

# LifeDate

Summer  
2017



A quarterly journal of news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

## New Life

**In  
the  
womb  
at  
conception**

**In  
Christ  
when  
faith  
is  
given**

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

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# Lutherans For Life

Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life.

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## 10 Blessings of Being Pan-Lutheran

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

Since its inception, Lutherans For Life has been intentionally pan-Lutheran. This means that we consist of individuals from different Lutheran denominations. We serve several Lutheran church bodies, including The American Association of Lutheran Churches, the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, the Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and the North American Lutheran Church. (We also enjoy a positive relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, but they are primarily served by their own life ministry, Christian Life Resources.) We count it a God-given honor, privilege, and joy to connect across these communions. In fact, here are ten of the many blessings we celebrate as a pan-Lutheran organization:

1. Our pan-Lutheran nature honors Lutherans For Life's legacy. God brought together Jack Eichhorst (American Lutheran Church), Jean Garton (LCMS), Leigh Jordahl (Lutheran Church in America), and Eugene Linse (LCMS) for our founding.
2. Our pan-Lutheran character involves more life-minded folks than just one branch. In this way, the Gospel reaches more communities and touches more hearts.
3. Our pan-Lutheran structure enhances the effectiveness of our mission and message. We form an intersection of complementary contexts and cultures through which our Lord magnifies the ministry's influence and amplifies its impact.
4. Our pan-Lutheran focus demonstrates the primary importance of life matters. Whatever our other doctrinal distinctives, all among us insist indisputably that God's universal grace declares every human being worthy of respect and protection.
5. Our pan-Lutheran approach sidesteps the temptation to compete with each other. Rather than unnecessarily expending energy in petty territorial rivalries, we get to invest the resources our Father supplies in efficient and effective activities together.
6. Our pan-Lutheran outlook obeys the Savior's command and desire that disciples be united. We rejoice to receive—wherever and whenever we can, even if only incompletely—the gifts He connects to His promises in John 17:11, Acts 4:32, and 1 Corinthians 1:10.
7. Our pan-Lutheran identity clings to a singular witness that transcends arguing and disagreement. Out of different convictions, customs, and conduct comes a unanimous confession of all persons' preciousness according to scriptural truth.
8. Our pan-Lutheran quality can foster and facilitate ongoing conversation between us. It provides a broad common ground upon which we may share and compare our unresolved perspectives and priorities.
9. Our pan-Lutheran background indicates our eagerness to value everyone. The Almighty Maker extends lifelong sanctity even to those who do not entirely affirm our beliefs—and so will we.
10. Our pan-Lutheran balance offers illustration and embodiment of the hope we proclaim. Already Jesus Christ is breaking down barriers of hostility in our midst (Ephesians 2:14), and we who once were enemies (Romans 5:10) are becoming one flock and family for everlasting life!

## I Could Have Been a Statistic

by Rev. Jonathan F. Meyer

January 2017 marked the 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court decision that effectively legalized abortion in the United States. In the four decades since then, it is estimated that over 50 million babies were not born due to elective abortion procedures. Fifty million—it's hard to put that number into perspective and realize how huge a population that entails. According to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), the state of Texas has about 27 million citizens. That's only *half* of the number of children who were not allowed to live since 1973. Historians speak of the great burden of deaths suffered by Great Britain during World War I. I recall reading in one of John Keegan's books—probably *The First World War*—that he estimated that England lost roughly a third of her men of military age from 1914-1918 and what a great burden that placed on the nation's recovery post-war. Ernest Hemingway popularized this as the "Lost Generation." Yet, during a four-year period, 2010-2014, studied by the World Health Organization in conjunction with the Guttmacher Institute, it was estimated that roughly 25% of pregnancies were terminated by abortion.\* Rather than mourning the loss of 25% of a generation, our culture lauds this act of genocide as "freedom," "choice," and "rights."

January also marked my 43<sup>rd</sup> birthday. I was born a year and a week after the *Roe* decision was rendered. Even as I remember my birthday—and give thanks to God for two faithful parents who had me baptized in the hospital at two days of age when doctors told them I probably would not survive because I couldn't keep food down and was losing weight rapidly—I also remember those who were not given the chance at life.

You see, I could have been part of a very sad statistic. I could have been that part of the lost generation after *Roe v. Wade* who did not live to be baptized. Let me explain.

One of the rationales offered by pro-choice groups is that children who are born with severe mental or physical handicaps will not have a high quality of life. Now, I realize that those terms are somewhat nebulous. "Severe" means different things to different folks. Doctors have metrics to determine how badly challenged a person has to be before labeled "mildly," "moderately," or "severely" handicapped. Likewise, quality of life can be rather slippery. But, at the risk of being overly broad, because these are the terms one generally sees, I am going to use them here as well.

Thanks to modern medicine, parents can see on a sonogram a rather clear picture of their child. And, if they're willing to pay a little more for it, parents can actually have a 3D photo made of their baby in the womb, allowing them to see amazing details of their baby even before getting to hold the little one. In 1974 such technological wonders didn't exist, at least not in rural Iowa where my parents lived. But, if this technology had existed then or was available, it would have shown a couple of strange things about my little body.

By definition, my body was physically handicapped. I say "by definition," because I've never considered myself "handicapped." But, no matter what I say, the fact is that my body is malformed. I was born without toes on either foot. Look down at your shoes. See where the laces end? My feet don't make it that far. They look more

like traumatically amputated stumps than feet. Both of my hands are dwarfed. My left hand has full fingers, but my 12-year-old son now has longer fingers than I do. Where your middle knuckles allow your fingers to bend and flex, that is where the fingers on my right hand stop. Although I can bend my right thumb, I cannot bend my right fingers at all. (I know that in the '70s there was a medication given to some mothers who suffered from morning sickness that caused such deformities, but my mom never took that. Likewise, there is sometimes a situation where an umbilical chord can wrap itself around a body part, effectively amputating it *in utero*. We do not believe this was the case with me, however, for two reasons: one, two distinct areas of my body were impacted (feet and hands); and, more significantly, my younger sister had dwarfism in both of her hands as well.) My birth defects seem to be genetic—a flaw, if you will, in the genetic code that makes fingers and toes.

Let's say, for the sake of argument, that modern sonograms were available in 1974 and showed my physical malformation. Further, and again for the sake of argument, let's say that Mom and Dad were counseled that my quality of life would be negatively impacted because of my problems. Depending on whether the doctor was a glass-half-full or a glass-half-empty guy, the conversation could have been as bad as this: "Your son might not be able to walk or run; he might never be able to throw a ball or manipulate anything with his right hand. He will certainly be different than other children. Do you want your son growing up to be the one every other child stares at?" What if Mom and Dad agreed and decided to abort me? My family of six, growing up, would have been a family of five—well, perhaps four had they followed the same line of thinking for my sister when they discovered her situation.

I could have been one of the lost generation.

"AND WE KNOW THAT IN ALL THINGS  
GOD WORKS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM,  
WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE."

ROMANS 8:28



I thank God every day for a lot of things. I thank God that Mom and Dad chose to have a baby who was able to play baseball (throwing right-handed!) and football (throwing left handed), lettered in the high school marching band (making it to the state finals two years in a row), mowed acres of lawns, hauled thousands of bales of hay each summer, and walked home from school many afternoons. I've stood on beaches and mountains, in forests and deserts. I've held hands with a beautiful woman who became my wife. With tears in my eyes, I prayed that my children would be "normal." I wept with joy when the sonograms showed all three of our children to have normal hands and feet, and I counted each precious finger and toe on their newborn feet multiple times to be sure we didn't miss something. I've fed my children and changed plenty of dirty diapers as a result. I'm a pretty good typist—I average around 80WPM with 95+% accuracy. I enjoy woodworking and have made all sorts of things, from benches to pens and all sizes in between. All these things were done because my parents weren't worried about my quality of life. They were simply thankful God had given them a child. The name Jonathan, incidentally, means "God gives."

Don't misunderstand me—I wouldn't wish my hands or feet on anyone. Without toes, the shock of walking and running was directly transferred to my hips and spine. I have three herniated lumbar discs, and my knees and hips are starting to hurt most days. Although I wear a full-foot prosthetic, my gait is odd. Standing for long periods of time is uncomfortable. Buying shoes and gloves is a challenge—no one makes gloves with only inch-long fingers, so the fingertips on the right glove flop uselessly. Over the years, plenty of people have given me "the look." At the swimming pool, people stare when I walk by. My nephew once quipped, "Uncle Jon—push your toes out!" While I've grown used to seeing a look of surprise when we shake hands for the first time, I'll never forget when my own toddler-aged brother bluntly asked—as only a young child could do—"What is *wrong* with you?"

