

# Lifelines

May/June/July 2024

## Congratulations to the 2024 Lutherans For Life of Michigan Essay Contest Winners!

1<sup>st</sup> Place Elementary Essay Contest Winner: Daniel Hudeck, 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Trinity Lutheran Church in Reese

### *Hidden in Disability*

When my sister was born at 23 weeks, the doctor did not want to resuscitate her, knowing she would have many disabilities in the unlikely event she survived. Disability can be a darkness for us but through God's grace, light shines in the darkness. God can use disability to bless us by using it as an opportunity to draw us closer to Him, spread joy and enthusiasm, and show our true value in Christ.

God uses disability as an opportunity to draw families closer to Him. Often the challenges are so overwhelming that it drives us to a very important truth. We realize that we cannot do this on our own. We need God's help. We also gain perspective when we realize there is much more to look forward to than this short life here on earth. For all who believe in Jesus as their Savior, we have an eternity in heaven to look forward to. Because of the effects of sin there are hardships and disabilities. But "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).

Often those with disabilities spread joy and enthusiasm in unique ways. They can share Christ with the boldness and excitement of a child not waiting for the perfect time or place. Their positive attitude is contagious. Beyond a joyful attitude, there is something far more important that gives us value.

"What huge blessings could have been missed had her life not been valued."

Where does our value come from? Our true value comes from being a child of God. You are loved not for

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what you can do but who you are. As it says in 1 Samuel, "The Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). Our value is not based on our abilities but the fact we are loved children of God. God's love for us is the most important place to find value.



Disabilities can be blessings used as an opportunity to draw us closer to Him, filling our lives with joy and enthusiasm, and reminding us of our true value in Him. My sister was very fortunate and although she has faced many difficulties, she is now in college studying to be a nurse. Thanks be to God! What huge blessings could have been missed had her life not been valued. Life shines in the darkness!

(Pictured left: Daniel Hudeck, photo submitted by Pastor Daniel Burhop, Trinity Lutheran Church in Reese)

Turn to p.4 to read the 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Essay written by Christiana Klamert!

Make sure to read a very important *President's Column* on p.5!

**LFL's mission is to equip Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.**

### **LFL Vision Statement:**

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

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Website: [www.lflmi.org](http://www.lflmi.org)

### **THANK YOU...**

*Lutherans For Life, Nevada, IA*

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*St. Michael Lutheran Church, Reese, MI*

*Doris Pagels, Howell, MI  
In memory of Char Ruhlrig*

*St. Luke Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor, MI*

## THANK YOU (CONTINUED)

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*Anne Ebel, Mt. Clemens, MI  
In memory of her mom Leanne Frank*

*James Tafel, Alto, MI*

*Alan & Janet Dunker, Auburn Hills, MI*

*Gordon & Sandra Carr, Shelby Twp., MI*

### **Pregnancy Resource Centers in Michigan**

There are more than 150 locations in Michigan that offer pregnancy and adoption help services.  
**(Find them at [www.rtl.org/pregnancy-help](http://www.rtl.org/pregnancy-help))**

### **Please let us know how you would prefer to receive Lifelines!**

It is available by email, mail, or on our website [www.lflmi.org](http://www.lflmi.org). If you would like to change how you receive it, please contact us at [schaidtl@gmail.com](mailto:schaidtl@gmail.com) or (586)214-3116.

### **Check Out These Easy Ways to Give!**

Lutherans For Life of Michigan receives a percentage of your purchase when you shop!

Amazon Smile and choose us as your charity! For details, go to <http://smile.amazon.com/about>.

Kroger and sign up to have us connected to your Kroger Plus Card as your charity! For details, go to <https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow/>

***All Babies Are a Blessing***

In Genesis we read that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature” (Genesis 2:7). All life comes from God. “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). All life is a gift from God, but people in this world are constantly taking away that amazing gift that God so generously gave us. No one has the authority to do this; God gave this life to us, and it is not meant to be taken away. Abortion must be stopped.

