

# LIFEDATE

Fall 2024  
from  
LUTHERANS FOR LIFE



Hope  
and a

Future

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**LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE**

Equipping Lutherans and  
their neighbors to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life!

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## Hope and a Future

by Pastor Michael Salemink



"For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11).

**W**hat a delightful and beloved assurance Jeremiah delivers from our Heavenly Father!

The prophet is ministering to a heartbroken Israel. Pagan Babylonians have deported their people from the Promised Land and left their Jerusalem in ruins. Yet even amid this despair, the Lord God has not forgotten His covenant or abandoned His plan of salvation for the chosen people—and ultimately the whole world.

These words anticipate two fulfillments. First, after seventy years in exile, the people will return, rebuild, and resettle. Second, in seven hundred years, Jesus the Savior will fulfill what all Israelite history prefigures and gather all the elect of humankind into a new heavens and earth inaugurated by His sacrifice and resurrection.

Our Almighty Maker has always had in mind good things for His people. He continually regards them with forgiveness and favor that invite us to hope in what's coming. Of course, the blessings may not all materialize immediately. And God's grace does not exclude us from all difficulty. Those living during and even after Babylonian captivity struggle under the curse of sinfulness. False prophets and unfaithful inhabitants face severe consequences.

*(The NIV translation, "... plans to prosper you and not to harm you ...," misleads a little. "Prosper" sounds like material gain, and "not to harm" sounds like invincibility from all injury. ESV's "... plans welfare and not for evil ..." captures the sense of survival and salvation—rather than primarily profit—and shielding from what endangers the soul—instead of principally what disturbs the body.)*

How appropriate for the life issues. Difficult situations like surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis can tempt us to forget our Savior's presence and power. Comfort comes not from making deals with death but from the gifts He wrings and the privileges He brings even in and through hardship. An everlasting, unchanging, and all-sufficient Creator and Keeper not only provides life, He protects it as well!



## Hope for the Future

by Diane Albers, President of Lutherans For Life



Maybe you have heard this phrase before: “Man plans, and God laughs.” According to Google, the phrase comes from a Yiddish proverb. And you know what it means: Our plans are not nearly as good as God’s plans for us—no matter what we think!

Jeremiah was in a hard place as a prophet. He had been telling God’s people to change their wicked ways and follow God, but they had not done so. Babylon had defeated Israel, destroyed Solomon’s temple, and taken many in exile to Babylon. Jeremiah told them that in 70 years, God would come to them to fulfill His promise to bring them back to their land.

**“‘FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU,’ DECLARES THE LORD, ‘PLANS FOR WELFARE AND NOT FOR EVIL, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE’” (JEREMIAH 29:11).**

Despite the sin of His people, God remained faithful and kept His covenant promise. This promise is for us, too. Note that it is not always immediate, but that it is the best plan for us. When we think of our future, we have a promise of hope even though our plans are failing.

What are God’s plans? Once upon a time, my husband, Mike, and I wanted to start a family, but it took six years before we had our first child and three more years before we had our second. We wanted a third child, but because of my age I did not want to wait six years. So, we prayed and gave God a deadline and, of course, we got pregnant immediately when our daughter was about nine months old! Now I had the opposite problem! What was I going to do with two babies under two?

I believe that God was preparing me for my work with Lutherans For Life (LFL). I know how it feels to long for a child and wonder if it will ever happen. I never contemplated an abortion, but I know how it feels to be pregnant when you are not sure that you want to be. LFL is prepared to help infertile couples see God’s plan for them. If not their own biological child, perhaps adoption or foster care are part of God’s plan.

As a teacher, I saw students with learning disabilities, severe allergies, physical disabilities, and Down syndrome and, as I worked with these children, I saw their mama’s pain. I saw how society views these children, and how their mamas were encouraged to abort. LFL is prepared to uphold families with children that have any kind of disability and to help women who have been hurt by abortion.

I have seen my parents, my in-laws, my brother, and dear friends who died in the Lord cared for and prayed for until the end. LFL has much to say about the end of life.

Over 45 years ago, a small group of people met and formed LFL to uphold the value of life affirmed by the resurrected Christ. Today we communicate clearly that death is not an acceptable, God-pleasing way to deal with the problems of life, and that there is a better way: the Gospel! Did that small group of Lutheran Christians have any idea what God’s plans were for LFL? Maybe not, but they had the sure hope of God’s covenant promise!

## Bless a Family with a Blanket of Love

by Michele Hartshorn, Volunteer Relations



“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord ...” (Psalm 127:3).

Through the craftiness of some LFLers in the Dayton, Ohio, area, along with the Miami Valley Life Chapter, a project entitled **LAMBs** (Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets) was created in 2018. More than 200 handmade baby blankets have been distributed since then. The Miami Valley Life Chapter is seeking volunteers to share their gift of sewing by helping to make blankets. There are many requests, and they want to honor them all. If you are interested in serving in this way, please contact Kim Merritt at [mrs.kimberlymerritt@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.kimberlymerritt@gmail.com).

Although our world might tell us otherwise, children truly are a blessing. Therefore, Lutherans For Life celebrates children, especially those families with a lot of them! **LAMBs** celebrates families that are awaiting the birth of their fourth or more child by gifting them with a homemade blanket.

Do you know such a family in your congregation? Each blanket is made with love and shipped directly to the expectant mother anywhere within the continental United States as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico (to which a blanket was recently sent). Thank you for helping us care for your neighbor in this way!

To nominate someone, download and complete the PDF form at [lutheransforlife.org/lamb-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets](http://lutheransforlife.org/lamb-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets). Simply send the completed form to Belén Fry of the Miami Valley Lutherans For Life Chapter. Her mailing address is on the form.

I was privileged to nominate Nick and Jessica Anderson as **LAMBs** recipients on March 5, 2024.

The handmade blanket arrived at the Anderson home in Apple Valley, Minnesota, on March 11, 2024. Jessica expressed her appreciation for the special package: “The blanket is so soft and adorable, and I love the pink crocheted hat.”

The Andersons have been blessed with five healthy, adorable children: Soteria (8), Josiah (6), Ezekiel (3), Matthias (2), and Orelle (infant). Orelle was born on April 8, 2024, at 6:10 p.m. She weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces and measured 20 inches in length.



*“The Lord has blessed our family. I only hope that Jessica and I can live our lives according to His will and be the Christ-like example that our kids look up to and try to grow up to be. Having a larger family, we find ourselves constantly praying. Our most common prayer is for strength and patience. Being a family of seven has many challenges, but we wouldn’t change it for anything,”* rejoiced Nick Anderson.