But I thank God for my hands and my feet. I see them as they are—imperfect, but part of what makes me, me. I wanted to be a Marine, but the Marines couldn't take me because of my hands and feet. I tried the Army, the Navy, and even the Air Force—no one would take me. Yet, the Lord had already taken me—hands, feet, and all my members and senses—and made me His. Called His child through Holy Baptism, He later called me into the Holy Ministry. As a pastor, I've stood next to newly minted parents with their own baby, and I've sat next to parents weeping because their child died all too soon. My hands have poured baptismal water over a baby's head and poured sand upon the grave of the elderly who have died in the faith. I've made the sign of the cross in holy absolution and in blessing.

God has given me these feet and hands—malformed, though they may be—and, in Christ, even these have been redeemed. God doesn't see them as ugly. He sees them as beautiful, through Christ.

And one day when Christ returns, they will be fully, completely, wholly, holy, and "resurrectedly" beautiful indeed.

\*[http://thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)30380-4/fulltext](http://thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)30380-4/fulltext)

*Rev. Jonathan F. Meyer is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Mission Valley, Texas—as of June 2017 (<http://zionlutheranmv.org/>). This article is used with permission from the author.*

## Is *In Vitro* Fertilization Ethical?

by Rev. Michael W. Salemink

The desire for descendants comes from God. He has given within us the holy longing to hold our own offspring. He Himself has bestowed upon us the heavenly blessing of having babies. **“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth”** (Genesis 1:28a) affixes the Lord’s benediction to man and wife made in Trinity’s image. This image includes the two becoming one flesh (Matthew 19:5) in the person of a third.

Pregnancy comes about only in accordance with His will. **“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord”** (Psalm 127:3a). It does not operate as mechanical or automatic “reproduction,” as if apart from our Creator. Whatever the circumstances or mechanisms of conception, it constitutes a gift of God. Zygotes, embryos, and fetuses always amount to full-fledged human beings, however they originated. **“Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God”** (Mark 10:14b). Even out of sexual assault, infidelity, or other awfulness, children bear no blame for their parents’ mistakes. God’s grace gets credit for *every* conception. Indeed, Lord God retains all responsibility for every opened womb (Genesis 20:17, 29:31, 30:22)—and reserves every right to close wombs (Genesis 20:18, 30:2; 1 Samuel 1:5-6).

So, unsurprisingly, the devil directly assaults procreation. Sin’s intrusion into human nature significantly impacted the privilege of producing children, making it more difficult and at times impossible. **“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children”** (Genesis 3:16a). Yet Almighty Maker claims even this predicament as occasion to extend His great love. Scripture and its Savior



prove sensitive to the sorrows of those struggling with infertility. The Lord listens to the cries of patriarchs (Genesis 15:1-3, 25:21, 30:1) and prophets (1 Samuel 1:1-16, 2 Kings 4:8-17, Jeremiah 31:15, Isaiah 54:1) and lifts the curse from them. Jesus also intervenes with His crucifixion to roll back barrenness: “[B]ehold, your son!” and “Behold, your mother!” (John 19:26-27)

Still Satan meddles, despite divine compassion, or perhaps precisely because of it. The Ancient Serpent can use infertility as opportune time for transforming desires to idols and twist sinfulness from gifts. Not every strategy or solution for childlessness channels the good and gracious will of God. Abduction and adultery, for example, do not make God-pleasing means of obtaining family. What about *in vitro* fertilization? Certainly, many Christian couples have succeeded in childbearing utilizing this technique. The process of IVF, however, presents several ethical questions and problems.



IVF usually begins with intensive medication. These chemicals make a woman’s body generate more than the normal one ovum (egg) per monthly cycle. Such a procedure aims to reduce the costs and delays associated with collecting the necessary cells. But it also endangers the would-be mother’s health and safety. It can cause ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS), with symptoms such as abdominal pain, excessive weight gain, nausea, diarrhea, blood clots, respiratory distress and fluid accumulation, cysts on ovaries and rupture thereof, and death. Gathering the father-to-be’s gametes may also involve questionable methods like masturbation. Some IVF attempts use eggs or sperm from donors due to deficiencies in the man’s or

woman’s reproductive system. Inserting a third party into the two-becoming-one and removing the resulting child from a biological parent wanders away from the good things God imparts and outlines in the sixth and fourth commandments.

After this, IVF combines the sperm and egg cells in a laboratory container. (The Latin phrase *in vitro* translates into English as “in glass.”) Not every mingling of sperm and egg yields an embryo. Because of the expenses and intervals IVF entails, technicians almost always try to make multiple embryos. Not every embryo formed survives, and not every embryo transferred from lab to womb implants (only 35% transition to viable pregnancies). Typically, physicians transfer a few or even several embryos at a time to increase the odds that at least one makes it. From among all the embryos cultivated, doctors assess and select specimens for transfer by grading their appearance (a rather unscientific and somewhat subjective approach).

Sometimes more than one embryo does implant. Many practitioners then recommend “selective reduction” (aborting the additional babies) to improve the resources and chances available to the desired child. In addition, they either discard the “left over” embryos (as “medical waste”), donate them for experiments that destroy them, or hold them in frozen storage to preserve them for future transfers. This freezing frequently causes damage or death to the embryos. Furthermore, budgets dictate that embryos be frozen and thawed in groups of two to five (called straws) rather than individually.



Every step of the IVF sequence appears to endanger embryos. This especially holds true if the woman's fertility difficulties derive from a womb that is less conducive or even inhospitable to gestation. Placing embryos in such hostile surroundings, even with the best sentiments, exposes them to an unsafe environment. All along the way, IVF risks laying greater weight upon adult desires (and economic concerns?) than the best interests of the child. And while taking certain careful measures (less aggressive collection methods, or fertilizing and implanting only single embryos) may mitigate some of the above moral perils, other obstacles remain intrinsic to IVF in any form. For these reasons, Lutherans For Life objects to and opposes the use of in vitro fertilization.

We also rejoice that God forgives even sins against life. None of our sins (and we all have sinned and are sinful) can lessen His love or undo His grace. Jesus Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection have demonstrated that He redeems also our failures and brings good from not-good. We celebrate couples who have undergone IVF and their children as persons eternally precious to God our Creator and Savior. We encourage compassionate ministry to them, not condemnation, that they may receive the comfort of Christ. Despite discomfort with IVF, Christians ought not to abandon our brothers and sisters who struggle with infertility. Along with the promises of the Gospel and the body of Christ accompanying one another under crosses, we advocate God-given medical treatment options that mediate the healing power of Jesus. Chief among these is NaProTECHNOLOGY ([www.naprotechnology.com](http://www.naprotechnology.com)). This natural procreative approach seeks to investigate, diagnose, and remedy men's and women's reproductive abnormalities rather than circumventing them.

Though parts of our bodies have fallen asleep, our spirits have been awakened to Him whose voice raises from death (John 5:28-29, Ephesians 5:14). It is His way to call into being things that are not (Romans 4:17), and **“out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham”** (Matthew 3:9 NIV). He who has already done it to us will also do it for us, and the One who has begun the good work in us will carry it on to completion at the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6)!

## Owen's Mission

**Over 28,000 students have now heard about Owen's Mission!**

Horton the elephant was right! The Bible agrees! In fact, the Bible says more: A person's a person created by God (Psalm 139:13-14), a person redeemed by Jesus (Galatians 3:13), and a person the Holy Spirit wants to call to be His child (1 Timothy 2:4)—no matter how small!

The goal of **Owen's Mission** is to honor Jesus by presenting a set of Touch of Life fetal models to every Lutheran elementary and high school in the country. (That's 1,078 schools affecting 139,000 students!) We want students to understand the God-given value of each life from the moment of conception. We want students to be motivated by what God has done as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier that gives value to life. We want students to value themselves and to value others as persons because of this God-given value. [www.lutheransforlife.org/about/owens-mission](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/about/owens-mission)



### It Is Well

by Lynette Auch, President of Lutherans For Life

**G**rowing up on a farm can offer vast opportunities to witness new life. Spring brings with it an explosion of babies, from newborn animals and newly hatched birds to seedlings sprouting from the warm earth. What a grand thing to behold—new life from God’s creating hands!

As an obstetric nurse for over 26 years, I have witnessed new human life take its first breath numerous times. Every birth never ceases to amaze me. A pediatrician once told me that birth is the biggest physiological transition a human being will ever go through in its lifetime—an amazing phenomenon!