You may have heard people say, “A child in the womb is just a clump of cells.” They claim that they can kill babies because they are “just cells.” This makes absolutely no sense however, because cells, by definition, are “capable...of performing all the fundamental functions of life” (Merriam Webster’s Dictionary 184). Clearly these so called “clumps of cells” are living beings. As Heartbeat Pregnancy Center says, “A baby’s heartbeat begins to beat on day 21 after conception” (Heartbeat Pregnancy Center). And yet, there are still many people out there in this broken world who are murdering these helpless babies.

How is abortion any different from murdering a grown person? It isn’t. They are both living, they are both human. As Choices Pregnancy center says, “an unborn baby is human” (Choices Pregnancy Center). Most importantly, they are both blessings from God: “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward” (Psalm 127:3). Sadly this is a sinful world and people find excuses to murder their babies, like fear that the baby will be too much work, cost too much money, have cancer or any other medical condition, or even live a life of suffering. Luckily there are pregnancy centers that are supporting women and supplying them with everything that they might need to care for a baby.

“This dark world is not all darkness.”

Even though many babies are being murdered every day, there are still amazing people out there who are doing all they can to save these poor, helpless babies. For example, this past November, we held our first ever Michigan March for Life. Many churches, (including my own) donate money and goods to pregnancy centers, to help women who don’t know what to do. This dark world is not all darkness. Life shines in darkness. Nothing in this world could ever change that.



*(Pictured left: Christiana Klammer with Pastor Paul Clark presenting her award, photo submitted by Pastor Clark)*

***Next Year’s Essay Contest Theme will be based on Psalm 139. Stay tuned for more details!***

## President's Column

by Pastor Paul Clark, President of Lutherans For Life of Michigan

During my six years of working as a medical orderly at *Seaway Hospital* in Trenton, there were several quite memorable occurrences. Most of these took place in the Emergency Room, which is where I was usually assigned. But at times I worked in one of the medical or surgical wings of the hospital. While working on the floor known as Surgical East, there was a patient by the name of *Richard*. I was often called to assist the nurses and aides in caring for him. Richard had been in a terrible motorcycle accident and had sustained serious head injuries. After emergency surgery, he had fallen into a coma. For over two months, Richard lay there, in that same bed, in that same hospital room, unresponsive, fed through a tube, and being turned from side to side every few hours to prevent bedsores. No one thought Richard had any chance of recovery. Sadly, the terrible and degrading word "*vegetable*" was used by some who cared for him. I confess, to my shame, that it may have been used by me.

*Then*, one day, Richard came out of the coma. *He simply woke up.*

In the days and weeks that followed, many were startled to hear that he had heard and even remembered some of the things that were said by the people who cared for him or visited him. I wish I could say that during that period I had prayed by his bedside or read Holy Scripture to him, but at that point in my life, sad to say, I was not very mature at all in the faith, and like many of my companions, had written him off as a lost cause. I shudder when pondering what he might have overheard.

As I said, I am *ashamed* of my attitude at that time. But then again, looking back, I am ashamed of many things. I venture to say that I am not alone. You've no doubt spent time in that Hall of Shame and that Garden of Guilt also. Our lives are often haunted by guilt and shame. The poet **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow** wrote,

Each heart has its haunted chamber,  
Where the silent moonlight falls!  
On the floor are mysterious footsteps,  
There are whispers along the walls!  
And mine at times is haunted  
By Phantoms of the Past  
As motionless as shadows  
By the silent moonlight cast.

The Past, with its beastly burden of guilt and shame, can leave emotional scars upon us. Longfellow was right: *Every heart does have its haunted chamber*. But remember, a *scar* is a wound that is *healed and covered with new skin*. Thanks be to God for His unfathomable love in sending us His beloved Son, Jesus, who by His suffering, death, and resurrection removed the burden of sin and guilt, and yes, even shame, and in their place gives us forgiveness and peace. We pray with the psalmist, "**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**" and He does. **In Christ**, through **Holy Baptism**, we are made **new**.