For more on this story go to: [lutheransforlife.org/article/bless-a-family-with-a-blanket-of-love](http://lutheransforlife.org/article/bless-a-family-with-a-blanket-of-love).



Sometimes, holding things close makes them harder to read.

**M**y grandpa was an avid coin collector, and he loved to involve his grandchildren in the hunt. I remember leaning in close, shoulder to shoulder with my little brothers, to peer down at coins in the palm of my grandfather's hand. As I grew older, I was invited to gather around his pile of pennies and help him sort them by year. What treasures we would find!

It was my grandfather who taught me the value of old wheat pennies and the satisfaction of completing a set of coins minted in the same year. And it was his enthusiasm over errors in the minting process that still has me looking closely at coins today.

My grandfather has been gone for many years now, but I'm still learning his lessons. The most recent? *Sometimes, holding things close makes them harder to read.* (He promised I'd understand that one someday. Let's just say, he was right.)

I'm guessing some of you who are reading this article haven't had the pleasure of learning this lesson yet. It's a condition called presbyopia—a type of farsightedness that creeps up on you with age. Over time, the eye's lens becomes less flexible, making it harder to focus on things that are near. Hence, things held close are often blurry.

I was reminded of this phenomenon as I reread parts of Jeremiah in preparation for this article, not because the words were blurry but because the future seemed to be blurry, both for Jeremiah and God's people.

Jeremiah had a difficult ministry. He was called to be a prophet to the Israelites before and after the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem. Having been made slaves in Babylon, God's people were awaiting rescue. They wanted to go home, and they wanted to go home NOW. To make matters worse for Jeremiah, many false prophets were telling God's people they would return home—and very soon!

But God inspired Jeremiah, the true prophet, to speak a different message in a letter to the exiles: God will lead you out of exile and return you to your homeland ... in 70 years.

70 years. That's a long time. For some, it would be a lifetime.

It would be easy to feel forlorn over this news, to be filled with anger and bitterness, wouldn't it? Perhaps we can understand why God's people disliked Jeremiah so much. His message would have been life changing. What about the future you had planned? What about the possibilities that were no longer possible?

Though it's likely that none of us has been in exile, we probably do know someone who has received life-altering news of an illness, a disability, or the death of a parent or child or spouse. News with life-altering consequences that will have to be endured until death. Weighty realities that must be carried in a broken world for the rest of our lives.

Perhaps we can see, up close and personal, that the future would indeed be blurry. It would be unpredictable and filled with unexpected suffering.

But God's Word reminds us that we are not alone in our suffering. Nor do we have a near-sighted God. In fact, Jeremiah clearly proclaims God's far-sighted approach; not only is God with them, but He's with them for the long haul. His plans and desires give them **LIFE**. How should they handle their exile? They should continue living, trusting in God to provide even during difficult times:

**"Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease"** (Jeremiah 29:5-7).

God's people are to continue living. They are commanded to build homes and grow food and get married and have babies. Despite their location, God is with them; He has not forsaken them. And, even more, He still has gifts and joy to give.

But Jeremiah doesn't end there. Not only will God bless individuals and families during this time of exile, but through them, God will also bless Babylon. **"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare"** (Jeremiah 29:7).

Pray for a government that is not following God's laws? Pray for the nation that has taken God's people captive? God's answer, even today, is **YES**.

And because God is the Lord of life, He also promises rescue. **"For thus says the LORD: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place'"** (Jeremiah 29:10).

Even more, despite the exile they find themselves in, God promises that He is working for good in the lives of those He loves:

**"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you'"** (Jeremiah 29:11-12).

In suffering, God is at work to draw us nearer to Him.

Jeremiah has been gone for thousands of years now, but by the grace of God, we still learn from him today. His inspired prophecies still give us hope. No matter our location, the corruption of our government, or the trials we are called to suffer, we are not alone. God is with us, and He still has life-affirming gifts to give.

And when we are tempted to grieve over the blurriness of tomorrow, may we find hope in a God who sees clearly, a God who has good plans for us, and a God who is farsighted for our **LIFE**.



# We Are Forged to Be Like Jesus

by Barbara Lane Geistfeld, D.V.M.



**H**as the Lord placed you in a fiery forge lately? Do the circumstances in your life land on you like blows from a sledgehammer? Are you weary from following Jesus through rough times with no end in sight? I think we have all been there, and sometimes, it seems, we will always be there.

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines the adjective *forged* as “*formed by pressing or hammering with or without heat—especially, made into a desired shape by heating and hammering.*” What a great analogy to the life of a Christian! Does not our Father in heaven heat us and hammer us throughout our entire life to shape us into the son or daughter that He has desired and planned for all along? The prophet Jeremiah said:

**“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope’” (Jeremiah 29:11).**

It is not easy to see God’s plans when in the middle of the forge. It is sometimes impossible to feel His love in the blows of the hammer. But our future and our hope are assured in the blood of the Lamb. Our Jesus *is* our hope and future.

**“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).**

Tribulation sounds a lot like “heat and hammer,” does it not? The Apostle Paul spent his entire ministry being shipwrecked, beaten with rods, lashed, stoned, jailed, chained, falsely accused, and maligned. And in the end, he was martyred in Rome. Paul knew that God’s promise of a hope and a future were assured in the promises of Jesus.

While in Madagascar last October, we watched young men take a slab of iron, heat it to red-hot in a forge, and then pound the daylights out of it with sledgehammers. It was amazing to see a shovel head appear before our eyes. It took an incredible number of blows to shape it into the final desired shape. In fact, if you’ve ever watched a blacksmith or an iron worker, you know they heat the iron in the fire until it is red-hot, then pound it, heat it to red-hot again, pound it, heat it again, and so on until it is finally in its “desired shape.”



As we live out our lives to our last breath, let us continue to walk with Jesus. He is our calm in the middle of the storm. He is our cool rest in the middle of the red-hot, fiery forge. He knows our hammer blows and pains and sorrows, so He has said to each of us, in love:

**“Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:29).**



# Word of Hope in Ohio



On June 21, Deaconess Janet Nicol had the opportunity to present information about Lutherans For Life’s **Word of Hope** ministry to the Ohio District LWML Convention held in Canton. There were 75 participants in this interest session out of a total of over 130 registrants to the convention.