For a new baby, that first breath of life outside of the womb has brought a whole “new normal” for him or her. Life will never be the same. For the parents or family who take that new baby home, life will never be the same either. The family will experience a “new normal” way of life. In this world of constant change, a “new normal” may affect us daily.

I recall a conversation with my then-teenaged daughter shortly after she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). My daughter asked the typical “woe is me” question, “Why me?” After a thoughtful debate in my mind how to reply, I said, “Why not you?” This led to a lively teaching opportunity regarding God’s testing of His servant, Job, through Satan’s vices.

Despite the loss of his children, livestock, and property, Job proclaimed, “**The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised**” (Job 1:21b NIV). Job was further tested, afflicted from head to toe with painful sores. His wife told him to “**Curse God and die**” (Job 2:9b). He replied, ““**Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble? In all this, Job did not sin in what he said**” (Job 2:10b NIV).

This led the discussion to the “new normal” that was before my daughter and our family as we learned to live with this uninvited disease in all of our lives and how we would respond to God’s testing.

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,  
Let this blest assurance control,  
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,  
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

Several years ago, I shared with *LifeDate* readers the story of a little baby boy, Tate, called home to Jesus due to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The family had just gotten used to the “new normal” of the new life that had just become part of their family. Now, sadly, they had to adjust to another “new normal”—the absence of that child.

This family could have easily taken the approach of Job’s wife to curse God, and perhaps during the grieving process they may have done some of that, but mostly they called on God for His comfort and peace, strength and healing.

*When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea billows roll;  
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

As a result of this family's tragedy, The Team Tate Foundation ([www.theteamtatefoundation.com](http://www.theteamtatefoundation.com)) was founded with the mission of educating all infant caregivers about SIDS and promoting safe sleep environments for babies.

In this world of constant "new normal," not knowing what the next life-altering experience may be around the bend, it is comforting to know that our loving heavenly Father is good and unchanging.

**"The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made." (Psalm 145:9 NIV)**

**"In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish ... But you remain the same, and your years will never end." (Psalm 102:25-26a, 27 NIV)**

**"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." (James 1:17 NIV)**

We can be assured that our good and unchanging God is in the midst of our ever-changing life circumstances and "new normals" orchestrating for our good.

My daughter, Crystal, recently reminded me of what I told her in those early days of learning to live with MS: "You cannot go there without seeing the cross first. There is no hope without our Savior!"

Crystal views her MS as a blessing, a witnessing tool. "I, who am physically weak and limited, have been able to encourage so many people. Mom, I hate that I have MS, but I am so very glad I do. It points people to Jesus."

*It is well with my soul,  
It is well, it is well with my soul.*

*It Is Well With My Soul by Horatio Gates Spafford (1873). Public Domain.*



# Advanced Visualization Study Shows Fetuses Feel Pain

by Jeffrey P. Tomkins, Ph.D.

**A** new study using advanced cellular visualization tools demonstrates that adult-like nervous system patterns exist throughout the early stages (first trimester) of human development, even in the baby's hands and feet. These results add to the increasing evidence that aborted babies experience severe traumatic pain, no matter the stage of pregnancy

For much of the modern scientific era, the details of human development in the womb have largely remained a mystery. Much of this has been due to the moral restraints imposed on experimentation on living humans. But these restraints have lifted as society's morals decline. Nevertheless, the sacrifice of human life at the hands of abortionists and its resulting contribution to scientific discovery have actually advanced the cause of those seeking to preserve life.

Recent developments in cellular visualization, perfected in animals like mice, are now being applied to developing human embryos and babies. These techniques can target certain proteins found only in certain types of tissues for exceptionally sharp microscopic images. In a recent study, researchers specifically targeted proteins in nerve vascular tissues and achieved incredibly detailed visualizations of the smallest individual nerve branches throughout the human body at a variety of developmental stages.

The most shocking results came from images produced during the first trimester of human development—a developmental stage in which abortion proponents routinely claim the fetus cannot feel any pain. The authors of the study state, "We found that the adult-like pattern of skin innervation is established before the end of the first trimester, showing important intra- and inter-individual variations in nerve branches."

Prior to this study it was well documented that infants do indeed feel pain during first trimester abortions. Video documentary of abortions clearly show developing babies recoiling in pain during abortion procedures. Abortion proponents claimed this recoiling is merely a reflexive reaction and that no pain is actually being experienced because the nervous system is not well developed at that early stage. This recent study in the journal *Cell* clearly shows that this decades-old claim is empirically false. The nervous system during the first trimester has adult-like sensory structure in place throughout the entire body, even at the very ends of its developing appendages.

Human life is special and sacred above the rest of creation because mankind was created in the image of God. We are the crowning work of the creation week described in Genesis. The Bible elaborates upon the amazing creation of mankind in Psalm 139:13-14: **"For you have formed my inward parts: you have covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise you; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are your works; and that my soul knows right well"** (King James 2000).

The corrupted roots of abortion dig deep, not only into the fallen sinful nature of mankind, but also the scientifically and philosophically flawed ideology of evolution.

*Dr. Tomkins is Director of Life Sciences at the Institute for Creation Research and earned his Ph.D. in genetics from Clemson University. Used by permission. For additional references and links go to: [www.icr.org/article/9958](http://www.icr.org/article/9958).*

## And Then There Were Three—New Life on Facebook

by Hilary Haak

On August 24, 2016, my friends Andrew and Heather Van Velson announced the coming of “Baby V” on Facebook. Let’s celebrate the joyful story of the new life of Baby Liam Van Velson by watching him grow through the life-affirming pictures and posts that his parents shared throughout the first few months of Liam’s life in—and finally outside of—the womb. May the Lord bless and keep Liam in the one true faith unto life everlasting.



And then there were 3! Andrew and I are excited to announce that our little family is growing! Baby V coming in March 2017! As we are closing in on the first trimester already, I can’t help but stop and reflect on this Bible verse: “I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him” (1 Samuel 1:27). Andrew and I are so blessed to be starting this amazing new journey together, and we already can’t wait to hold this little bear in our arms!

I can’t believe we’re already half way! We love this little one so much already and can’t wait to meet him/her in 20 short weeks!



As of yesterday we are 4 months along! It’ll be a couple more weeks before I feel baby move! And yes, I’m slowly getting a baby bump! 24 weeks to go!



Size of a banana!!



Who knew that someone so little would take up so much room in your heart! Oh, little man, you are so loved already & I don't want to speed up time, but we can't wait to hold you in our arms! #babyV #Marchbaby



## 24 weeks

Baby V is about a foot long & weighs just over a pound!

Little man kicks & moves around a lot!

Baby's face is fully formed with eyelashes & eyebrows!

His brain is growing quickly now & his taste buds are continuing to develop.

PICCOLLAGE

Another month has already passed & we're almost to the end of the second trimester! Baby V is growing fast and he moves around a lot! Our little man likes to trick daddy & not let him feel him move! We are beyond blessed & can't wait to meet this little guy of ours in a very short 16 weeks!



A mother's joy begins when new life is stirring inside..when a tiny heartbeat is heard for the very first time and a playful kick reminds her that she's never alone.

... I can't believe how quickly this pregnancy is going ... I have been cherishing every moment and realizing that the wonderment growing inside me is the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle. To me that's absolutely breathtaking ... Of course we can't wait to hold him in our arms and love him so much already, but this experience is beyond amazing and we are so blessed to be on this journey!



## 28 weeks

*Hello 3rd Trimester!*

*Baby V can now open his eyes!*

*Little man is about 15 inches long & weighs about 2.25 pounds.*

*His favorite thing is to keep mommy awake at night by kicking & moving all over!*

PICCOLLAGE

I can't believe it, another month down and now we are in the 3rd trimester!! Little man is very active and loves to keep Momma up at night, but it's all worth it to feel him move! We can't believe it but we will be meeting this little man in 12 weeks! (Now let's hope we can get everything done before then!)



## 32 Weeks

8 months down, 8 weeks to go!

Little man surprised us this week and weighs 4lbs 10oz & is about 17" long!

He's been busy practicing breathing & is head down!



PIC•COLLAGE

And just like that we are 32 weeks! Only 8 weeks to go until we meet this little man of ours!

The littlest feet make the biggest footprints in our hearts! This little guy doesn't know how much he's loved already!



## 36 weeks

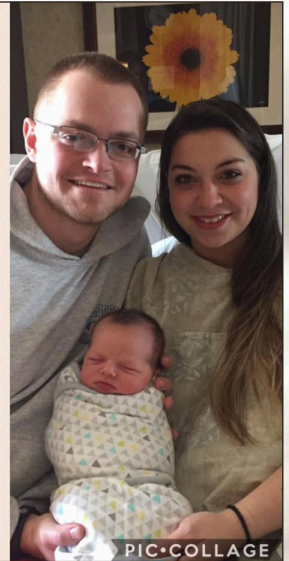
Little man weighs about 6-7 pounds & is 17-19 inches long!