**Human life is a precious and beautiful gift.** Every life has infinite value to the One whose flesh was pierced and whose body was nailed to that bloody cross. Jesus died for all. As we recently did in **Holy Week**, we now continue to come to the Lord's House and hear once more the emotionally overwhelming account of our Lord's Passion, of His intense suffering, both physical and spiritual, for us sinners. (*continued p.6*)

## The President's Column *(continued from p.5)*

Dear Christian, ***your Savior's blood*** wipes away every taint, every trace, of your sin. That blood quenches the damning fire of your guilt and shame. These plunge into the waters of your baptism and rise no more. No matter what you have done, or what past sins haunt you, there *is* and *remains* forgiveness in Jesus. This is the One who was stricken, smitten, and afflicted - for you. Here in God's Church, we "*come to Calvary's holy mountain,*" where we find "*a pure and healing fountain*" that "*flows for you, for me, for all*" (LSB #435). Here you freely receive the gifts of God given to you in the *Divine Service*. Here are **WORDS** that have ***the power to absolve***. Here is **WATER** connected with God's Word and promise that now ***washes away the grime of guilt and sin*** and brings regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Here are **BREAD AND WINE**, that hand over to you the very **BODY AND BLOOD** of Him, who on the Tree of the Cross, cried out, ***"IT IS FINISHED!"***

Here, as we gather together in the *Divine Service*, is the risen and victorious Lord Jesus, who conquered death and hell, and brings life and immortality to light. Once again – **ALL FOR YOU!**

***Every life has tremendous value.*** Your life, my life, *and yes*, Richard's life – there are no human vegetables. There are only human beings, created in the image of God, created male and female, valued enough that God sent His only-begotten Son to die for us, ***for God desires all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.***

Richard – *whether in a coma or not* – was *valued* by God. Jesus gave His life for Richard. Our humanity is not determined by how healthy we are, how strong we are, or how much we do. It is not determined by how others see us or by what value society places on our lives.

But here is the ***bad news***. Here in the *State of Michigan* a four-bill package has already been introduced in our State Senate designed to legalize physician-assisted suicide. ***Dear saints, we must stand against this!*** Our lives and times are in God's hands, not doctors, nor medical panels, nor government officials. Both physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia weaken the entire medical profession, undermining the commitment by doctors and medical professionals to care and save lives, instead of ending them. It gives too much power to doctors, government, insurance companies, and the like. Many patients, who already may suffer from depression, will feel abandoned or even pressured by society, or even by their own family, to end their lives. The grisly beat of the pro-death drum continues, but the march toward the so-called "*right to die*" only brings more suffering and emotional anguish and furthers the devil's mission to deceive people into embracing the culture of death. We need to be prepared to resist this legislation in Michigan and remain at our post in being a strong and reliable voice for life.

We have so much more to offer than "*solutions*" such as physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. We support efforts that are designed to heal, not kill, such as hospice care, counseling, medications that can ease pain, and emotional support. No matter how many days we may have on this earth, or how badly our health fails, we are loved and valued by God. In Jesus, we have an inheritance that is kept for you in heaven, unfading, unspoiled. Instead of offering death as an answer to pain, suffering, and emotional anguish, we offer compassion. We have the **Gospel**, which alone brings peace and help to all who call upon the Lord in faith.

