others.

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**On December 12, 2013, Belgium moved to become the first country to permit euthanasia for incurably ill children**—after the upper house of Parliament voted to extend to minors its 2002 law legalizing the practice for adults. The vote was 50-17. Under the amended law, euthanasia would become legal for children who experience “constant and unbearable physical suffering” and are equipped “with a capacity of discernment.” The bill does not include an age limit. Alex Schadenberg of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition commented, “Currently, the Belgian euthanasia law limits euthanasia to people who are at least 18 years old. This unprecedented bill would extend euthanasia to children with disabilities.” He continued, “The Belgian Socialist government is adamant that the euthanasia law needs to extend to minors and people with dementia even though there are significant examples of how the current law is being abused and the bracket creep of acceptable reasons for euthanasia continues to grow.

The current practice of euthanasia in Belgium appears to have become an easy way to cover-up medical errors.” The bill now goes to the Belgium House of Representatives. (*Euthanasia Prevention Coalition*, 12/13/13; *CLR Life News*, 12/20/13)

**An English columnist has argued that sex-selective abortion is a legacy of abortion on demand.** Dominic Lawson, writing for the *Daily Mail* newspaper, said: “If [an unborn child] has no moral status during the temporary period of total dependency on the mother, why should one reason for termination be any more legal or illegal than another? ...



That’s what pro-choice means, however much those who framed the law might seek to distance themselves from the consequences.” (*Mail, SPUC*, 1/20/14)

**A new study of women from India shows women who get an induced abortion are 626 percent more likely to have breast cancer compared with women who carry their pregnancies to term and have the baby ...** This study follows closely after a bombshell meta-analysis of breast cancer studies found a 44% increased risk of contracting breast cancer for women who had abortions ... [The] report, published in the *Indian Journal of Cancer*, confirms what previous studies have shown, namely that an abortion weakens the breast’s muscle tissue in a way that makes it more susceptible to cancer. (*LifeNews.com*, 1/3/13)

**The number of abortions in New Zealand have fallen to their lowest levels in 20 years as fewer doctors want to do them ...** “and significantly fewer teenagers are having the procedure. In 2012, 14,745 women had abortions in NZ, down from 18,382 five years earlier. The number of abortions is at the lowest level since 1995, according to a report from the Abortion Supervisory Committee ... in New Zealand.” (*LifeNews.com*, 1/3/14; *www.stuff.co.nz*, 1/4/14)

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**Lutherans For Life offers Word-based resources on abortion, adoption, bioethics, Creation, end-of-life, family living, fetal development, Life Sunday, sexual purity, and more! Here is a sampling of what is available!**

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## DVDs

**The Other End of Life** takes a look at end-of-life issues. Item LFL1409DVD. **\$5.00 ea.**

**Hope for Broken Hearts – The Gospel and Post-Abortion Syndrome**, with Rev. Dr.

James I. Lamb, examines how the Gospel of Jesus Christ speaks so powerfully to women and men struggling in the aftermath of an abortion. Item LFL1407. **\$5.00 ea.**

**The Abundant Life** – Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb helps us better understand what Jesus meant when He said in John 10:10 that He came to give us an abundant life. Item LFL1408DVD. **\$5.00 ea.**

## Top Ten Suggested Resources to Share with Pastors

**A Christian Guide to End-of-Life Decisions**

– Insight into end-of-life issues by Rev.

Richard C. Eyer. Item LFL801R. **\$0.50 ea.**

**A Lutheran Catechism on Abortion and Life**

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**Abortion and the Message of the Church: Sin or**

**Salvation?** The Church has long called abortion sin. Item LFL205T. **\$0.50 ea.**

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**Word of Hope** offers information on LFL's post-abortion ministry.

WOH – Abortion. Item LFL404T. **FREE;**

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**Marriage – A Statement by Lutherans**

**For Life** – God is clear about what He still intends marriage to be.

Item LFL905T. **\$0.50 ea.**

**Educational Resource Manual – Digital**

**Edition** – A credit-card sized USB drive featuring PDFs and video files of many of

LFL's resources. Item LFL1607USB. **\$15.00 ea.**

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**Life Thoughts in the Church Year** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*.