Mommy has been having Braxton-Hicks contractions.

Daddy & I can't wait to meet you in 4 weeks!



PIC•COLLAGE



PIC•COLLAGE

Liam James Van Velson joined our little family at 10:53 p.m. weighing 7lbs 20 oz and 20 3/4 inches long! We are so in love with him! He's a perfect addition to our family!

Welcome to the world, little man!



## Mother's Day and Father's Day Bulletin Inserts



"Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart." (Luke 2:19)

### Heart of a

**Mother** shares that every mother's heart, along with Mary's, is a treasure store of things to ponder—things of joy and things of sorrow. A mother's heart also needs the treasure of Christ's love—to celebrate the joys and to be comforted in sorrow. *Item LFL1108BI. \$0.10 ea.*



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

**Faithful Fathers** spotlights the life of Joseph, the importance of fathers in family life, and the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father in helping dads in their vocation.

"Daily seek to be faithful to your vocation as father. You are important! Daily seek your faithful God's forgiveness. You are important to Him! He will bless and uphold you."

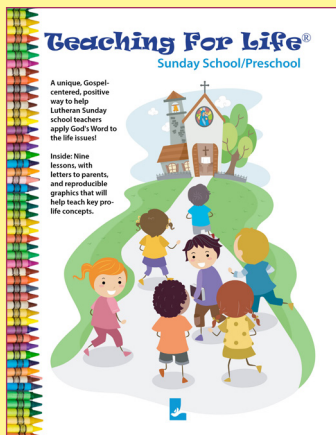
*Item LFL1107BI. \$0.10 ea.*

Two classic bulletin inserts are being brought back for 2017.



Order LFL Resources at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040. Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.

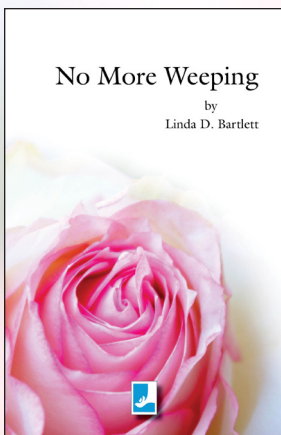
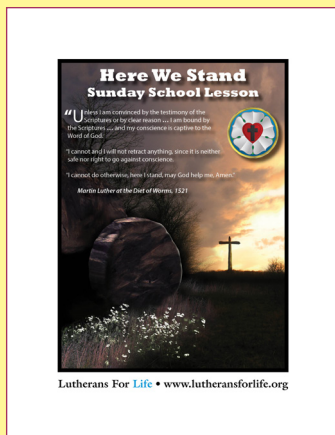




## Downloadable

Teaching For Life – Sunday School/Preschool – Item LFL732C. \$10.00

Here We Stand Sunday School Lesson - A summer Sunday school lesson option and/or a Life Sunday “refresher” lesson.  
[www.lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2017](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/store-life-sunday-2017)



**No More Weeping** by Linda Bartlett is written for those who are suffering from an abortion decision.

“Only God can heal the sin of abortion ... You may feel very alone in the sorrow of your abortion, but you are not ... The Spirit of God helps in times of silent weakness. ‘For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words’ (Romans 8:26). Through the Holy Spirit, all who are broken can claim God’s forgiveness in Jesus Christ.”

Item LFL408. \$2.00 ea.

Be sure to like/follow LFL on social media! See links below:

- [www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife](http://www.facebook.com/LutheransForLife)
- <https://twitter.com/ForLifers>
- [www.instagram.com/lfly4life](http://www.instagram.com/lfly4life)



Also see:

- [www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife](http://www.youtube.com/user/LutheransForLife)
- <https://vimeo.com/user4132928>



Order LFL Resources at [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org) or 800.325.3040. Shipping/handling applies to all orders. Quantity pricing on select resources.

### Life Thoughts in the Church Year

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

You can find Life Thoughts based on the historic One-Year Lectionary at:

[www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-thoughts-in-the-church](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-thoughts-in-the-church).

**July 2 – Pentecost IV (Proper 8A)** – Speaking and showing the truth about how God loves life may not bring temporal peace (Matthew 10:34), but it does give the all-surpassing hope and joy of living forever in His family. And this sure promise and confidence not only preserves us in adversity but also even saves those deceived by the devil’s falsehoods. *Lord and Father, let us share Your prophets’ message and Your Son’s reward. Amen.*

**July 9 – Pentecost V (Proper 9A)** – The Savior Jesus gently assumes every human burden as His own, including unplanned pregnancies and incurable conditions (Matthew 11:29). Whether or not they come about by our own fault, He humbly accompanies through them. His unconditional accepting and steadfast assisting sets us free from sin and self (Romans 8:24-25) and gives rest from fear and grief. *Jesus Christ, King and Lord, come among us to reveal deliverance and salvation. Amen.*

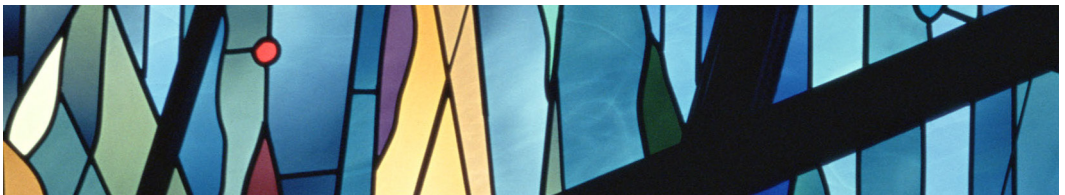
**July 16 – Pentecost VI (Proper 10A)** – Defending life involves declaring the dangers of using death as a solution. As intimidating and discouraging as it sometimes seems (Matthew 13:4-7), God finds His own greatest joy in the Gospel message. He guarantees that His Word of life in Christ alone will yield abundantly (Isaiah 55:11, Matthew 13:23). *Almighty Father, cultivate Your Word in us unto joy and life. Amen.*

**July 23 – Pentecost VII (Proper 11A)** – Weeds infiltrate even the Lord’s gardens (Matthew 13:26-27), and creation itself groans (Romans 8:22). Choosing life can mean suffering, but soon comes harvest. God’s glory cannot stay long concealed (Matthew 13:43), and Christ’s resurrection assures that it will more than make up to us for all annoyances (Romans 8:18). *Son of Man, our Rock and our Redeemer, sow such hope in our hearts that we fear not in any weakness. Amen.*

**July 30 – Pentecost VIII (Proper 12A)** – God proclaims every human person His treasure (Deuteronomy 7:6, Matthew 13:44), whatever contrary appearances they may be hidden under. He loves them and you enough to bind Himself inseparably (Romans 8:38-39) to you and your circumstances. He will give heaven and move earth itself to bring you into His joyful kingdom. *O Lord our God, give us patience until You graciously give us all goodness even through hardship. Amen.*

**August 6 – Pentecost IX (Proper 13A)** – Jesus shows God has as much concern for physical essentials as for spiritual necessities (Matthew 14:14). His people also care so much that we point out the world’s ways that do not sustain or save (Isaiah 55:2). Instead we put before all people (Matthew 14:16-19) the grace of God and faith in Christ that satisfies body and soul. *Holy One, God over all, draw us into Your compassion to serve the vulnerable ones before us. Amen.*

**August 13 – Pentecost X (Proper 14A)** – He who commands the winds and waves (Matthew 14:27, 32), who controls all human history and destiny (Job 38:4-18), also manages the suf-



ferings and situations of our lives. Even the unborn, unconscious, unhealthy, and unproductive do not fall outside His everlasting arms. His incarnate love bestows riches without distinction (Romans 10:12-13). *Almighty Maker of heavens and earth, take hold of all who fear and save us. Amen.*

**August 20 – Pentecost XI (Proper 15A)** – Our words of respect and works of protection even for disregarded lives (Isaiah 56:6, Matthew 15:27) often appear to crumble under the force of popular opinion. Nevertheless, our Lord, the Father Almighty, attends to these prayers and effects life-giving mercy through them (Matthew 15:28; Romans 11:15, 29-32). *Son of David and Son of God, gather us and all our fellow outcasts into Your holy house forevermore. Amen.*