Thus, the drumbeat to which we march is the cadence that God provides us in His holy Word. Jesus - who died for you, for me, and for all - has crushed the head of the serpent and demolished the stranglehold of death. ***Grounded in the Resurrection of Jesus***, we behold *our resurrection* as well. Hope springs anew, and the life we have now expands into eternity. *No devil* can touch that. The bottom line is this: ***Jesus lives, and in Him, we will live also.***

***Praise be to Jesus, who suffered, was crucified, died, and rose again; who is truly the LORD OF LIFE!***

# Treasurer's Report

by **Brendan McMahon**

We praise and thank the Lord of life for your generous donations. Your gifts enable us to carry out our mission in Michigan churches, schools, and communities, to give witness to the sanctity of all human life, from fertilization until forever, based upon the Word of God. And they allow us to provide most resources free of charge.

Income for the first four months of 2024 is at a near high. We are pleased that we have been able to provide financial support to three pregnancy resource centers around the state. We would be pleased to discuss aiding and providing seed money to help start a Life Team at your congregation, or to help your Life Team progress to the next step. We would also like to discuss assisting your congregation in hosting a Life Issues event.

## **Donations to Lutherans For Life of Michigan**

The printed remittance envelope provided in the newsletter is to be used to give a donation to Lutherans For Life of Michigan. In the interest of reducing our costs, remittance envelopes only have the treasurer's address printed on the outside. When making a general donation, you may just put a check in the envelope and write your return address on it. If the name or names, and address on the check are correct, no other information is required. If not, please provide the name or names that are to be acknowledged as the donor or donors on a separate sheet of paper. Also, if your address has changed, please provide your new address.

If your donation is an honorarium or memorial, please provide the information identified in the form below. You may cut out the form and fill in the information or provide it on a separate sheet of paper.

**All donations to Lutherans For Life of Michigan can be sent to:**

Lutherans For Life of Michigan Treasurer

c/o Brendan McMahon

25646 Castlereigh Dr.

Farmington Hills, MI 48336

## **Memorials or Honorary Gifts**

The enclosed gift is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

OR

The enclosed gift is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send notification of this gift to:**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State, Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your name** \_\_\_\_\_



# What's Happening...

We had a very nice Life Sunday recently, with a particular focus on Word of Hope. I've included a photo of our table with Life Team members. We gave away many 10-week fetal baby models and had some good interaction with table visitors.

Pastor spoke about the Word of Hope ministry during the service and included our pro-life message in the prayers of the church.

## Word of Hope Ministry

The OSL Life Team would like people to know about the Word of Hope ministry, a free, confidential online counseling service for anyone who has participated in or is contemplating an abortion. This wonderful service is a branch of the National Lutherans for Life. Look for Word of Hope contact information on the [Community Resources](#) page of our website.

Our Life Team also collects donations for Hannah's House. Both the church and school participate (photo below).



(both articles on this page and photos submitted by Deb Kamm from Our Savior Lutheran Church & School in Lansing)

To find out more about starting a Life Team, contact Virginia Flo, Director of Volunteer Relations at [vflo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:vflo@lutheransforlife.org) or (651) 333-0337.

## Word of Hope

LFL's Post Abortion Healing Ministry

We can help, contact us at:

1-888-217-8679

[www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org)

[help@word-of-hope.org](mailto:help@word-of-hope.org)

Just a minute, what's a Life Team? So glad you asked! A Life Team is a gospel-motivated group of church members that communicates and shares the abundant love of Christ, both in life issues within the church and outward into the community.



Our Savior is blessed with a team of more than twenty individuals who have a heart for life. On Life Sunday, several members manned a display table loaded with educational materials. Good

discussion took place with visitors and many 10-week fetal models were given out. We especially enjoyed the teens who came for cookies! How important to reach young people with God's truth about the value of life.

We look for ways to educate, witness, and serve – in love. We want to involve our school children! This spring,



classrooms will collect items for Hannah's House, a local shelter for expectant moms. Chapel offerings will support Hannah's, and a speaker will visit. We also encourage participation of 6-8th graders in the annual Life Essay Contest sponsored by Lutherans for Life of Michigan.

Last year, our congregation donated \$3,500 to Shared Pregnancy Women's Center, collected through the Baby Bottle Blessing project. Reaching out with God's love is such an honor.