Deaconess Nicol spoke about the history of **Word of Hope** and how it operates under Lutherans For Life (a Recognized Service Organization of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod). The main focus of **Word of Hope** had been abortion recovery care but, since the pandemic, it has expanded its care to souls who are ashamed, brokenhearted, and crushed in spirit due to many life issues. Deaconess Nicol explained what constitutes a life issue and shared two moving stories of individuals who have contacted the hotline in the past year (with names changed due to confidentiality).



Deaconess Nicol explained that **Word of Hope** is the only Lutheran hotline that exists in the United States and Canada, and that direct spiritual care is provided that is grounded in the truth of Scripture. **Word of Hope** also gives referrals to other life-supporting Scripture-based organizations if needed.

Deaconess Nicol also shared **Word of Hope**’s dreams and aspirations for the future, fielded interesting questions, and offered print materials from Lutherans For Life, Y4Life, as well as **Word of Hope**. Find out more about **Word of Hope** on Facebook and at [word-of-hope.org](http://word-of-hope.org).

## Free Resource! Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry

Lutherans For Life has produced a free downloadable resource based on a series of articles in our Directions newsletter: “Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry.” The nine facets are Consistent, Multifaceted, Unified, Gospel-Motivated, Resourced, Interfaced, Trusted, Multiplied, and Careful. The word “facet” was chosen because, as the facet of a cut gem reflects light, so we are to reflect the light of Christ in our life ministries. Download this free resource and learn more about the Frontline ministries of Lutherans For Life at [lutheransforlife.org/frontlines](http://lutheransforlife.org/frontlines).

**Nine Facets of a Healthy Life Ministry**

- Consistent
- Multifaceted
- Unified
- Gospel-Motivated
- Resourced
- Interfaced
- Trusted
- Multiplied
- Careful

LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

## A Statement on Surrogacy

by Pastor Michael Salemink



Just because we could doesn't mean we should.

Surrogate pregnancy is gaining popularity. The process promises to equalize access to childrearing. Couples experiencing infertility, same-sex and transgender couples, and even individuals can now raise their genetically related offspring when the natural processes do not work. Laboratory technology has captured the power to make life and give kids.

Of course, children always embody blessings from heaven. Even the desire for them comes from Almighty God. And He grieves infertility, as do His people, alongside everyone who suffers it. But surrogacy involves a lot of ethical concerns. It operates outside the Heavenly Father's design for sexuality and procreation. It requires either adultery or in vitro fertilization, and thus endangers the physical survival and psychological welfare of the little ones. Its financial considerations and exchanges invite corruption of sacred relationships. It appears above all to prioritize adult preferences ahead of children's benefit.

For these reasons, and motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Lutherans For Life's Board of Directors offers the following position statement. Our life-affirming community prays it will guide and persuade consciences to proclaim and practice the sanctity of every human life so that all may receive what our Lord and Savior promises.



## Surrogacy

WHEREAS, Children are a gift and privilege from God (Psalm 127:3, 5); and

WHEREAS, God bestows this gift through the one-flesh union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28, 2:18, 21-24), a mutual self-giving love reflective of the love within the Trinity (1 John 4:8) out of which He created and redeemed man (Genesis 1:26; John 3:16); and

WHEREAS, Children are the embodiment of the mutual self-giving love of their parents; and pregnancy reflects this reality in vocations of motherly and fatherly servanthood and sacrifice for their child's welfare; and

WHEREAS, Surrogacy involves contracting with a woman to gestate a child with whom this surrogate mother may have no hereditary relation and whom she will not raise; and

WHEREAS, Surrogacy may also involve donation of sperm and/or egg from one or both parents who will not raise the child; and

WHEREAS, Surrogacy thus transgresses the divinely instituted one-flesh union of husband and wife by introducing up to three additional participants in procreation and gestation, and requires in-vitro fertilization; and

WHEREAS, Surrogate women usually receive compensation for medical expenses and inconvenience, so that financial considerations may motivate their participation, and the economics dehumanize and commodify both women and children; and

WHEREAS, Surrogacy intentionally separates a child from one or more biological parents contrary to the good design of God, and this may have adverse consequences for the child's physical and psychological welfare (in addition to emotional and spiritual repercussions for the adults involved); and

WHEREAS, Pregnancy, according to God's design, connects even a surrogate mother physically and emotionally to the child she carries, and this further complicates the child's separation from her; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life opposes surrogacy as contrary to God's good design; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life nevertheless recognizes the intense grief of infertility and commends the holy desire to bear and raise children; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life unreservedly celebrates children of surrogacy as gifts and privileges whose ultimate identity is in Jesus Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Lutherans For Life assures those who regret and repent any involvement in surrogacy of their forgiveness in Christ crucified and encourages them to seek the comfort of holy absolution.

Adopted 30 May, AD 2024

## Your Life Is Sacred

by Pastor Robert Mohns



Your life matters—from conception to natural death to eternity.

As I write this, it is springtime out west, and signs of new life are beginning to appear. This is despite very trying times: Drought conditions on the prairies and a hard, untimely frost have done their best to prevent new life from appearing.

And it's not just the weather that has sought to prevent life from appearing; we live in a world of death-lust. As of this writing, almost 34,000 abortions have taken place in Canada. We live in a part of the world which has one of the highest death rates by Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) in the world. Our neighbours in Nunavut have one of the world's highest suicide rates (82 deaths per 100,000). We live in a time in world history when the term *genocide* is used more often than at any other time in history.

Many of you know the ancient story from the first book of the Bible, how from the very first temptation that human beings faced, our desire has always been to choose the pathway that leads to death. It is the pathway that seeks to strip human beings not only of life, but also of their worth. That old evil foe would have you and me believe that life is worthless. We are tempted to repeat those words to one another. In our fear, anger, hatred, and anxiety, we have treated others as though they are dead to us.

**God has a better word to speak to us in our day: "The life I give is sacred. The life I give has infinite and eternal worth. Each and every life matters to Me."**



The revelation of sacred Scripture tells us that our good and gracious God created the world and every living thing through His Word. It reminds us that He formed human beings from the elements of the earth, breathed into them His own life-giving Spirit. It reminds us that life is a gift given by our good and loving God. So, we can say that life is a sacred thing. All of it, from beginning to life's natural end, and even into eternal life.

Hear again what sacred Scripture says, that God **“formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb”** (Psalm 139:13).