**April 6 – Fifth Sunday in Lent** – Where do we find hope in lifeless dry bones scattered in a valley (Ezekiel 37:1-14) or in trying to please God with deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:1-11) or in life after four days dead in a tomb (John 11:1-45)? We don't *find* it! God *gives* it! He gives His Spirit and Christ's righteousness and the power of His resurrection. Nothing is ever hopeless! Prayer: Father, no matter how hopeless things may seem in my life, give me the certain hope that is mine in Jesus. Amen.

**April 13 – Palm Sunday, Sunday of the Passion** – When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowd hailed Him as Savior and King because He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 12:13-18). When He left Jerusalem with thorns and a cross, the soldiers mocked Him as "King of the Jews" (Matthew 27:29). Neither group understood the humility of His servant kingship or His glory as the suffering servant. Praise God that His Spirit reveals this to us so that we might humbly walk as redeemed and life-affirming servants. Prayer: King Jesus, help me have and share Your attitude about life. Amen.

**April 20 – The Resurrection of our Lord** – The resurrection of Jesus is God's empty-tomb-echoing "YES" to all Christ did because of the Father's love for human life. Prayer: Help me rejoice in Jesus' resurrection and the value it gives to me

and all humanity. Amen.

**April 27 – Second Sunday of Easter** – In a world that dishonors Christ and His truth about the value of life, the sanctity of marriage, and the purity of sexuality, are you willing to honor Christ by upholding these truths and joyfully suffer dishonor as the Apostles? (Acts 5:41) May the Lord grant such faithful courage to us all. Prayer: Give me Apostolic-like faith to uphold Your truth and suffer dishonor for Your name, O Christ. Amen.

**May 4 – Third Sunday of Easter** – Ransomed with the "precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19). How unworthy we are of such a price, and yet how worthy that price makes us. And do not forget, since Christ died for all, His precious blood bestows value upon all. This is why we uphold the value of every life. Life's value does not flow from our size or abilities or health. It flows from the blood of Christ. Prayer: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for Your precious blood and the value it gives to life. Amen.

**May 11 – Fourth Sunday of Easter** – The abundant life Jesus gives (John 10:10) is not necessarily a life of abundance. It may include unjust "sorrows while suffering" (1 Peter 2:19). As it was for the shepherd's sheep, the abundant life for the Good Shepherd's sheep is following the Shepherd. Only then can we say, "I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1). Prayer: Good Shepherd, help me to follow You on paths of righteousness to the peace and nourishment of the "green



pastures” and “quiet waters” of Your Word and Sacraments. Amen.

**May 18 – Fifth Sunday of Easter** – Much in this life troubles our hearts including issues like an unplanned pregnancy or making decisions about a desperately ill parent. The world’s way out of troubles so often involves death as the solution. But Jesus says, “I am the way ...” (John 14:6). Jesus says, “Believe in God; believe also in me” (14:1). In short, when your hearts trouble you—trust God! Choose life! Prayer: Father, give me faith to trust in You and Your Son, Jesus, to bring calm to my troubled heart. Amen.

**May 25 – Sixth Sunday of Easter** – Upholding the God-given value of life or any biblical truth gives opportunity to “make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). Sometimes, however, we forget the “gentleness and respect.” Paul in Athens (Acts 17:16-31) provides a good example of respecting those who oppose us without compromising the truth we proclaim. Prayer: Lord, give me courage to defend Your truths with gentleness and respect. Amen.

**June 1 – Seventh Sunday of Easter** – “Your adversary the devil” (1 Peter 5:8) loves abortion. He delights in the destruction of God’s handiwork. He loves to turn on those he deceived into making this choice and lead them to despair. “Resist him”! (9) He is a toothless, defeated enemy in Christ. Trust that Christ “will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you” (10). Prayer: Lord Jesus, restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish me in my faith. Amen.