We want to speak out for the most vulnerable. In November, members participated in the March for Life along with several thousand others gathered in Lansing. Many high school students were there – praise God!



National Lutherans for Life offers the Word of Hope Ministry, a free, confidential online counseling service for anyone who has participated in or is contemplating

an abortion. Word of Hope contact information is located at [www.oursaviorlansing.org/community-resources](http://www.oursaviorlansing.org/community-resources)

It's been great sharing about our team. You are welcome to join us at any time! For more information, contact Deb Kamm at [d.kamm@comcast.net](mailto:d.kamm@comcast.net).



# ...in Michigan?

## *A Life Summit: Life Triumphant Hurled in Splendor Through Thy Broken World*

*Presented by Lutherans For Life of Michigan*

More than 100 people from across Michigan gathered at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fowler on April 28<sup>th</sup> to listen, discuss, and encourage each other in our work For Life. Michigan is becoming an increasingly challenging state in which to advocate for the value of every human life from fertilization to forever. Even still life shines through the darkness and that message of the value of every human life must continue to be shared. So we gather and learn and share ideas and celebrate God's gift of life together.

The event began by joining together in the hymn "O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth" by Martin Franzmann (*Lutheran Service Book* #834), wherein we find the title of the event: "life triumphant hurled in splendor through Thy broken world." It is a broken world indeed. Yet the Lord of Life Himself brought life to this broken world by His own life incarnate, His death for our life, and His triumphant resurrection to bring the sure hope of ours. After the hymn, Pastor Paul Clark presented on this theme. He serves as Pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fowler, President of Lutherans For Life of Michigan, Life Coordinator for the Michigan District of the LC-MS, and serves on the LFL National Board of Directors. He spoke on the connection of the hymn text to our work advocating for the protection of human life. While we mourn over the brokenness of this world and the increasing culture of death that surrounds us, we do not mourn as those who have no hope (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13). Rather, we press on, knowing that life is indeed triumphant because the Lord of Life has already triumphed over death. To those in despair, in darkness, in the depths of the culture of death, we strive to bring this hope, a hope that enlivens, protects life, and rejoices in the life to come.

Next, we heard two presentations by Dr. Roni Grad. He is a retired pediatric pulmonologist, Chair of his congregation's Life Team in Arizona, Secretary of the LFL National Board of Directors, and the Life Coordinator for the English District of the LC-MS. In his first presentation, *Intricately Woven*, he discussed how we see the hand of God at work throughout pre-natal development. His second presentation, *Organ Donation and Determination of Death*, covered the biblical definition of death contrasted with recent changes in the accepted medical definition and how that impacts the decision-making process about organ donation. Visit the Lutherans For Life website at this link <https://lutheransforlife.org/article/a-statement-on-determination-of-death/> to read the official statement on The Determination of Death (with Special Reference to Organ Donation) adopted by Lutherans For Life.



*Photo left: Pastor Paul Clark and Dr. Roni Grad*

*Photo right: Attendees at the Life Summit enjoying fellowship, refreshments, and resources*

*(Photos submitted by Pastor Paul Clark)*



## **Upcoming Events**

### **St. Luke Life Team's Annual Movie Event**

**What:** Showing the documentary *Stuck in Traffic: Modern-Day Slavery in Michigan*, followed by a short presentation and Q&A with Deb Ellinger, Director of Elli's House in Detroit. For more information on Elli's House, visit [www.ellishouse313.com](http://www.ellishouse313.com).