**August 27 – Pentecost XII (Proper 16A)** – Utilizing death to address disappointment makes sense to our sinful minds. Certain circumstances don't feel worth living, and God's ways often seem unsearchable (Romans 11:33). Yet even amid pain the very gates of hell cannot prevail against Christ's righteous will (Matthew 16:18-19, Isaiah 51:5). His Gospel alone comforts what all others dismiss as waste places (Isaiah 51:3). *Son of the Living God, transform our people into Your heavenly kingdom by renewing our minds in Christ. Amen.*

**September 3 – Pentecost XIII (Proper 17A)** – Like Peter, the world imitates Satan in talking or acting as if some situations even Jesus shouldn't redeem (Matthew 16:21-23). Though we often allow this or even agree, still the Lord God does not forget or forsake us (Jeremiah 15:15, 20-21). Indeed, He lifts up the lowly (Romans 12:16), because His vengeance has been repaid against our crucified Savior instead (Romans 12:19). His forgiving goodness overcomes every evil, even sins against life. *Lord God of Hosts, by Your words let us bring rejoicing to those who weep. Amen.*

**September 10 – Pentecost XIV (Proper 18A)** – We warn our neighbors to turn from abortion, embryo destruction, assisted suicide, abuse, pornography, promiscuity, and perversion (Ezekiel 33:7-9). This is not merely because it is wicked but even more because they are God's precious children to whom He has come in Christ to share His whole kingdom (Matthew 18:3-4, 10-14). *Father in heaven, strengthen us to tell brothers, sisters, and lost ones of Your deliverance. Amen.*

**September 17 – Pentecost XV (Proper 19A)** – All human choices, including ours, affect others—often significantly (Romans 14:7). The devil uses the illusion of autonomy to bring about death. We cannot disconnect from each other any more than God will separate from us (Romans 14:8-9). Jesus Christ surrounds us even in sin and suffering with forgiveness, compassion, fellowship, and community (Matthew 18:27) that keeps us alive (Genesis 50:20). *God of all goodness, make us stand and provide for our little ones. Amen.*

**September 24 – Pentecost XVI (Proper 20A)** – God's plans and actions don't always look good (Isaiah 55:8-9), especially when unforeseen events saddle us with panic and labor (Philippians 1:22). But He provides purpose and worth even in times of trouble (Philippians 1:20-21). Great reward awaits all who settle themselves into His generosity (Matthew 20:9, 15). *Lord Most High, lead us to speak the Word without fear, for the sake of all our fellow laborers. Amen.*



**The government of the United Kingdom has granted permission to Newcastle University to create three-parent embryos in combating mitochondrial-related genetic diseases.** The UK's fertility authority, the Human Fertilization and Embryology Authority (HFEA), announced last December it would grant licenses for the controversial procedure on a case-by-case basis. A number of couples have since applied for the procedure ... Critics described the move as “ethically reckless.” Mark Bhagwandin of the pro-life charity Life told *The Daily Telegraph*: “We had hoped that the HFEA would have listened to the thousands of people who have expressed concern about three-parent embryos. Instead it has ignored the alarm bells and approved a procedure which will alter the human genome. It is at the very least reckless and irresponsible given that we have absolutely no idea what the long-term consequences are to us interfering with the human genome. Whilst we are deeply sympathetic to the plight of people with mitochondrial-related diseases, the end does not always justify the means. Our understandable search for therapies to help overcome illness and disabilities must be done in an ethical way and balanced against the unconditional acceptance of all human beings, whatever differences they may have.” (*BioEdge.org*, 3/18/17; *CLR LifeWire*, 3/24/17)

**Many doctors in Canada who initially signed up to provide lethal injections or medication for their patients have found the act “simply too distressing,” according to Jeff Blackmer, the Canadian Medical Association’s VP of Medical Professionalism.** “... we’re seeing doctors who go through one experience and it’s just overwhelming, it’s too difficult, and those are the ones who say, ‘Take my name off the list. I can’t do any more.’” Canada’s Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) law went into effect last June, officially legalizing euthanasia in the country. The list of 137 physicians in Ontario willing to participate in MAID continues to get shorter. At least 24 doctors in Ontario have already asked to be removed from the listing and another 30 have opted out temporarily. Meanwhile, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) has stated that doctors who oppose euthanasia must provide patients with “an effective referral” to a “non-objecting” physician who will kill their patient. The Coalition for HealthCare and Conscience is challenging the CPSO’s policy to protect conscience rights for all medical personnel. (*Euthanasia Prevention Coalition Newsletter*, March 2017; *CLR LifeWire*, 3/16/17)

**A Swedish midwife who has fought for years to not be forced to commit abortions lost her case at the Swedish Labour Court of Appeal ...** Ellinor Grimmark, a Christian, was rejected for employment by three maternity centers for her unwillingness to assist with abortions. She sued in local court, and although the court determined Grimmark’s rights had been violated, it ultimately ruled against her in 2015 because maternity centers have a “duty to ensure that women have effective access to abortion.” Grimmark was ordered to pay the local government’s legal fees, which were more than SKr 1m (over \$100,000 USD) ... “The desire to protect life is what leads many midwives and nurses to enter the medical profession in the first place,” [said Robert Clarke, director of European advocacy for ADF International]. “Instead of forcing desperately needed midwives out of a profession, states should look to safeguard the moral convictions of their staff.” ([www.lifesitenews.com/news/swedish-court-denies-pro-life-midwives-appeal-its-reasonable-for-employer-t](http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/swedish-court-denies-pro-life-midwives-appeal-its-reasonable-for-employer-t), 4/12/17)

## Christ Is in You

**“If Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness”** (Romans 8:10 NIV).

How many funerals have you been to over the past year or month or week? It seems the older we get, the more funerals we get “invited” to. Is that the curse of age? Or is it perhaps the privilege of age?

When someone I know dies, it is always a sad occasion. It is never an event to be enjoyed or embraced. That is because death itself is awful. It is repulsive. It is ... \_\_\_\_\_ (you fill in the blank with one of the many available descriptions of death).

Even though some will say that death is natural, it really isn't. Death is not natural because our Creator did not originally create man to die but to live. Death is not just the result of sin but the punishment for sin. Death is “condemnation.” These bodies of ours wear out and die. Or for some, tragically too soon, their bodies meet cruel death by disease, illness, or accident. Whatever the cause, the death of this body will come. “[Y]our body is subject to death.”

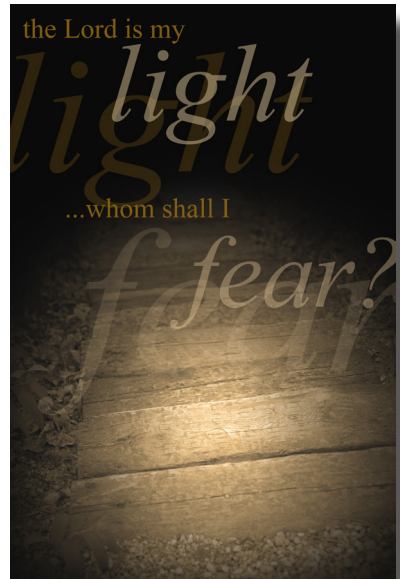
But not your eternal soul. “[T]here is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1 NIV). Wow! Think about that a moment. “No condemnation” means never condemned to eternal death but elevated to eternal life ... in Christ Jesus. We know our Savior lived and died and rose again for us. We trust in Him to cover us with righteousness, and the righteous live forever.

The apostle Paul wrote previously to the Romans: “[A]part from the law the righteousness of God has been made known ... This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ” (Romans 3:21, 22a NIV). Here is good news: Jesus credits His righteousness to us. This gives us daring confidence to live each day in Christ, looking forward to being with Christ for an eternity.

The Holy Spirit loves righteousness too much to leave even one righteous person in the grave. He is too proud of His righteous saints to hide them under cemetery clay. He is too eager to glorify and reward the righteous; He cannot leave them subject to death forever. You are His righteous saint, covered with the righteousness of your Savior, and you will be made alive all because there is not condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

*Jesus, thank You for giving me the daring confidence to live each day for You now, even while I look forward to an eternity in heaven with You. Amen.*

*From Meditations Daily Devotional Vol. 60, No. 2 © 2017 Northwestern Publishing House. Reprinted with permission.*



## Share the Life Message All through the Year!

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

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

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## Check Out Our New Life Team Tools and Mark Your Calendar for 2017 Life Team Leader Conference Calls!



**SAVE THE DATES:** June 13, August 8, October 10, and December 12. These are one-hour calls to give For Life leaders “strength for their journey.” The call will be led by Pastor Doug Merkey and will include a biblical devotion, leadership coaching, idea sharing, and prayer. Find out more:

[www.lutheransforlife.org/about/life-chapters-and-life-teams](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/about/life-chapters-and-life-teams)

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## Automatic Withdrawal of Your bills—and LFL, Too?