**June 8 – The Day of Pentecost** – God desires to pour out His Spirit upon everyone (Acts 2:17). Does that not give value to every life, born or unborn, frail or fit?

In other words, every single human being is someone God wants to call into an eternal relationship with Him. Praise God for His Spirit and the faith He creates and the value He gives to life. Prayer: Father, thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit. Help me see every life as someone You desire to call. Amen.

**June 15 – The Holy Trinity** – They are more than words for some ceremony. When crisis comes, when suffering seems unbearable, when there seems to be no place to turn, these words give you the assurance of an ever-present and ever-loving God: “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Prayer: Holy Trinity, thank You for the assurance You give in the waters of Baptism. Amen.

**June 22 – Second Sunday after Pentecost** – Summer began yesterday! Birds abound. What an opportune time to lay our fears aside and think of life’s God-given value. “Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31). Prayer: Father, when I look at the birds today, remind me how valuable I am to You. Amen.

**June 29 – Third Sunday after Pentecost** – The life issues can certainly be the cause of the kind of family strife that Jesus describes (Matthew 10:3-42). But our first love must be for Jesus and His truth must never be compromised even for the sake of peace. When we deal with such family “swords,” we find hope and strength in the true and lasting peace that Jesus brings, peace with God. Prayer: Lord, give me Your peace that I may never compromise Your truth for the sake of my peace. Amen.

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## Y4Life in Washington, D.C. – An Update

by Laura Davis



We had another highly successful trip to Washington for the March For Life in January!

This year, we had seven students join us from Texas, Missouri, and North Carolina, along with another eight from a Lutheran High School in Parker, Colorado.

One student is ready to take what he learned back to his college campus and start a life ministry there and others have already expressed their eagerness to learn more!

This trip was just the start of God using these students to do great things!

To learn more about **Y4Life**, visit [y4life.org](http://y4life.org) or contact me at [ldavis@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:ldavis@lutheransforlife.org).

*Laura Davis is the director of Y4Life.*



Photo: LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford



Photo: LCMS Communications/Erik M. Lunsford



Laura Davis with Ryan and Bethany Bomberger of The Radiance Foundation

Follow us on ...



## A Newfound Awareness

by Hilary Murray

In our country, more specifically on our university campuses, we often hear the word “awareness” as it relates to various issues. A newfound awareness of an issue creates knowledge of the previously unknown and this knowledge can create passion to change something. This happened to me on the issue of abortion—and I was deeply affected by it.

On January 24, 2013, I, as well as my pastor and two other peers, traveled to Washington D.C., to participate in the annual March for Life and the first ever LCMS Life Conference. The information that I gathered about the ugly truth of abortion was sickening, but that information sparked a passion in me to seek change.

When terrible facts are made clear, the natural instinct of most people is to try and change something—but then we recognize that change is not an easy task. We make excuses as to why we do not have time to strive for change. (I avoided life-issue-awareness groups because I knew that change requires hard work and dedication.)

The 2013 March for Life slapped me in the face! Over 55 million American children have been killed through abortion over the last 40 years since the *Roe v. Wade* (and *Doe vs. Bolton*) Supreme

Court decision! Yet, my generation is the pro-life generation and we will never stop fighting until *Roe* is overturned.

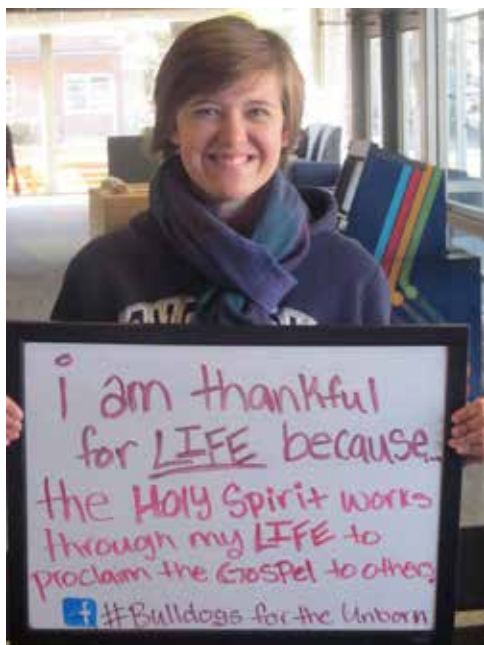
Upon our return from Washington D.C., we asked ourselves, “How can we make a difference?” We wanted to spark a passion in students for defending the unborn child. We decided to start an organization on our campus called Bulldogs for the Unborn. Our goals are to educate and make students aware of the reality of abortion by hosting pro-life speakers, plan pro-life events such as community diaper drives (in support of local crisis