Concerning life's end, St. John records that he **“heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Blessed indeed,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!’”** (Revelation 14:13). And again, Jesus declares in John 11:25: **“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live.”**

**All life is sacred. Your life is sacred. Every life has infinite worth and eternal value. Your life matters—from conception to natural death to eternity. The psalmist declares:**

**“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works; my soul knows it very well”** (Psalm 139:14).

God sent His Son, Jesus, as the antidote to our death-lust. Jesus' incarnation, perfect life, obedience, suffering, death, and His resurrection have redeemed us from the empty way of life. On the cross, Jesus, true man and very God, was put to death! His last words were: **“Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit”** (Luke 23:46). His body was placed into a tomb.

Three days later, He rose from the dead. He died and was raised to life in order to bring an end to sin and death and to silence the voice of the devil who seeks to rob you and all human beings of their worth.

In your Baptism, God has brought you from death to life. He has given your life His infinite worth, and He has sealed it with the blood of His Son. Jesus is the antidote to death-lust—not only yours but the world's. Jesus says:

**“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”** (John 10:10).

Friend, you have a good word to speak to your neighbour. You have God's Word of life to share—with your spouse, your children or grandchildren, your co-worker or friend. You can tell them that their life is sacred, a gift of God, and that their life matters to you.

As you walk the path of life with your neighbour, learn and celebrate the depth and breadth of the infinite worth of their life—whether they are preborn, homeless, destitute, dying, friend, or foe. Learn, through the trials set before you and the sacrifices you make to improve the life of your neighbour, the awesome worth of life. Life is sacred. Every life matters.

*Rev. Robert Mohns is Lutheran Church–Canada (LCC)'s West Regional Pastor.*

## Your Ministry Partnership Matters!

Lutherans For Life cherishes your support in our education, advocacy, and life-affirming endeavors. Your faithful and unwavering partnership is making an impact in the hearts of all people and the lives of their neighbors. Listed below are examples of the many ways your general fund donation might be used to assist our Gospel-motivated, life-affirming work.

### Gospel Preparation – (Under \$250)

- One registration for a Y4Life Apologetics Retreat.
- Print and ship a Life Team tool kit.
- Paper for a month (office supplies).
- Translating an LFL brochure into Spanish.
- Adding close captioning to online videos.
- One Word of Hope spiritual care session.
- One Word of Hope hotline call.



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### Gospel Motivation – (\$250 - \$500)

- T-shirts for Y4Life Summit participants.
- One student scholarship for Y4Life Conference.
- Develop and print one Frontline playbook.
- One student scholarship for Y4Life in Washington, D.C.
- Conduct beta testing for new and converted materials online.

### Gospel Transformation – (\$500 - \$750)

- Website maintenance for six months.
- Transfer Frontline training materials to an online resource.
- Print Word of Hope brochures.

### Gospel Proclamation – (Over \$750)

- Publication of a new LFL brochure or Y4Life infographic.
- Travel expenses for an LFL presentation or exhibit.
- Spotlight on Life event.
- Edit or build a Frontline video.
- One year of Microsoft Office for LFL staff.
- Word of Hope video production of online training materials.
- Mailing quarterly *LifeDate* journal.

If you would like to partner with LFL and our efforts to uphold life from fertilization to forever, please consider an online gift at [lutheransforlife.org/donate](https://lutheransforlife.org/donate) or mail your donation to Lutherans For Life, 1101 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Nevada, IA 50201-1816.

**And remember ...** Every time you shop at any of the 1,800+ online stores in the **iGive** network, a portion of the money you spend benefits Lutherans For Life. It's a free service, and you'll never pay more when you reach a store through **iGive**. In fact, smart shoppers will enjoy **iGive**'s repository of coupons, free shipping deals, and sales. To get started, just create your free **iGive** account. Start iGiving at: [www.iGive.com/LFL](https://www.iGive.com/LFL).



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## JOIN US ONLINE!

**Youth4Life Podcast** – The Youth4Life podcast answers THE question of today's generation: Why should I be 4 Life? Each Youth4Life podcast focuses on one or more life topics and provides facts, discussion starters, and opportunities for youth to become Gospel-motivated voices 4 Life!

**For Life Conversations** – Recorded 5-15 minute interviews on life topics shared on our Facebook page and website.

**Find us on YouTube!**



**Coming in January!**

# Spotlight on

Spotlight on Life brings awareness of life issues through brief locally hosted events. From abortion to euthanasia, human trafficking or disabilities, sexuality and gender, or marriage and family, we work with you to find the right expert speaker and set up for your life event needs.

# LIFE

LFL



***Help your life event shine!***

**Willing to host a brief event in your church to promote life?**

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*I praise you because ...*



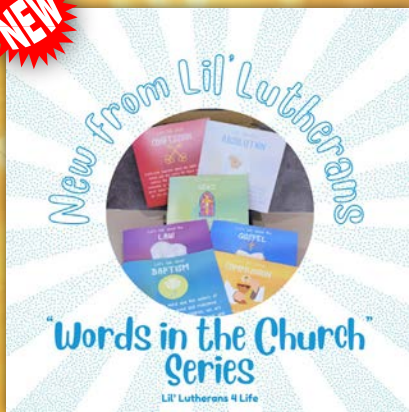
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**I Praise You ...** – This beautiful 14" x 36" fold-out brochure highlights the fetal development of Jesus in the womb.

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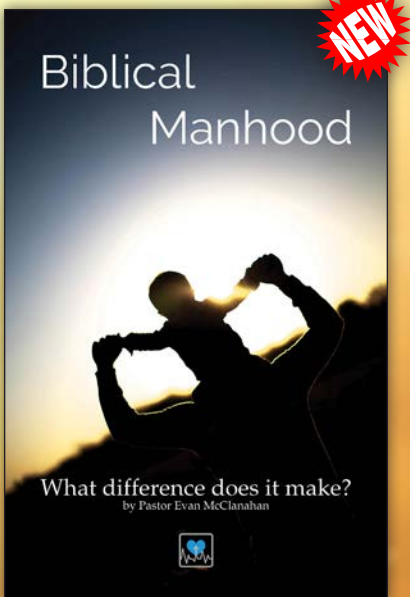
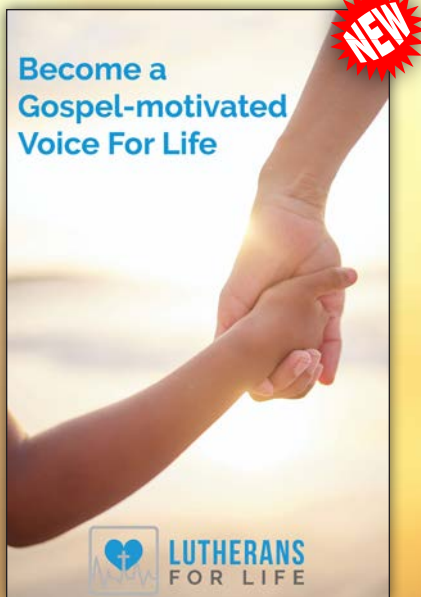
**Lil' Lutherans 4 Life "Words in the Church" Series**