Go to [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org) and click “Give.” Then look for “**Automatic Monthly Debit from Your Checking or Savings Account (ACH)**.” Download the ACH Contribution Form. Follow the instructions, and your automatic gift withdrawal will be in place. Many thanks in Christ! – *John Hawkins*

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## For Those Who Have Had an Abortion, a Word of Hope



We all have grieved the loss of someone at some point in our lives ... But those who have lost a child because they had an abortion, or were part of an abortion decision, often do not allow themselves to grieve or don't know how to grieve. 888-217-8679 or [help@word-of-hope.org](mailto:help@word-of-hope.org) • [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org)

**Since 1973: 58,586,256 abortions in America**

Source: [www.lifenews.com/2016/01/14/58586256-abortions-in-america-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973](http://www.lifenews.com/2016/01/14/58586256-abortions-in-america-since-roe-v-wade-in-1973)

## Thank You, Life Chapters!

In addition to all they do to serve Gospel-centered life affirmation and Lutherans For Life in their local communities, we would like to thank the following Life Chapters for their support of National Lutherans For Life during 2016:

Carver Lifelines LFL #096, Waconia, MN; Central Connecticut LFL #204, Bristol, CT; Coles County LFL #259, Mattoon, IL; DuPage County LFL #083, Villa Park, IL; East Dakota LFL #191, Aurora, SD; Fargo Moorhead Area LFL #037, Fargo, ND; Fond du Lac LFL #304, Fond du Lac, WI; Four-S LFL #034, Stewardson, IL; Greater Grand Rapids LFL #061, Rockford, MI; Houston LFL #132, Houston, TX; Jefferson County LFL #180, Dittmer, MO; Johnson County LFL #278, Lenexa, KS; Lakeshore LFL #152, Luxemburg, WI; LFL of Denver #023, Littleton, CO; Lincoln Area LFL #184, Lincoln, NE; Linn Area LFL #072, Marion, IA; Los Angeles LFL #275 - Our Redeemer Lutheran, Winnetka, CA; Loving Arms LFL #094, Fraser, MI; McHenry County LFL #155, Marengo, IL; Norfolk Area LFL #195, Norfolk, NE; Northern Ozarks LFL #342, Lincoln, MO; Northern Virginia LFL #168, Centreville, VA; Ozaukee County LFL #026, Cedarburg, WI; Peoria Area LFL #268, Peoria, IL; Portage Area LFL #038, Portage, WI; Rochester Area LFL #339, Stewartville, MN; Root River LFL #139, Wykoff, MN; Salem Lutheran LFL #246, Florissant, MO; Seward Area LFL #041, Seward, NE; Shawano Area LFL #093, Shawano, WI; Springfield LFL #090, Battlefield, MO; St. Charles County LIFE LFL #337, St. Charles, MO; Tilden Area LFL #177, Tilden, NE; Trinity LFL #220, White Lake, SD; West Central Missouri LFL #150, Concordia, MO.



## Abundant Life Giving Society

Beginning in 2017, Lutherans For Life has opted not to list annual members of LFL's Abundant Life Giving Society (ALGS) in *LifeDate*. This is for reasons of individual privacy. However, your support at the ALGS level is still very much needed and appreciated!

The ALGS was first introduced in 2010 and seeks to thank and recognize all supporters who contribute \$1,000 or more during the calendar year. Donors who give at this level will continue to receive a personal acknowledgment and thank you from LFL towards year end. Also, memorials and honorariums for 2016 can be found on the Give page at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org).

More questions on the ALGS or supporting LFL in any way can be directed to 888.364.LIFE (5433) or [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org).

The  
Abundant Life  
Giving Society



Lutherans For Life  
[www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)  
[info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org)  
888.364.LIFE

## It's a New Year and Interest Rates Being Paid Are ... Well ....

by John Hawkins, Director of Development

When most folks planned to retire, it was their hope, if not expectation, that they'd live at least in part off the interest earned on savings deposits. Then the great recession hit, and interest earned dropped dramatically. As of press time, the Federal Reserve has raised interest rates twice in three months. Still, interest on a six-month certificate of deposit averaged 0.14 percent. Last year at this time it was 0.13 percent. Meanwhile, many folks wonder if there's some way—indeed any way—to get a higher return on their money. The answer is yes, there is, and it can also be designed to let you do some good in the Lord. This can be done through either of two vehicles: a **Charitable Gift Annuity** or a **Charitable Remainder Unitrust**.

Now before I describe them, let me explain one thing. You'll notice that both of these begin with the word "charitable." That is, they were created first and foremost to leave gifts to charitable organizations (or in a narrower context, ministry—such as Lutherans For Life). That should be the main motivator in entering into an agreement to do one of these vehicles. Other benefits, such as income, tax incentives, etc., should be secondary motivators. While charitable intent should predominate, the secondary benefits have never been more attractive, in my opinion.

First, let's look at a **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)**. Conventional wisdom has always held that these shouldn't be done unless you're in your 70s (and preferably your later 70s or even 80s). That's because one of the key variables—income paid—just wasn't that much, relative to other things. However, let's look at a sample CGA for a husband and wife who are both 69. They have a variety of assets, including a \$25,000 certificate of deposit that's up for renewal. Instead of renewing that CD, however, they establish a CGA to benefit Lutherans For Life (which they've also supported financially in the past). Here are the benefits they will receive:

- Annual interest rate: 4.5% (*Please note that the rate will be reduced by slightly over 1% because of a management fee that will be levied by the administering foundation.*)
- Annual income of \$1,125 (of which \$848+ **is tax free**, making the return actually higher than the percentage rate cited above)
- Charitable deduction of \$6,839+ (also positively impacting their bottom line)

The couple would continue to receive income from the CGA **guaranteed** until both husband and wife die. The remaining principal will then be sent to Lutherans For Life. (Note: it's likely that this amount will be less than the original \$25,000, since part of the principal will be used to pay income.) Of course, no one can predict the future when it comes to fiscal policy or interest rates. All things being equal, however, CGA payments alone as illustrated, even without the future gift, would be very positive. Even if interest rates edge up a bit higher, they will still fare comparably.

Second, let's look at the other option—a **Charitable Remainder Unitrust (CRT)** with the same basic variables: husband and wife both age 69 using \$25,000 in cash. Here are the benefits they will receive:



- Payment Rate: 5% of fair market value or \$1,250 (*Please note: This payment rate percentage would be reduced by slightly over 1% because of a fee that will be charged by the managing foundation. In addition, legal fees may be incurred in setting up a CRT. Lastly, annual dollars received may be reduced in future years if principal needs to be tapped to help make payments.*)
- Charitable Deduction: \$9,863

Because of the charitable deduction, a CRT may be considered the more attractive of the two options for people under 70 years of age, particularly for those with higher incomes (e.g., if they are still working).

Of course, as with a CGA, charitable intent must be an integral factor in establishing a trust. In that regard, a CRT also has a distinct advantage over a Charitable Annuity. With a CRT, you can likewise leave the principal to a charity or ministry upon your death(s). However, **after that time you can also elect to have payments continue for five, ten, or even up to 20 years to (a) loved one(s) such as children, grandchildren, etc.** Once this time is completed, the principal remaining would then go to your chosen ministry.

So, the time may be right to consider either a CGA or CRT, both for financial and charitable reasons. In the case of the latter, this may also allow you to do something you've always wanted to do but haven't—leave a portion of your assets to a charity, a ministry, or specifically to Lutherans For Life before you pass on.

If you would like to know more about Charitable Annuities or Trusts, and possibly have a personalized illustration run for you (with no obligation and in complete confidence), feel free to contact me at 888.364.LIFE (5433) or [jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:jhawkins@lutheransforlife.org).

May God bless you today and always!

*Note: this article is not intended as legal or financial advice. For assistance with specific issues, you are encouraged to seek the advice of an attorney or other professional advisor.*



The time may be right to consider either a Charitable Gift Annuity or a Charitable Remainder Unitrust.



**Buying or selling a home or commercial property?** You can support Lutherans For Life at no cost to you by taking advantage of the Real Estate for Life program. Call 877.543.3871 or email [proliferealestate@yahoo.com](mailto:proliferealestate@yahoo.com) for more information.

[www.realestateforlife.org](http://www.realestateforlife.org)

[www.lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life)

## 2016 Congregational Auxiliaries – Organizations Donor Honor Roll

**L**utherans For Life is very grateful to the following congregational auxiliaries and organizations for their financial support in 2016. To God be the Glory!