pregnancy centers), take students to the March for Life in Washington D.C., every year, and, last of all, but most important, to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to those who are repentant of their sin and are in need of guidance and care.

Now, you may be asking yourself, “What can a college organization possibly do to overturn *Roe v. Wade* or re-

duce the number of and perceived need for abortion?” You also may be asking, “How can I—one single person—make a difference For Life?” Let me tell you a story.

Last year, I had the honor of being a residence assistant on campus. I took care of a hall of 23 girls. I disciplined them when they broke rules. But, I also held them when they cried on my shoulder. They called me “mom.” One day, a few of us were sitting in the hall, on





the floor, just talking about life. I don't remember how, but the subject of abortion came up. One girl, (I will call her "Hayley") seemed a bit confused about her stance on the issue. Her roommate kept saying, "Abortion is ok if the mother is unable to take care of the child." Of course, I politely made it clear that I did not agree with her. I gave the reasons for my beliefs and she was not able to argue her case against mine.

When I returned to school that next semester, I noticed that Hayley was no longer a student at Concordia. I wanted to check up on her so, naturally, I looked on her Facebook page. What I saw was rather shocking. I read a status update that said, "24 weeks along! I can't wait to meet my little baby boy." Hayley was six months pregnant. As I let that sink into my brain, I realized that she would have been six or seven weeks pregnant when we had that conversation on our hallway floor. She possibly chose life because of that conversation!

Not being aware and informed about abortion may have lead me to ignorantly argue my case and potentially cause Hay-

ley, my friend, to have an abortion. Today, that beautiful baby boy has a mother's love. Today, that beautiful baby boy is alive—thanks be to God!

I believe those types of victories will be a small part of getting *Roe v Wade* overturned someday. Learn the arguments. Be courageous. Fight for life. We are the pro-life generation. We survived Roe. We pray that Roe will not survive us.

*Hilary Murray is a senior at Concordia University Nebraska. She currently serves as the president of Bulldogs for the Unborn, the student life group at Concordia.*



# Life News

## Monthly Bulletin Inserts



**Life News is available as a free download at:**  
**[www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-news)**

***Check out our other free resources for your congregation including "Life Quotes" and "Life Thoughts in the Church Year!"***

## A Thank Offering to the Lord

by Jim Schroeder



**M**any individuals would like to make a thank offering to the Lord from their estate plan. Have you ever considered doing so?

Take a minute and think of the things that you are thankful to the Lord for. I'm sure that you can think of a number of earthly things. Your list may include your spouse, your children, grandchildren, and other family and friends. What about your health, your career, your home, your free country, your education, your car, your savings, etc.?

After you have thought about your earthly blessings, take some time and meditate on your spiritual blessings from the Lord. Think of your baptism where the Lord adopted you into His family and gave you forgiveness of your sins, life, and salvation.

After your baptism the Lord blessed you with His Word in many forms. The gift of Holy Communion is a blessing that the Lord gives us for our spiritual benefit. Ponder for a minute the blessings of our eternal salvation and life in the new Heaven and the new earth. What a blessing it is for us to think of how much our Heavenly Father loves us and some day we will be blessed to be in His presence.

One last way to thank the Lord for all of His blessings is to include a gift to the ministries of His church in our estate plan. We don't have to do this to earn His favor but the Holy Spirit works through us to further the work in the Lord's kingdom.