– These child-friendly brochures discuss absolution, Baptism, Holy Communion, and more. Find order links at [lutheransforlife.org/resources/store](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/store). **\$1.50 ea.**

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**Membership Brochure | Become a Gospel-Motivated Voice For Life** – An informational insert, membership form, and return envelope. *Item LFL1600. FREE!*

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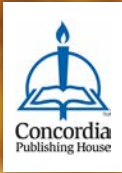


**2024 LFL Regional Conferences**  
*Join Us! Life Shines in Darkness*

September 14, 2024  
Regional Conference Northeast  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Bristol, Connecticut (Hartford area)

October 12, 2024  
Regional Conference Midwest  
Hope Lutheran Church and School  
Shawnee, Kansas (Kansas City area)

November 9, 2024  
Regional Conference Southeast  
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Winter Garden, Florida (Orlando area)



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



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FOR LIFE**

Available in App Stores



Share the For Life message all year long with **Life Quotes!**

**Life Quotes** are quotations on life issues—many from LFL resources and publications—for use in weekly congregational bulletins. You are also free to use the quotations in your monthly newsletter.

[lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes](http://lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-quotes)



Do you know a family in your congregation who is having its fourth or more child? Fill out the form at the link below, and the Miami Valley Life Chapter will send a blanket made with love directly to this expectant mother (in the continental United States). No strings attached! [lutheransforlife.org/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets](http://lutheransforlife.org/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets)



**Buying or selling a home or commercial property?** Support Lutherans For Life at the same time! Call 877.543.3871 or email [proliferealestate@yahoo.com](mailto:proliferealestate@yahoo.com) for more information. [realestateforlife.org](http://realestateforlife.org)  
[lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life](http://lutheransforlife.org/real-estate-for-life)



**Frontline Call** – For all LFL Frontline volunteers! Monday, October 14, 2024 – 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, guest speakers, and Q & A. **For topics, speakers, and Zoom links, go to the LFL homepage calendar.**



For those who have had an abortion, a **Word of Hope** ... 888.217.8679  
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## Know Who You Are

by Deaconess Janet Nicol



I am a fan of comedy. Especially sarcastic comedy. One of the kings of this genre is Jerry Seinfeld. He recently spoke at Duke University's graduation ceremony and mentioned being sick of the phrase, "Follow your passion." He said to let go of the idea that one thing is your passion and to make your best effort at anything. Making the effort even if it fails is worthwhile. He also said to pay attention and fall in love. He spoke about enjoying the richness of human life. It was a good speech. (You can find it on YouTube.)

I would like to add to Mr. Seinfeld's speech another piece of good advice: Know who you are. For Christians, it is essential to participate in the richness of the human experience knowing that you are a child of God, baptized into Christ, redeemed through His saving grace, and called to love and serve each other. If you know this much, you will live life to the fullest.

Oh, and yes, it will be hard. I am not saying live YOUR best life. I am saying live THE best life IN CHRIST. One guided by truth, not by the misconstrued philosophies of our culture's mindset: "Follow your heart because it knows best." The truth is in the Word of God:

**"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).**

**"See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ" (Colossians 2:8).**

So let go of the idea of your heart knowing things and open your ears, which are spiritually connected to your heart, to the Word of God, which will give you wisdom and strength to carry out your vocations in life. The Word in Jeremiah 17:10 says:

**"I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."**

We face many challenges in life, and they are all meant to bring us closer to Him who gives life to the fullest. It is the work of Satan to attempt to kill that life. John 10:10 tells us:

**"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."**

Live abundantly, friends, graduates, loved ones, and fellow brothers and sisters in Christ! Know who you are and to whom you belong. Amen.

**"Be still, and know that I am God."  
(Psalm 46:10)**

## He Comforts Us ... We Comfort Others!

by Virginia J. Flo, Director of Volunteer Relations



"He comforts us whenever we suffer. That is why whenever other people suffer, we are able to comfort them by using the same comfort we have received from God" (2 Corinthians 1:4).

**K**nowing that God has a plan for us and that He watches over us is very comforting—until things go wrong in life. That's not how we planned it. When we experience life-changing events, God is still there for us to lift us up and heal our broken hearts because He loves us. His ultimate source of comfort was sending Jesus to save us and bring us the hope of eternal life. In the meantime, we live in this sinful world—and things happen. God calls on us to help others, through our own experiences, and bring them hope.

How far do you plan ahead? Do you have a personal calendar that you keep up to date with all the things in your life for months down the road, or are you a day-by-day or hour-by-hour person, making the most of each day as it arrives? I doubt anyone is totally day-by-day, as there are certain things in our lives that require planning, such as weekly worship, doctor appointments, and family gatherings. Yet, that doesn't mean that most of your life isn't a "play it by ear" or "take it as it comes" situation.

There are things that can force us to plan, but even at that, we can put them off as long as possible. Sometimes my schedule gets away from me and things can turn chaotic, especially if I am traveling and away from home. Perhaps you can relate, especially if others in your life depend on you and their needs can affect your personal plans.

Even the best laid plans can be upset by unexpected surprises. It's that call that a family member or friend has gone to be with the Lord. It's that meeting with the doctor who shares the news that you or a loved one has a serious health issue that needs to be addressed immediately. It's that change in your job status that you did not expect or plan. Perhaps a family member woke up ill, and you now need to fill in or stay home to care for them. I'm certain you can add to this list!

Hopefully, you have people in your life at home, church, or through your friendships who will be there for you when you need help, who can relate and provide empathy and support. Paul shares a great message in 2 Corinthians 1:4 (see above). What a hopeful message for each of us. God provides comfort through our own suffering and experiences. Then He equips us to be able to comfort *others* through our own experience. No one should ever feel alone or abandoned by the Church as we have been equipped to provide care, comfort, and hope for all we serve.