Bethlehem Lutheran Ladies Aid, Morristown, MN; Bethlehem Lutheran Women's Guild, Dundee, IL; Calvary Lutheran LWML, Kansas City, KS; Christ Lutheran Church - Dorcas Circle, Duluth, MN; Christ Lutheran Ladies Guild, Normal, IL; Christ Lutheran LWML, Elbow Lake, MN; Christ Lutheran LWML, Rawlins, WY; Christ Lutheran LWML Martha Society, Noblesville, IN; Christ Lutheran Sunday School, Columbus, NE; Christ Lutheran Women's Guild, Mantua, OH; Community Lutheran Church Women, Wausaukee, WI; Concordia Ladies Aid, Clearwater, NE; Dorcas Society, Taylor Ridge, IL; Ebenezer Lutheran Johanna Jacobs Circle, Greensboro, NC; Ebenezer Mission Society, Leslie, MO; Emanuel Lutheran LWML, Santa Barbara, CA; Faith Lutheran Christian Service League, Sturtevant, WI; Faith Lutheran Church LWML, Jefferson City, MO; Faith Lutheran Church Men's Bible Study, Naples, FL; Faith Lutheran Church Women, Dannebrog, NE; Faith Lutheran Ladies Guild, Hot Springs Village, AR; Faith Lutheran Ladies Society, Early, IA; Faith Lutheran School, Plano, TX; Faith Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Grand Prairie, TX; First Lutheran Church Guild-LWML, Phillipsburg, KS; First Lutheran Women in Mission, Waldorf, MN; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Sherman, IL; Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Ladies, North Mankato, MN; Good Shepherd LWML, Pittsburgh, PA; Good Shepherd LWML, Appleton, WI; Grace Luth. Christian Service Guild LWML, Brooklyn Park, MN; Grace Lutheran Church Ladies' Aid, Seguin, TX; Grace Lutheran Church LWML, Crescent City, CA; Grace Lutheran LWML, Visalia, CA; Guardian Lutheran School, Dearborn, MI; Hales Corners Lutheran School, Hales Corners, WI; Holy Cross Lutheran Ladies Aid, Waterloo, IL; Immanuel Luth. Ladies Aid of Potsdam, Elgin, MN; Immanuel Lutheran Church Ladies Aid, Tilden, NE; Immanuel Lutheran Church Women, Plainview, MN; Immanuel Lutheran Church-Mission Club, Davenport, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Aid, Rockwell City, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Aid, Logan, IA; Immanuel Lutheran Ladies Society, Decatur, IN; Immanuel Lutheran LWML, Tuscola, IL; Immanuel Lutheran School, Olivette, MO; Immanuel LWML (Lotts Creek), Lone Rock, IA; Light of Christ Women of Life, Williston, ND; Lutheran High School of St. Charles County, St. Peters, MO; Lutheran Laymen's League - Trinity Lutheran Church, Poca-hontas, IA; Lutheran Priscilla Guild, Manilla, IA; Lutheran South Unity School, Fort Wayne, IN; Lutheran Women of the Redeemer/LWML, Columbus, GA; Lutheran Women's Missionary Guild, Madison, CT; LWML, Marshalltown, IA; LWML - St. Matthew Luth. Church, Hazen, ND; LWML - York Zone, NE; LWML Iowa West District, Fort Dodge, IA; LWML Nebraska District South, Lexington, NE; LWML Northern Illinois District, LWML Waterloo Zone, Reinbeck, IA; Lydia's Fellowship Thrift Store, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Mary Martha Circle, Oakley, KS; Mary Martha Guild, Coal Valley, IL; Mary Martha Guild, Columbia, MO; Messiah Lutheran Women's Guild, Ripon, WI; Mount Calvary Ev. Luth. Church Bible Class, Omaha, NE; Mount Zion Ladies League, Denver, CO; National AALC Women of Life, Nunda, SD; North Shore Lutheran Ministry, Lake Forest, IL; Our Father Lutheran School, Greenfield, WI; Our Savior Ladies Guild, Salinas, CA; Our Savior's Afternoon Guild, Crookston, MN; Our Saviors Lutheran Day School, Crookston, MN; Our Savior's Lutheran Women's Guild, Hutchinson, MN; Peace Lutheran Church LWML, Bremerton, WA; Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid, Wall Lake, IA; Peace LWML, Filer, ID; Pella Lutheran Ladies Aid, Waupun, WI; Philathea Society, Panora, IA; Prince of Peace Luth. Church Ladies Guild, Lakewood, WA; Redeemer Lutheran Church LWML, Sioux City, IA; Saint Paul Dorcas Circle, Falls City, NE; Saint Paul Lutheran High School, Concordia, MO; Saint Paul Lutheran Ladies, Janesville, WI; Saint Peter's Ladies Aid, LWML, Scribner, NE; Salem Lutheran Morning Bible Class, Salem, MO; Salem Lutheran School, Florissant, MO; Shepherd of the Hills Luth. Church LWML, Hyannis, NE; South Shore Trinity Lutheran Guild, White Bear Lake, MN; St John Lutheran Ladies Aid, State Center, IA; St John Lutheran Women's Guild, Oskaloosa, IA; St John's Fellowship Club, Pekin, IL; St John's Ladies Aid, Stewartville, MN; St John's Luth. Church Ladies Aid, Hammond, MN; St John's Luth. Church LWML, Wilcox, NE; St John's Luth. Ladies Aid, Kiron, IA; St John Lutheran Ladies Aid, Lincoln Park, MI; St John's Lutheran Ladies Aid, Victor, IA; St Luke's LC Missionary League, Worland, WY; St Paul Dorcas Society, Fairview, KS; St Paul Ladies Aid-Whitehall, Strum, WI; St Paul LLL, Altamont, IL; St Paul Lutheran Dorcas Circle, Bishop, TX; St Paul Lutheran School, Rochelle, IL; St Paul Lutheran School, Concordia, MO; St Paul Lutheran School, Utica, NE; St Paul LWML, Garner, IA; St Paul Lydia Circle, Fredericksburg, IA; St Paul Women of Life, Tripoli, IA; St Paul's Church Cotta Guild, Waseca, MN; St Paul's Lutheran Adult Bible Class, Webster City, IA; St Paul's Lutheran Charity Club, Fairmont, MN; St Paul's Lutheran Church Women, Wenatchee, WA; St Paul's LWML, Park City, MT; St Paul's LWML, Wauneta, NE; St Paul's Men's Club, Concordia, MO; St Peter Lutheran School, Saint Peter, IL; St Peter's Lutheran Church LWML, Riceville, IA; St. James Lutheran Church LWML, Lexington, TX; St. John Ev. Lutheran Ladies Aid, Merrill, WI; St. John Lutheran Guild, McCook, NE; St. John Lutheran LWML, Melcher-Dallas, IA; St. John's Luth. Church LWML, Corcoran, MN; St. John's Luth. Ladies Aid, Villard, MN; St. John's Luth. Women's Missionary League, Norwood Young America, MN; St. John's LWML, Denver, IA; St. John's LWML, Buffalo, MN; St. Johns Women Society, Luverne, MN; St. John's-Bethlehem LWML, Upham, ND; St. Luke Women's Guild, Clinton Township, MI; St. Matthew Luth. Church LWML Society, Holt, MI; St. Matthews Ev. LWML, Max, ND; St. Paul Ev. Lutheran LWML, Lester Prairie, MN; St. Paul Lutheran Church Dorcas LWML, Austin, TX; St. Paul Lutheran Guild, Red Bluff, CA; St. Paul LWML, Lewistown, MT; St. Paul's Ladies Aid, Fulda, MN; St. Paul's Ladies Society, Boone, IA; St. Paul's Lutheran School, Enid, OK; St. Paul's LWML, Webster City, IA; St. Paul's LWML, Bridgeport, NE; St. Peter's Luth. Church Christian Women's Council, Arlington, WI; St. Peter's Lutheran Church Ladies Aid, Forestville, WI; Stavanger Lutheran Church Dorcas Society, Garden City, IA; Suburban Bethlehem Lutheran School, Fort Wayne, IN; TAALC Women of Life, Williston, ND; Tabitha Society, Augusta, KS; Trinity All Circle Guild, Mallard, IA; Trinity Ev. Lutheran School, Roselle, IL; Trinity Ladies Aid, State Center, IA; Trinity Ladies Aid, Lowden, IA; Trinity Ladies Aid, New Haven, MO; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Knoxville, IA; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Hartford, SD; Trinity Lutheran Church LWML, Kearney, MO; Trinity Lutheran Friends-in-Faith, Roanoke, IL; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid, Packwaukee, WI; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Aid/LWML, Cissna Park, IL; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Guild, Staples, MN; Trinity Lutheran Ladies Society, Hampton, IA; Trinity Lutheran Mission Circle/LWML, Glidden, WI; Trinity Lutheran School, Davenport, IA; Trinity Lutheran School, San Angelo, TX; Trinity Lutheran Women Afternoon Group, Algona, IA; Trinity Lutheran Women's Guild, Boone, IA; Trinity Lutheran Women's Guild, Urbana, IL; Trinity LWML, Casper, WY; Trinity Lutheran Women's League, Fort Dodge, IA; Trinity Lutheran Youth Group, Morristown, MN; Trinity Missionary League, Copperas Cove, TX; Village Lutheran Ladies Guild, Lanoka Harbor, NJ; Women of Life, Williston, ND; Women of St Paul, Fort Dodge, IA; Women's League of St Johns Luth. Church, Topeka, KS; Zion Luth. Church Adult Bible Class, Willshire, OH; Zion Lutheran Church Adult Bible Class, Poplar Bluff, MO; Zion Lutheran Church Bible Class, Grant Park, IL; Zion Lutheran Church Ladies Guild, Manning, IA; Zion Lutheran Church LWML, Hiawatha, IA; Zion Lutheran Church LWML, Fairmont, OK; Zion Lutheran Ladies Aid, Danvers, IL; Zion Lutheran Ladies' Aid & LWML, Cologne, MN; Zion Lutheran School, Litchfield, IL; Zion Lutheran School, Dallas, TX; Zion Lutheran Womens Missionary League (LWML), Terra Bella, CA; Zion LWML, Ogden, IA; Zion LWML, LuVerne, IA; Zion LWML, Detroit Lakes, MN; Zion LWML, Buffalo, OK.