**Where:** St. Luke Lutheran Church in Clinton Twp.

**When:** Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup> 2:00-3:30pm

The event is free. Please RSVP to Lauren Schaidt

(586-214-3116 or [schaidtl@gmail.com](mailto:schaidtl@gmail.com))



\*If this arrives after the date of the event, we recommend watching this documentary by going to <https://vimeo.com/181176937>

### **Annual Diaper Drive**

**When:** Mother's Day – Father's Day (May 14<sup>th</sup> – June 18<sup>th</sup>)

**What:** Collect diapers to donate to local pregnancy centers

**Where:** Your congregation

Let us know how many you collect and where you donate them (contact Lauren at [schaidtl@gmail.com](mailto:schaidtl@gmail.com) or 586-214-3116). We love to print it to bring awareness of our many pregnancy centers in Michigan and encourage others to support them throughout the year!

### **Save the Date!**

Dual Event Sponsored by Lutherans For Life of Michigan

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, Executive Director of the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty in Washington, D.C.

Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Clinton Twp. AND Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> in Grand Rapids

*More information coming in the next issue of Lifelines!*

## 2024 LUTHERANS FOR LIFE REGIONAL CONFERENCES

FROM [WWW.LUTHERANSFORLIFE.ORG/CONFERENCE](http://WWW.LUTHERANSFORLIFE.ORG/CONFERENCE)

**Join Us in 2024! 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)

**On Saturday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Michael Salemink, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life** will present, *“A Childless World: Utopia of Disaster?”* at Hope Lutheran Church, 1180 W Herbison Rd., Dewitt, MI 48820. There will be a Matins service at 8:00am. The presentation will be from 9:00am – 2:00pm and will include lunch. Preregistration will be required; information will be available on Hope’s website ([www.hopelutherandewitt.com](http://www.hopelutherandewitt.com)).

## Step Up 4 Life!

Lutherans For Life's annual Walk for Life campaign provides a novel twist to the traditional Walk for Life. Each participant sets his or her own walking (or other activity) and fundraising goals, then walks to raise awareness about LFL's work and encourages others to donate to his or her campaign. (from <https://www.charityfootprints.com/StepUp4Life2024>, go there for more information)

# How do I get started?

- **Registration Opens: April 1, 2024**
- **Fitness Tracking Begins: May 12, 2024**
- **Participate in Step Up 4 Life by following these 4 simple steps:**

**Step 1**

**REGISTER:** Participate as an individual or join a group effort! (Registration is free with a suggested participation donation of \$100 for adults /\$50 for youth.)

Click the register button on this page and choose (or create) your team. Once registered, set up your fundraising page with your custom personal fitness and fundraising goals.

**Step 2**

**TRACK** your steps and miles from May 12 to June 24. Any kind of exercise and physical activity counts! (Check out the activity conversion chart below.)

There are three ways to track your progress:

- Download the free Charity Footprints App.
- Sync your fitness device (Fitbit, Apple Watch, Garmin, Google Fit, Misfit, Strava) or use the health app on your iPhone.
- Manually enter miles on your event page.

**Step 3**

**SHARE** your personal fundraising page with your network!

Invite your family, friends, and colleagues to join you by participating on your team, or ask them to make a contribution on your fundraising page to help you reach your fundraising goals. Every dollar raised directly supports Lutherans For Life! Share your progress and experiences on social media. Don't forget to use our hashtag #stepup4life, and tag elfly4life.

**Step 4**

**ORDER** additional items for your fundraiser!

- Order your **FREE** Step Up 4 Life kit. It includes bulletin announcements, sponsorship forms, fundraising tips, congregational one-day event ideas, and so much more!
- Don't forget about your t-shirts and Step Up swag! Order pre-designed shirts or download a PNG to design your own team shirts using one of the Step Up 4 Life logos (See links at top of page.)

# Valuing Life: A Personal Reflection

by Mandi Wesley

As I sit here writing this article, I am eagerly (and admittedly, impatiently) awaiting the birth of our third child. The months, weeks, days, and hours that have passed since we found out we were expecting have given me ample time to reflect on the gift of life and the tremendous joy that comes with a new baby. This time has also led me to reflect on the sad state of our society, which continues to devalue that very gift of life and celebrate its destruction.

