

Lifelines

August/September/October 2026

Announcing the Lutherans For Life of Michigan 2026 Essay Contest Winners!

1st Place Essay in the High School Division:

Life Worth Living

By Clara Brown, Senior at Lutheran North

In J.R.R. Tolkien's novel, *The Return of the King*, the character Samwise says, "Though here at journey's end I lie in darkness buried deep...above all shadows rides the Sun and Stars forever dwell: I will not say the Day is done, nor bid the Stars farewell." Samwise must fight against the darkness, even when it seems easier to give in, because he believes he has a greater purpose. His words reflect the truth that many young adults face today. There is darkness in the world, and it is hard not to succumb to it. In today's culture, people experience depression when they base their worth on scholarships, wealth, jobs, and achievements. When these pursuits fail, people are left feeling broken and empty. However, suffering through depression does not change the sanctity of life, and hope is not meant to rest on temporary sources of joy. The world teaches that worth is based on success, but the Gospel teaches that even in depression, the value of life and hope are found in the sacrifice of Christ.

Depression has many causes, but one source of despair is the pressure to build identity on achievement. Young adults are influenced by the cultural norm that worth and happiness are found in relationships, careers, and

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wealth. Consequently, "College campuses and workplaces are seeing an increase in students and young professionals reaching out for counseling, often reporting feelings of hopelessness, fatigue, and overwhelming anxiety" (Galdo). Many young people struggle emotionally and mentally and experience anxiety and exhaustion. They begin to think that their lives do not matter because life feels overwhelming and burdensome. As the pressure increases, it becomes unbearable, and the young adult becomes depressed, hopeless, and unhappy.

Depression can lead a person to feel numb and worthless. It is like swimming in an ocean so cold that the skin becomes numb to the chill, while the waves pull the swimmer down. Yet, just as there is comfort for the swimmer when the light from the lighthouse shines through the darkness, there is comfort in the Word of God for the depressed. God's Word proclaims that *they may have life* despite their suffering—a life full of purpose and worth through Christ. In John 10:10, Jesus says, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." The thief, the devil, wants to destroy hope and peace. He tempts people to seek fame, achievements, and success for their value, but Christ has given everlasting worth that is not dependent on success. People long for something to give their lives meaning, not realizing that Christ has already done so. The Scriptures teach that no matter the suffering, there is hope, life, and worth through Christ. God gives everyone a purpose to love Him and share His Word, so that *(continued on p.3)*

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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Word of Hope

LFL's Post Abortion Healing Ministry

We can help, contact us at:

1-888-217-8679

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(Life Worth Living, continued from p. 1)

others may know His grace. Depression may try to pull people into the deep, numbing waters, but the light of God always shines. There is always hope and value because Christ has died for all. The fact that the Son of God came down from Heaven to bear the sin of the world to the cross shows how much worth every person has and how deeply Christ loves His children.

In my own life, I often feel exhausted and discouraged, but I know my worth does not come from success or emotions. My value comes from the sacrifice of Christ, and despite this exhaustion, I still have value. I also must be reminded that this exhausting day-to-day life will not be solved in a few seconds. However, with every negative thought, I can shift my mindset by turning to the Word. In Christ, I have abundant life on earth and in eternity and my life is worth living. God has provided His Word to bring comfort and assurance that everyone is made in the image of God and is loved and chosen by Him.

The world teaches that the value of life comes from wealth and achievements, but Christ teaches that each person has value because He has redeemed every human by His blood. Whether it is the struggling student or the depressed adult, no life lacks worth. If Christ deemed all lives worthy to die for, then each life is worthy to live. Christ has overcome the pain and suffering of the world so that all may have life. With Him, all have value, hope, joy, and a life that no darkness can overcome.

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2nd Place Essay in the High School Division:

Self-Destructing in 3...2...1...

By Lydia Klammer, Junior from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fowler

There are many oppositions in this world which point to the distinction between God and Satan: light and darkness, good and evil, true and false; these are just a few examples. John 10:10 sums this up particularly well: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (The Lutheran Study Bible). The devil is a thief, taking what he wishes, not simply ignoring the pain it may cause, but delighting in it. He is also a trickster and a liar, which he shows even from the garden of Eden when he first presents himself as a serpent, a creature subsequently used in literature to represent slyness and distrust. All have fallen prey to his temptation as we hear in Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God" (The Lutheran Study Bible) and he has gotten more crafty throughout history. He has tricked the world into believing that families, pregnancy, and children are evil, something to be destroyed rather than celebrated.