When life isn't going as planned or things take a turn for the worse, we can all feel helpless. Yet, these are the very times that God uses us to be hands-on for Him by being there for others. This is especially true when you have yourself had personal struggles and have come through them because of God's comforting words and our fellow Christians' loving care. (Providing comfort can be the most necessary and needed treatment for people.)

Sometimes it's as simple as just being there with a hurting person to remove some of the loneliness people in crisis can experience. Sometimes it's sharing a meal at a time when someone in distress is suffering, and making food is of little significance for them and often skipped. It might just be a phone call asking, "How are you?" that brings hope to someone's day. Sharing God's words of comfort is what someone needs to hear. For we know, "**He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds**" (Psalm 147:3). We may not be trained healers, but we have been trained through our own experiences and God's Word to bring comfort.

Be brave, reach out, and know the Lord is by your side. Pray for His guidance in what you say and do so you will bring needed comfort. We have a message of hope!



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**W**hy travel halfway around the world to serve orphans and do mission work when there is such a great need right here at home? After completing my tenth trip to India, I still get asked that question quite often.

Let me introduce you to Pastor Swenkumar Pulavarthi—Swen, for short (although you would never mistake him for being Scandinavian if you saw him). Swen is in his mid-forties. He and his wife, Aruna, have been married almost 20 years, and they were finally blessed with a daughter, Hannah Faith, six years ago. Swen serves a congregation in Rapaka, Andhra Pradesh, India, where Sunday morning attendance often approaches 100 souls. Swen also serves as District President for about 120 Lutheran congregations in east central Andhra Pradesh.

Swen and Aruna also serve as “parents” to 20 orphans living in an “orphanage”—two three-bedroom apartments in a seven-story building. The children, equally divided between male and female, range in age from eight years to fourteen years old. Like their peers who live elsewhere in Tanuku, they attend the local public schools. They study Telugu (the local language), English, math, physical education, etc. They have quizzes, tests, and daily homework. They have best friends, play pranks, and have career aspirations.

The children wake at 5:00 a.m. for Bible study and devotion. That is followed by assigned chores of laundry, cleaning the apartment, or helping to cook breakfast. After school, they play in the open area on the roof of their apartment building, do homework together, or just hang out until supper and devotion before bedtime.

**All of these children have been given the gift of faith through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is at work on their peers—all 1.4 billion of them. Jesus died for the sins of these children and their peers. God desires that these children and their peers will spend eternity with Him in heaven.**

**Bethany Good Shepherd Orphanage  
Tanuku, India**



The orphans being served suffer from many life issues: homelessness, food insecurity, and lack of parents to name a few. There are many other life issues being faced by the adults of the area: alcoholism, domestic abuse, human trafficking, poverty, and suicide are some of the major ones.

*So why do I travel halfway around the world to serve orphans and do mission work when there is such a great need right here at home?*

Because that's what God has called me to do, and He gives me the resources to carry out that calling.

In my work at Lutherans For Life, God has equipped me to help the pastors and lay people in the area address the life issues being faced by the adults (and children). On each trip I spend several days leading conferences for pastors, lay people, and youth, teaching them what the Bible says about the sanctity of life and the specific issues that they face.

In my work as a pastor, God has blessed the congregation that I serve, in cooperation with a neighboring congregation, with the ability to support the orphanage in Tanuku through finance, prayer, and cards and letters.

In the personality that God gave me, I empathize with the needs of the children, the concerns of the pastors, and the struggles that Swen and Aruna face raising 20 children in a very confined space. Swen and I communicate several times a week via WhatsApp, exchanging pictures and updates on the children as well as Swen's daily concerns.

I thank God for the opportunity and the ability to serve Him and my friends on the other side of the world—and for your interest in learning more about the similarities and differences among life issues here and abroad.



**“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27)**

## Looking into the Whirlwind

by Grace MacPherson



God is not unreasonable. But He created reason, and He also transcends it.

Recently I received the news that a dear family friend lost her eight-week-old baby to miscarriage. I was quiet at the time. I gave what comfort I could. And later, I cried.

Curled under a blanket, I cried for the baby its mother would never get to nurse. The baby its family would never get to hold and touch. The baby its parents would never bring to Baptism. And as I cried, I asked God why. Not why He had let that baby die—but why He had let it live. Why it had ever been conceived if only to cause this grief.

Sometimes it's easy to see the beauty in pain. When my grandmother was terminally ill with dementia, my family brought her into our home, and for several beautiful and excruciating weeks, we read to her and sang with her and prayed for her as we watched her memories slowly slip away.

As a young teen, I babysat a little boy with Down syndrome. He never learned to walk or talk in the time I knew him, but he brought such joy to me and to his mother with his drooly smiles and soft cuddles.

When the world looks at those lives, it sees nothing worth preserving, nothing worth embracing, nothing worth celebrating. It only sees lives unworthy of life. Never mind that my most precious memories of my grandmother, now in heaven, are from those weeks, or that that little boy with Down syndrome is statistically shown to be happier than the rest of us. Their lives were imperfect. Flawed. Unworthy.

Yet they brought so much joy.

And when I think of that tiny baby who died in its mother's womb just days ago, I don't understand why. I see how God worked through the pain of my grandmother's death to pull my family closer together, to teach us patience and unconditional love, to give us moments of joy in the most unexpected and startling of places. I see how that baby boy with Down syndrome, so full of smiles and baby cuddles, brought unspeakable joy to his mother's life.

But I don't see the hidden good in letting a baby live for two months, only to die. I don't see happiness in that, only pain and grief and loss. I only see the agony of every other mother who has lost an unborn child. I wonder if there is any way for me to escape that pain if I'm blessed with marriage.

Why would a loving God allow so much suffering? Why would a just God close the wombs of godly women who have begged Him for a child? Why, if God is good?

But why would a loving God send His Son to die? Why would a just God forgive the wretched sinners who have been washed in His Baptism and fed at His table?

God is not unreasonable. But He created reason, and He also transcends it.

I still don't understand why. But I trust that a God who would sacrifice His own Son for me, for that precious unborn baby, for his grieving family—I trust that that God would not do it without a reason both wise and loving.



He has taken to Himself my grandmother, who lived so many beautiful years on earth before her death, and He has taken a tiny nameless baby who never even drew a breath. Who can know the ways of God?

It wouldn't surprise me if right now, in heaven, my grandmother was holding that precious baby—or if he was playing with my own miscarried siblings as my grandmother and her own parents and sister look on.