While every effort was made to include all contributing auxiliaries and organizations, we regret any that may have been omitted by oversight.

# Hope For Life



## 2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Ft. Wayne, Indiana – Concordia Seminary, September 16, 2017

### *Mark Your Calendars!*

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

*Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Fort Wayne:*

- Rev. Michael Salemink – “Standing Out in the Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- Rev. Scott Licht – “Hope Amidst the Lies – A Christian Perspective on Physician-Assisted Suicide”
- Dr. Christina Francis – “Yes, Abortion Pill Reversal Will Work”
- Rev. Dr. Matthew Rueger – “We’ve Been This Way Before” – Christians often feel thrust into a hopeless battle previous generations didn’t have to fight, especially in the culture wars raging over sexual ethics and life issues.
- Rev. Dr. Peter J. Scaer – “The Loss of Life and Liberty in the Pursuit of Happiness”

For additional information, including registration, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: [www.lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference). Questions? Email Virginia Flo at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org).

LFL conferences are wonderful places to meet new friends and build relationships! You will find many FOR LIFE-minded folks from around the United States and Canada. (Some say an LFL conference is like attending a family reunion.)

# Hope For Life



## 2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

New Braunfels, Texas – Cross Lutheran Church, October 7, 2017

*Mark Your Calendars!*

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

*Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in New Braunfels:*

- Rev. Michael Salemink – “Standing Out in the Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- Laura Davis – “Defusing the Tension: Revealing the Heart of the Abortion Debate”
- Dr. Barbara Geistfeld – “Life ... a Gift from God” on the developing human being
- Dr. Sheila Page – “Pain Perception in the Developing Human”
- Rev. Dr. Laurence White on life issues and the church

For additional information, including registration, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: [www.lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference).

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org).

An LFL conference is spiritually uplifting and encouraging.

The speakers focus directly on God’s Word and how it applies to the life issues as demonstrated in our conference theme, Hope For Life.

# Hope For Life



## 2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Lincoln, Nebraska – Redeemer Lutheran Church, October 21, 2017

*Mark Your Calendars!*

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

*Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Lincoln:*

- Rev. Michael Salemink – “Standing Out in the Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- Laura Davis – “Defusing the Tension: Revealing the Heart of the Abortion Debate”
- David Zach of Remedy Drive, with a pre-conference concert at Concordia University, Seward, and speaking on human trafficking
- Brian Young on Creation
- Greg Baker – “Christian Witness in the Public Square”

For additional information, including registration, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: [www.lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference).

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org).

Knowledgeable and engaging speakers will address a variety of life issues.

Learn about life in ways you may have never thought of before.

Go to the link above to find out more.

# Hope For Life



## 2017 Lutherans For Life Regional Conferences

Pekin, Illinois – St. John’s Lutheran Church, November 11, 2017

*Mark Your Calendars!*

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15).

*Here are the wonderful speakers scheduled to join us in Pekin:*

- Rev. Michael Salemink – “Standing Out in the Field” – How to be a life-minded congregation and community
- Dr. Sheila Page – “Pain Perception in the Developing Human”
- Kim Laube on embryo adoption
- Brian Young on Creation
- Sherry Sherwood – “Pregnancy Centers vs Illinois Law Requiring Abortion Information” and the value of pregnancy centers

For additional information, including registration, schedules, hotels, and more, go to: [www.lutheransforlife.org/conference](http://www.lutheransforlife.org/conference).

Questions? Email Virginia Flo at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org).

Great exhibitors will be sharing wonderful resources, products, ministries, and organizations.

LFL conferences offer a wonderful opportunity to meet local, state, and national LFL leaders; the LFL national office team—AND FOR ALL OF THEM TO MEET YOU!

## Lutherans For Life ...

- **Applies God's Word**, both His Law and His Gospel, to all the life issues—abortion, chastity, assisted suicide and euthanasia, and bio-technology.
- **Assists For Life Christians** in offering the hope and help of the Good News of Jesus Christ to: women with an untimely pregnancy; women, men, and families suffering under the guilt of an abortion; young people with questions and concerns about sexuality; and the elderly and those with disabilities or terminal illnesses.
- **Believes God gives the gift of life to all people**—from the moment of conception until natural death.
- **Needs your support to continue to encourage, educate, and uplift with a Gospel-centered, Word-based message of hope, forgiveness, and new life!**

## Lutherans For Life ...

**Witnesses** to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God.

**Serves** through individuals who volunteer at pregnancy care centers, with hospice, through prayer, and in a wide variety of caring activities.

**Educates and Encourages** through conferences and workshops, printed resources (including our *LifeDate* journal, *Life News*, *Life Quotes*, and *Directions*), Life Sunday materials and Bible studies, curricula (including Teaching For Life®), video, and through [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org).

**Equips** local congregations to speak out on life issues in their communities through Life Chapters and Life Teams. Many Lutherans For Life State Federations and Life Chapters also support a variety of compassionate, caring pregnancy and post-abortion ministries that offer pre- and post-natal counseling, parenting skills workshops, and lifestyle counsel.

## Lutherans For Life ...

Is a **Recognized Service Organization** (RSO) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Is a **ministry partner** of the North American Lutheran Church.

Is not subsidized by any church body.

Is supported entirely by individual donations and grants.



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

**Our Vision** ... Every Lutheran 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.

### National LFL Board of Directors

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Paula Oldenburg, Wisconsin – Rhinelander

LFL has 11 State Federations, 95 Life Chapters, 110 Life Ministry Coordinators, and 58 Life Teams in the US.

**LifeDate**

Lutherans  
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*Mark your calendars ...*

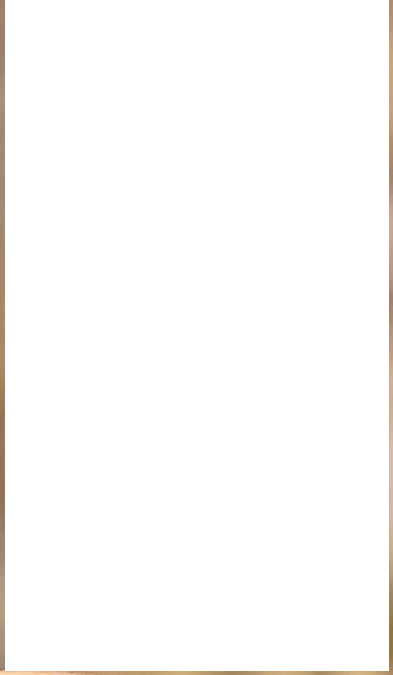
**Hope for Life - 2017 LFL Regional Conferences**

**Ft. Wayne, Indiana - September 16**

**New Braunfels, Texas - October 7**

**Lincoln, Nebraska - October 21**

**Pekin, Illinois - November 11**



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