There are two parts to planning a thank

offering to the Lord in your estate plan.

The first of these is to decide what asset from your estate could be used for your gift. The most common form of this type of gift is from an asset that is transferred by a beneficiary designation. That could be from life insurance, an annuity, an IRA, 401k, or other investment account. From a tax-wise stewardship position the gift from a tax-deferred account like an IRA, 401k, or an annuity would be the best. This is because if you leave a gift to a qualified charity from these accounts the charities will receive the gift tax-free.

The second part of planning your thank offering to the Lord is to meditate on the ministries of His church that could benefit from your gift. You will want to consider those ministries that the Holy Spirit has directed into your life. You have been joined to these ministries for a purpose. God wants to use you to further the mission of these ministries. He can use your time, talent, and treasures to do His work.

Is Lutherans For Life one of those special ministries that God has connected you to to do His work? Do you believe that the mission of Lutherans For Life of "Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices for Life" is part of God's mission of His church on earth?

Please consider including Lutherans For Life in your thank offering gift from your estate plan. If you would like more information on doing this please contact me at [jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org) or call me at 515.490.7371. I would be glad to give you the help you need at no-cost or obligation.

*Jim Schroeder is LFL's Christian estate planning counselor.*

## God at Work in Life Teams and Chapters

by Lori Trinché



God is busy in Colorado creating new Life Teams under guidance from Jude Donovan, president of Metro Denver LFL. Teams are forming at Ascension Lutheran, Littleton; Epiphany, Castle Rock; Holy Cross, Highlands Ranch; Peace, Arvada; Shepherd of the Hills, Centennial; and Wheat Ridge Lutheran, Wheat Ridge.

In Iowa, there is a new Life Team at Trinity, Creston.

A Life Team is also being started in Antigo, Wisconsin.

In Indiana, plans are coming together for another Life Team 101 training session in Fort Wayne in February.

LFL chapter 337, in St. Charles, Missouri, reported on their “Teens Talk to Teens Abstinence Event” held November 6 at Lutheran High School in St. Peters. Led by the congregational youth who have been “equipped to be Gospel-motivated voices for Life,” the event consisted of separate programs for parents and teens. Ninety-four parents and 133 confirmands from twelve participating congregations attended. A representative from the local crisis pregnancy agency partner (Thrive—St. Louis) led the parent program and the youth, under pastoral guidance, led the program for teens. Pizza and soda was provided prior to the programs. (This is a wonderful idea for an annual event for either a chapter or team!)

Calls continue to come in from across the country with new interest in chapters and Life Teams in New York, Washington, South Dakota, and Illinois.

These are just a few of the many places Life Teams are starting and are already at work across the country.

Coming up March 20, I invite you to join me for a free webinar on “Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-Motivated Voices for Life” from 1:00-2:00 p.m. (Central Time). This webinar is being hosted by our friends at LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission—and I am grateful for the opportunity! To find out more go to [www.lcms.org/rstm](http://www.lcms.org/rstm). You may also join the webinar directly by going to [www.anymeeting.com/lcmsrstml](http://www.anymeeting.com/lcmsrstml) on March 20.

If you have a story to share about your Life Team (or chapter), or want more information on starting a Life Team, please contact me at [ltrinche@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:ltrinche@lutheransforlife.org). To God be the glory!

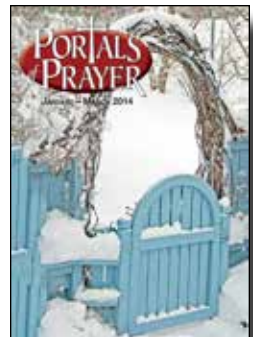
*Lori Trinché is the Mission & Ministry Coordinator for Lutherans For Life.*

## Portals of Prayer

Did you enjoy Dr. Lamb's devotions in the January 2014 *Portals of Prayer*?

If you did, please send your comments to [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org).