I still cry for my loss. For the far deeper loss of that baby's family. For the hours of cuddles and laughter and play that might have been.

But every life is precious. Why God let that baby live and die, I don't know and will never understand. But I know that on the day I meet my Creator, I will meet that baby too. For now, I do the only thing I can do. I look with Job into the whirlwind and say:

**“The LORD gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21, NKJV).**

*Grace MacPherson lives in Casper, Wyoming, with her family. She is the author of The King's Sword and Domitian.*



# THIS Is Your Plan, God?

by Mona Fuerstenau

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope’” (Jeremiah 29:11).

As a parent of a son with developmental disabilities, I know I am not alone in asking this question. I spent a number of years asking God that question or variations on that theme. How is this your plan? What do I do? This was not MY plan! Who will help me? What will the future be? And over the course of my career in disability advocacy and ministry, I’ve met and worked with hundreds of parents who had their own variations on those questions, comments, doubts, and fears.

Periodically I caught a glimpse of God’s plan in action, one that I had an active part in working out. The young counselor at Lutherwood family camp who said her interaction with my then two-year-old son helped her decide to pursue special education. The pastor who said he felt my son minister to his soul as they looked into each other’s eyes during the blessing at communion. The five-year-old bully in kindergarten who became his champion instead. And so many more throughout his now nearly 33 years. Moments that came as we went about life, being and doing what other families with and without disabilities do.

Once I stepped outside my emotions, I began to see the impact my son had on those around him. I am so grateful for those moments that showed me God’s plan. That encouraged me when I searched for hope. And I have found some Scriptures that have resonated with me that I return to regularly for encouragement. There are no caveats on these promises. They are for ALL of God’s people.

God’s carefully crafted plan for my son was made specifically for him as we are reminded in Psalm 139:13-16: **“For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.”**

My hope is found in 1 Peter 4:10: **“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”**

And peace about the future I find in Ephesians 3:20: **“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us.”**

I know these doubts and fears and emotions exist about any of our plans that don’t go the way we envisioned. And it would be easy to ask, “What plan? What hope? What future?” I pray these verses encourage you along your journey of God’s plan.



On the train from Frankfurt to Amsterdam.

## 2024 Regional Conference Update

By Erika Peterson, Events Coordinator

REGISTER TODAY!

**“In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (John 1:4-5).**

There is such hope in the Gospel message! With three regional conferences taking place this fall—under the theme **Life Shines in Darkness**—we’ll be able to draw near to folks across the nation to share the Gospel of Life.

The first conference takes place on **September 14** in the outskirts of Hartford, **Connecticut**, in Bristol, at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Rev. Evan McClanahan, author of our recently released biblical manhood resource, will present at all three conferences, presenting on the same subject. Our very own Rev. Scott Licht will share on the Gospel of Life among widows and orphans in India; our National Director of Y4Life, Michelle Bauman, will present on raising life-affirming kids; and Rev. Michael Salemink, our Executive Director, will also share the For Life message.

On **October 12**, at Hope Lutheran in Shawnee, **Kansas**, in the Kansas City Metro area, we’ll hear again from Rev. McClanahan.

As a complement to his presentation on biblical manhood, Deaconess Rose Adle of Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne will present on Christian womanhood. Our Director of Volunteer Relations, Virginia Flo, will facilitate a panel with local Life Teams sharing their inspiring work. And wrapping up the conference, Rev. Dr. James Lamb, formerly of LFL and Lutheran Family Service, will shed light on Christian citizenship, especially in light of this election year.

Finally, rounding out the conferences on **November 9**, we will be in Winter Garden, **Florida**, just outside Orlando at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church. In addition to Rev. McClanahan and Rev. Licht presenting, we will also hear from the founder and owner of Skoog Dementia Support, Teri Skoog, on caring for those with dementia; and on the heels of our election day, author and current Vice President of External and Government Relations at Focus on the Family, Tim Goeglein, will share his thoughts on faith in the halls of power, exploring what is next for America in the Pro-Life movement.

We hope you will be able to join us at one or more of these conferences to be encouraged and equipped to continue on your Gospel-motivated For Life journey. For additional information on each conference, or to register, visit [lutheransforlife.org/conferences](https://lutheransforlife.org/conferences) or snap a photo of the QR code.



**Special Note: Go to the conferences webpage to find out about a free Conference for Life on Friday, October 11, in Shawnee and about childcare at all three conferences.**

# Life Thoughts in the Church Year

*Based on appointed readings from Lutheran Service Book*

**October 6 – Pentecost XX (Proper 22B)** – Our Almighty Maker carefully creates every human male or female (Genesis 2:21-22). Jesus Himself took on the same flesh in fertilization and gestation to redeem our entire race (Hebrews 2:14, 17). And the Lord our God calls even the littlest among us for His own (Mark 10:14). Could the Scriptures get any clearer about the sanctity of life? Can we?

**October 13 – Pentecost XXI (Proper 23B)** – Even in Christian congregations, some promote death as a solution. Sin's deceit has hardened hearts (Hebrews 3:12-13). But Jesus loved the rich young man enough to welcome him with truth and love (Mark 10:21). Let us not keep His courage and compassion to ourselves. We can warn neighbors about abortion and euthanasia. We can win them over with the sanctity of every human life!

**October 20 – Pentecost XXII (Proper 24B)** – The Lord Jesus sees and knows the hardships of life issues because He lives among us (Hebrews 4:15). And He promises that His atonement and resurrection bring blessing and deliver delight not only after but amid these difficulties (Mark 10:29-30). May we comfort and encourage one another with thoughts of gift rather than talk of rights (Ecclesiastes 5:15,19).

**October 27 – Pentecost XXIII (Proper 25B)** – Bartimaeus' neighbors found his disability inconvenient and even burdensome. But Jesus drew near to affirm, support, and even restore his humanity and sanctity. All humankind suffers sin's brokenness, but the Lord our God does not allow this to disqualify anyone. We get to receive every life as special, precious, and priceless, no matter what age, appearance, or ability.

**November 3 – Pentecost XXIV (Proper 26B)** – Almighty God has given us solemn privilege and responsibility to instruct children about their Heavenly Father (Deuteronomy 6:7). This absolutely includes recognizing Him alone as Lord over life-and-death decisions as well as receiving every neighbor as a blessing (Mark 12:29-31). They need to know the power and presence and compassion of Christ Jesus is sufficient (Hebrews 9:14), even in surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis.