I know first-hand that pregnancy does not come easily for some couples. We went through several years of waiting, praying, and some basic infertility treatments before being blessed with our firstborn, a daughter. We went through several more years of waiting, praying, failed infertility treatments, and a year-long adoption process before being blessed with our son through adoption. We were so thankful that God had given us two children, and we felt that our family was likely complete. In addition to the gratefulness we had for our two kids, the astronomical cost and the stress of both infertility and adoption had led us to close the doors on pursuing either of those routes again.

Needless to say, we were beyond thrilled last June to find out that God had blessed us with a third child. The shock, joy, disbelief, and excitement created a surge of emotions that I'll never forget. Ten years ago, we weren't sure if we would be able to have any kids at all, and now here we are - days away from meeting our third little one!

I share all of this because I understand that our path was different than the "average" couple's. I am confident that the long, bumpy road we traveled to become parents has made us all the more grateful for the kids God has placed in our care. I believe that people tend to appreciate something more when they have to work harder or wait longer to get it, and I'm sure that plays a part in my passion for life ministry and my desire for all people to see the value of every life, especially the unborn. But I also believe that the road a couple (or an individual) travels does not excuse them from seeing the value of every life. Whether pregnancy came easily or not, whether a pregnancy was planned or not, whether it's an "ideal" time to have a baby, whether the parents are financially stable, whether there's a chance the baby may have a medical condition, or whatever other various scenarios you can think of, that baby is a precious life, created by God. God already has a purpose and a plan for that precious life, and no circumstance of the parents or anyone else merits the destruction of that life. Take a look at a couple of truths found in Scripture that support this claim:

- **Psalm 139:13** - **"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb."** This verse emphasizes the fact that God created us *in the womb*. This is important because it confirms that we did not come to be by chance or by accident; rather, we were *created* by God. This fact alone means that our life has had meaning and purpose from the time we were in our mother's womb.
- **Exodus 20:13** - **"You shall not murder."** When God gave the Ten Commandments, He was straightforward and direct. These clearly stated laws were guidelines for the Israelites long ago and for us today. The Sixth Commandment does not include a list of exceptions...it doesn't say "You shall not murder *unless the victim is younger than \_\_\_\_ or older than \_\_\_\_*," or "You shall not murder *unless the victim has a disability*," or "You shall not murder *unless this is an inconvenient time to have a child*." Rather, it simply and directly states, "You shall not murder." It leaves no room for interpretation. Thinking back to the



previous truth that God created us *in the womb*, this commandment certainly applies even to those little lives at their earliest stages.

- **Matthew 22:39 - “Love your neighbor as yourself.”** In this verse, Jesus is stating that the idea of *loving one’s neighbor* is the second greatest command, behind only *loving the Lord your God*. It is understood throughout Scripture that the idea of *neighbor* refers to all human beings. We have already established that God creates life in the womb, so this term *neighbor* certainly extends to those lives in the womb. Can you think of a more vulnerable, helpless, at-risk group of *neighbors* than the unborn? They certainly need our love, protection, and willingness to stand up and defend their right to life.

The fact that there are people in our world, our country, our state, and maybe even our own circles of friends and family who refuse to acknowledge these Scriptural truths is heartbreaking. People are literally fighting for the “right” to murder, and celebrating when that “right” is granted. What an absolute slap in the face to anyone who has ever longed for a child, lost a child, struggled with infertility, or had a miscarriage. More so, what a slap in the face to God, our Creator, and the truths that He set forth for us in His Word.

You don’t need to have personal experience with pregnancy, infertility, or parenthood to recognize the horror of abortion and to feel heartbroken over the millions of lives lost to and affected by abortion. As Christians, as those who believe in the truths of Scripture, and as humans who respect and desire to protect every life, we need to continue to pray, share, and spread information to help end the atrocity of abortion. It will not go away on its own. We need to help create a major culture shift that leads to loving, valuing, and protecting one another and the most vulnerable among us - the unborn.