Both Lutherans For Life and Concordia Publishing House would appreciate hearing from you. Some readers objected to the life-affirming devotions and claimed that *Portals of Prayer* had gotten political and was now pushing a pro-life agenda. We at Lutherans For Life see the life issues as, first and foremost, spiritual issues.



### Thrivent

Rev. Dr. James Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life:

“Thrivent Financial has ruled that LFL and other pro-life organizations—including crisis pregnancy centers—will no longer receive funds from, or through, *any* Thrivent program. You can check our website for our response ([www.lutheransforlife.org/article/thrivent](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/article/thrivent)). Not only does this deprive Thrivent members of the choice of supporting a life-affirming ministry, it has financial implications for us. We will now be losing over \$2,500 each month in income.”

### Upcoming Retirement

Dr. James I. Lamb, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life, has announced his desire to retire from this position at the end of December 2015. A search committee has been formulated and will be accepting names for application to this position. Please call or send names or inquiries to the national office: Lutherans For Life, 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada, IA 50201-2774; [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org); 888.364.LIFE.

### Thank You Kay

Kay L. Meyer retired on December 31, 2013, from Lutherans For Life after working with us as a contracted, part-time, director of development since January of 2009.

Kay wrote, “It has been a joy and privilege to work with so many LFL donors, volunteers, and the National Life Center Team during the last five years. I will continue to

be a Gospel-motivated Voice for Life and pray the Lord will continue to bless Lutherans For Life.”

All of us at Lutherans For Life thank Kay for her faithful and dedicated service!



Kay L. Meyer with Dr. Lamb at the 2013 LFL National Conference

### No Offense Intended

In the last issue of *LifeDate*, an article appeared by a woman ordained as a pastor by the North American Lutheran Church (NALC), a synod that has arisen out of the recent divisions within the ELCA. Although an RSO of the LCMS, Lutherans For Life is an independent Lutheran ministry that desires to serve all Lutherans regardless of synodical affiliation and seeks to unite them in a common witness to the sanctity of all human life. There are many Lutheran bodies that do allow women to serve as pastors and although Lutherans For Life does not endorse the ordination of women, we do wish to be a resource to Lutheran churches that do. Following the divisions within the ELCA, many opportunities have arisen to do so. LFL apologizes for giving that offense to those who wrote to LFL and to those who were offended and did not write. We are hopeful that for the sake of uniting all Lutherans in a common witness to the sanctity of life, this explanation and apology will be accepted and we can all move forward with a renewed vigor to confront the great evils of our time, abortion, euthanasia, and other assaults on God's gift of life.



## A New President for LFL

*In this edition, we are featuring articles from both outgoing president Diane Schroeder and new president Lynette Auch (who became president this February).*

### Seasons and Transitions

by Diane E. Schroeder



I have had the privilege of serving as president of Lutherans For Life for the past ten years. It has been a time of challenge and growth as well as joy for me personally. As all LFL presidents before me, I have brought my gifts to the position—gifts of organization, development, and management. My goal was simple. To bring LFL to a higher level and build a sustainable organization that could meet the challenges of the future. Plans and goals were developed and problems and issues analyzed. Out of those activities came strategic initiatives such as Teaching for Life®, Renewal For Life®, and Y4Life as well as outreaches to non-LCMS denominations such as the LCMC and the NALC.

In August of 2012 I informed the LFL board that I wished to retire from my position as president effective February 2014 and the board began a deliberate search to find a replacement.



**Diane E. Schroeder and family at the 2013 LFL National Conference**

After implementing a well-designed search program and vetting three well-qualified candidates, a new president was chosen: Lynette Auch, President of the South Dakota Lutherans For Life Federation.

Lynette comes to LFL from a long service in the grass roots of South Dakota—teaching, leading, and implementing. She has her own story that has equipped her with the passion and desire necessary to be LFL's fourth president.

There is no doubt in my mind that Lynette is God's choice to lead LFL into the future to meet the challenges that will be presented and like all LFL presidents leave her mark on the organization.