**November 10 – Pentecost XXV (Proper 27B)** – The God who abides among us in both incarnate body and Holy Spirit knows our material needs. He remembers how we cannot provide for ourselves, much less for each other or anyone else. So, He who sends mouths also sends meat. Whether surprise pregnancy, terminal diagnosis, or any other circumstance, He will surround with jars that do not run empty and jugs we cannot exhaust (1 Kings 17:16).

**November 17 – Pentecost XXVI (Proper 28B)** – The heart broken by abortion may be sitting beside us in church. This one desperately longs for the relief and healing only God's forgiveness affords (Hebrews 10:22). We have no right to refuse them this Word because we fear political controversy. Instead, we have the privilege to proclaim abortion as sin and explicitly identify it as atoned for in Christ.

# Life Thoughts in the Church Year

*Find One-Year Lectionary files at [lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts](https://lutheransforlife.org/resources/life-thoughts)*

**November 24 – Pentecost XXVII (Proper 29B)** – The Scriptural Ancient of Days has gray hair (Daniel 7:9). The Word of the Lord pictures Him as aged. And while the world idolizes youthfulness, the Bible speaks flatteringly of getting old. “Elder” is a compliment, long life is blessing, and advanced years embody wisdom and honor, even though they often also entail weaknesses. The Gospel of everlasting life in Christ leaves no room for physician-assisted suicide.

**December 1 – Advent I** – Abortion and assisted suicide arise out of panic. The Advent Gospel offers something better: promise and patient anticipation. During surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis, Jesus Christ means that better days are coming (Jeremiah 33:14), redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:28), and none who wait upon the Lord shall be put to shame (Psalm 25:3). Sufferings will end, but blessings accumulate. Breathe, trust, hope, and rejoice.

**December 8 – Advent II** – The people of Christ do not sit still or stay silent. We shout, sing, praise, and bless (Psalm 66:1-2, 8). We get to testify after the fashion of the Baptist and loud like the Lord who has opened our lips. May we raise our Gospel-motivated voice For Life to encourage and advocate for those vulnerable to the deception of using death as a solution.

**December 15 – Advent III** – Gospel-motivated voices For Life bring reasonableness to the cultural conversation about life issues (Philippians 4:5). It means a message of joy and hope instead of just another angry and fearful demeanor. The sanctity of life proclaims good news to neighbors made poor (Luke 7:22) by pressures toward abortion and physician-assisted suicide. God remains mighty to save (Zephaniah 3:17), even in surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis.

**December 22 – Advent IV** – Whether the hamlet of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) or gestating babies (Luke 1:41-44), the God of Christmas loves to elevate what seems insignificant. Indeed, the heart of the Gospel consists in exalting those of humble estate (Luke 1:52). Rejoicing in the Lord who creates, redeems, and calls regardless of size, skills, or circumstances, the sanctity of life delights to declare nothing less!

**December 29 – Christmas I** – The Old Testament ritual of redeeming firstborns clearly declares that the Lord lends us our children, but they belong to Him (Exodus 13:11-12). Little ones are gifts and privileges, not property, preferences, accessories, or rights. The coming of Christ extends this designation to every neighbor, including those of advanced age (Luke 2:25-26, 36-38). Let us not neglect to teach and admonish one another about it (Colossians 3:16)!

## Step Up 4 Life 2024!

by Dave Probst, Director of Development



We are overwhelmed with gratitude for your thoughts, prayers, steps, and financial gifts to our **Step Up 4 Life** campaign. Your enthusiasm and commitment to proclaiming God's gift of life from fertilization to forever is inspiring. Here's how YOU impacted **Step Up 4 Life** this year:

- **Step Up 4 Life** received twenty donations and \$32,200 from our seed money appeal letter.
- **Step Up 4 Life** received 452 gifts from 427 donors totaling \$101,106 before July 1. Our **Step Up 4 Life** campaign goal for 2024 was \$80,000!
- **Step Up 4 Life** received donations from ministry partners in 38 states including: AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MT, NC, ND, NE, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SD, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, and WY.
- The most donations to our **Step Up 4 Life** campaign came from Minnesota with 52 donations, Indiana with 49 donations, and Iowa with 45 donations. Go Gophers!
- **Step Up 4 Life** had 10 teams participate in our **Step Up 4 Life** Team Challenge! The three teams with the highest rankings were St. Paul, Clifty, in first; Soulful Strutters in second; and Walking This Way 4 Life in third!
- **Step Up 4 Life** had 75 walkers and 58 sponsorship donations. The total number of steps taken during our campaign was 14,528,209. One individual amassed 1,469,352 steps on their own!
- **Step Up 4 Life** received 328 donations and \$27,805 in 2021, 519 donations and \$68,251 in 2022, and 417 donations and \$93,543 in 2023.
- **Step Up 4 Life** received 26 Winners Circle donations (\$750 and up), 11 Marathon Runner donations (\$500-\$749), and 22 Pace Setter donations (\$250-\$499).

Once again, thank you for your compassionate advocacy for the sanctity of life. Your support directly impacts our ability to continue this vital life-changing work and uphold the God-given value of every human life.

# Step Up 4 Life!

## Lutherans For Life ...

- **Applies God's Word**, both His Law and His Gospel, to all the life issues—abortion, assisted suicide and euthanasia, sexual purity and bio-technology.
- **Assists For Life Christians** in offering the hope and help of the Good News of Jesus Christ to all, whatever their circumstances.
- **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!**
- **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 presentations, printed resources, Life Sunday materials, Bible studies, curricula, audio and video, and through [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org).
- **Equips** local congregations to speak out on life issues in their communities through Life Chapters and Life Teams, or as a Life Advocate. LFL State Federations, Life Chapters, and Life Teams also support a variety of compassionate, caring pregnancy and post-abortion ministries (including our own Word of Hope) that offer pre- and post-natal counseling, parenting skills workshops, and lifestyle counsel.
- 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.



**LUTHERANS  
FOR LIFE**

Equipping Lutherans and  
their neighbors to be Gospel-  
motivated voices For Life!

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

**Our Vision** ... Every Lutheran, both individually and in community, upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same

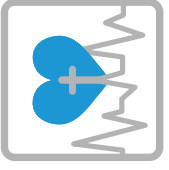
**Our Philosophy** ... Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give a Gospel-motivated witness to the Church and society on these and other related issues, such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living. We will call God's people to compassionate action and foster life-affirming alternatives for those facing difficult situations.

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