May God bless you and lead you to share His truth, inspire change, and boldly stand up to defend the right to life for all of His precious children.

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## News from Loving Arms, Macomb County Chapter 94 of LFL

By Karen Hoerauf, President

586-247-5177 51hills@sbcglobal.net

Mr. David Probst, the Development Director for Lutherans For Life, came to St. John Lutheran in Fraser, Michigan on the fifth Wednesday in Lent. He visited with a group, ages 15-89, during the soup supper to share news about LFL and to hear the For Life stories of those in the group. Lauren Schaidt, Vice President, and Jeannette Meyer, Secretary, of Lutherans For Life of Michigan, were also present. What a wonderful time to share and be affirmed in our mutual mission to support LIFE!

David then worshiped at the Lenten Service where Rev. Joel Haak, Associate Pastor at St. John, chanted the Order of Compline. David told Pastor he hadn’t heard that since his days at Concordia in Seward. Both Pastor Haak and Deaconess Nora Gorman chatted with David following the Lenten service at the LFL display table.

On **May 11 from 10:30-12** a meeting of Loving Arms will be held at St. John Lutheran in Fraser. Plans for the Spring and Fall will be shared. Pamphlets and books will be available to take back to the area churches. Ideas for future projects will be discussed. Anyone from the SE Michigan area churches is welcome to attend. Please contact Karen Hoerauf (info. above) for more information.

## Donations to National Lutherans For Life

The "I WANT TO SPEAK FOR LIFE" form provided is to be used to give a donation to National Lutherans For Life in Nevada, IA. When using that form you need to provide your own envelope and mail it to address shown on the bottom of the form. Lutherans for Life of Michigan is part of Lutherans For Life, but we have separate budgets and bank accounts. The National office has paid staff members but Lutherans For Life of Michigan has no paid staff. National sponsors conferences and develops resources to be used throughout the United States and other countries. LFL of MI provides educational information and sponsors events and conferences in Michigan churches, schools, and communities.

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### I WANT TO SPEAK OUT FOR LIFE!

I want to become a member of LFL (Please select a membership category.)

\_\_\_\_ Annual: \$35 \$50 \$75 Other \$\_\_\_\_ (A donation of any amount will enroll you as an annual member of LFL.)

\_\_\_\_ Sponsor: I commit to a monthly gift of \$\_\_\_\_ (Annual & Sponsor contributions to LFL are tax-deductible.)

I'm not interested in membership, but am enclosing a contribution of \$\_\_\_\_ to support the national efforts of LFL.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Name/# (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

Church Body (Synod) AALC \_\_\_\_\_ AFLC \_\_\_\_\_ CLBA \_\_\_\_\_ ELCA \_\_\_\_\_ LCMS \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and send to: Lutherans For Life, 1101 - 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Nevada, IA 50201-1816

1-888-364-LIFE \* (515) 382-3020 \* E-mail: [info@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:info@lutheransforlife.org) \*

Website: [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

## Lutherans For Life of Michigan

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## In the Next Issue...

Information on Upcoming LFL  
Conferences

Legislative Report

What's Happening...in Michigan

Several Upcoming Michigan Events

And More!

## Quotes

"It is He who sustains us each and every day. It is He who brings us into the world, and He who draws our earthly lives to a close at the proper time. It is He who was born for us, He who died for us, He who rose for us, and He who reigns on high for us. His is the pattern of our lives." *Deaconess Bethany Stoeber, Director-at-Large, LFL of Kansas – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*

"I can finally perceive that God put some of the most difficult neighbors in my life at some of the most difficult times in order to bring me to the end of myself. Jesus didn't say that what God asks us to do would be easy. What God asks is impossibly difficult if God were not actually alongside us, helping us every step of the way. But the good news is that He is alongside us, helping us every step of the way." *Donna Harrison, M.D., American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*