As I depart this position, I look forward to serving the Lord of Life in other areas that He will reveal. Like you, once an LFLer, always an LFLer. But now it is time for a new president and I know that you will give Lynette your support and your prayers as she leads the ministry we love, Lutherans For Life.

### Whom Shall I Fear?

by Lynette Auch



I share Martin Luther's love of music. He once wrote, "I truly desire that all Christians would love and regard as worthy the lovely gift of music, which is a precious, worthy, and costly treasure given to mankind by God ... next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits ..."\*

In my communications, you may see references to song lyrics. I appreciate many genres of music that serve to drive the love of Jesus Christ and the inerrant

truths of God's Word into the depths of my being.

Growing up on the plains, and among the James River hills of South Dakota, one can sing to their heart's content and let the imagination grow wild. Such is the case for me with the vivid Bible account of the prophet Elisha in 2 Kings 6.

As the Aramean King's plans against Israel were continually intercepted by the prophet Elisha, he was determined to capture him. The Arameans found and surrounded the city where Elisha and his servant were staying. Upon waking and seeing the army around them, the servant became frightened.

**“Don't be afraid,' the prophet answered. 'Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.' And Elisha prayed, 'O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.' Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha” (2 King 6: 16-17 NIV)**

The account continues as the Lord struck the army with blindness. Elisha led the army right into the city of Samaria and was captured.

This narrative reminds me of the song, Whom Shall I Fear (God of Angel Armies), by Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash, and Scott Cash. (Due to copyright issues, I cannot include the lyrics, but I invite you to look up the lyrics and song yourself.) The lyrics explain that God hears us when we call; nothing can hide God's light. He is our sword/shield, surrounding us with His angel army and crushing the enemy. He alone can save and give the victory. Nothing can stand against us, so whom shall we fear.

Elisha knew that there was greater

strength in the unseen reality of the heavenly hosts than in the visible reality of the Aramean army. God answered Elisha's prayer; his servant was able to see the protecting God of angel armies gathered about them.

**“The Lord is my rock ... and my deliverer; my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation ... I call to the Lord ... and I am saved from my enemies” (Psalm 22:2-4 NIV).**

As a wife and homemaker, veteran home school mom of two grown children, mother-in-law, grandmother to an active grandson, and an obstetric nurse, I have experienced countless times a fear similar to that of Elisha's servant. God has often heard my call and has gone before me in the different circumstances of my life. I am sure that many of you can relate in some way.

**“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid ... Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear ...” (Psalm 27: 1,3 NIV)**

I remember well the day my then 16-year-old daughter was given the final diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis. I felt my family's world was crashing down before us. As the darkness of the diagnosis sank into our reality, and the thoughts of what it meant for our daughter's and our family's future, it threatened to hide the Light. But, we could see the power of God crushing the enemy of fear and doubt through the love of Christian community. Our “spiritual” eyes were opened to see the God of angel armies surrounding us.

What did we have to fear?

**“He gives us the victory through our LORD, Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:57b NIV)**

During my 28 plus years of LFL work in South Dakota, alongside life-affirming friends, I have witnessed, first-hand, God’s victories in our ministry endeavors. One such endeavor was an ultrasound ministry. We believed, if it was from God it would prosper, so what did we have to fear? It did prosper, and within a pregnancy center, twins were among the first to be saved.

**“If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31a NIV)**

Just as God has been faithful to my family going before us giving hope and direction, and standing behind us to catch us before crashing to the depths of despair, He has you, your family, and the LFL ministry in His hands. We are reminded in Romans 8:31 (NIV), “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Whom shall we fear?

\*[www.eldrbarry.net/mous/saint/luthmusc.htm](http://www.eldrbarry.net/mous/saint/luthmusc.htm)



**Lynette Auch with her grandson, Isaac, at the 2013 LFL National Conference**



**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 11 state federations, 120 local chapters, 139 Life Ministry Coordinators, 86 Life Team Leaders, and 48 Life Teams in the US.



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*Matters of the Heart*

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**We have new bulletin inserts for Mother's Day and Father's Day! See page 15.**