He attacks the youth in many ways, spreading his lies in schools, government, and media, and when he cannot corrupt them through these means, he murders them. The earliest corruption comes *(continued on p.4)*

(Self-Destructing in 3...2...1..., continued from p.3)

through media, with “children’s” shows such as Cocomelon promoting same-sex marriage (@MichaelKnowles). When this seed of evil has been planted, schools continue to feed this corruption in sex ed by teaching that sex is just a casual part of life, rather than the deeply personal act it really is which only belongs to a husband and wife. Some schools even go so far as to give students condoms, which further encourages a casual view of premarital sex, and the first response to teen pregnancy is to dispose of the child, rather than cherish it for the beautiful life it is. These views of sexual relations and abortion are ways of the world, and not the way of Christ. Sadly, these ways of the world—even promoted in American schools—have seeped into the government, as well. In states like Michigan, abortions are now taxpayer-funded, forcing people to commit evil through what they call “law.” Abortion is promoted as a backup; one method is an abortion pill called “Plan B”, and when you think about it, abortion really is the “Plan B” for Satan. When he can’t corrupt people in their youth, he has to get rid of them. However, abortion is not Satan’s only “Plan B.”

When Satan can’t convince children to follow his lies, and can’t convince their parents to destroy the precious life they’ve created, he uses the outside world to attack them. Although many are able, by God’s grace, to resist Satan’s lies, not all are so able. And he uses these people, whispering in their ears until they despise anyone who dares to stand against them. After all, if he’s managed to convince them that babies are disposable, it’s suddenly much easier to believe that adults, who the world sees as having lost their childlike innocence, deserve death. He’s been spending his time convincing his misled followers that anyone who is white, male, straight or republican is unworthy of life. This ideology has led to many horrific actions, like the assassination of Charlie Kirk, and other such murders, as well as the call for the assassination of our president himself, not to mention the call for the murder of ICE agents who are simply doing their job. Satan’s corruption rages deep in the hearts of these people, but we need not lose hope, because we know who has won the battle.

“And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain” (The Lutheran Study Bible). These words of 1 Corinthians 15:14, written thousands of years ago, still ring with the same truth they did when first preached. If Christ had not been raised, then we have no hope, because Satan has won and we are doomed to hell with no hope of a resurrection. This is what makes Easter such a glorious day, because it’s not about bunnies and Easter egg hunts, but about our Lord rising from the dead to save us and give us hope, that we may have life and have it abundantly. Our Lord has defeated Satan, so we don’t need to be afraid. We are called to have faith and fight, knowing the battle has already been won for us.

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1st Place Essay in the Elementary School Division:

Children Are a Heritage from the Lord

By Adalena Allen, 8th Grader at St. John Lutheran Church in Midland

Have you ever seen a pregnant woman and wondered what the baby inside her looks like? When I was seven years old, my baby sister was born two months early. Now, when I see a pregnant woman in her third trimester, I know exactly what the baby inside her looks like. Abortion is morally unacceptable because it involves taking a human life, a belief that is shaped by questions of when life begins, religious perspectives, and moral responsibility.

A key argument in abortion centers around when life begins. Many scientists agree that at conception an organism with a unique genetic code is created. A heartbeat can be heard as soon as six weeks after conception. Babies in the womb undeniably have personalities and habits, and they can respond to stimuli. (Cleveland Clinic) As the Bible says in Psalms 139:13, "For you formed my inward parts, you knitted me in my mother's womb". (Bible ESV) When my sister was born prematurely, she was fully formed with the same sweet facial features she has today.

Biblical teachings do not support abortion. "You shall not murder," Exodus 20:13. (Bible ESV) Killing an unborn child is murder and the Bible clearly states murder is wrong. It's a commandment that we do not murder. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly," John 10:10. (Bible ESV) The Lord is the giver of life. We do not have the right to make a choice against life.

Many parents and hospitals fight for premature babies to survive. How is it fair that babies born at twenty-four weeks gestation have people fighting to keep them alive while in other cases, we permit abortions at twenty-four weeks gestation? We have a moral responsibility to fight for all lives. "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute," Proverbs 31:8. (Bible NIV) Unborn babies need us to be their voice.

In conclusion, life begins at conception and therefore, abortion is murder. Murder is wrong in the eyes of the Lord, thus making abortion wrong. It's our moral responsibility to fight for those who have no voice, like the unborn, so *that they may have life*. "Behold. Children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward," Psalm 127:3. (Bible ESV)

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2nd Place Essay in the Elementary School Division:

What's the Difference?

By Lacy Bronsberg, 8th Grader at Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran School in Hartland

Is it morally right for a woman to choose her own hairstyle? Should a woman have the right to pierce her ears? If a woman has a healthy leg, but she doesn't want it anymore, should a doctor cut it off? Is it ethical for a woman to have an abortion? What does God say about this issue? John 10:10 states, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." This verse shows that people who choose abortion over life are thieves who are stealing a life and killing it. Between the death of the fetus, the trauma to the mother, and the destruction of God's creation, there is no acceptable reason to steal a life through abortion.

A common pro-choice argument is, "My body, my choice." Is it the woman's body that is crushed and killed when she has an abortion? An abortion is considered successful when a life is ended. That ended life is not that of the mother, it is of her child. As stated in the book What To Say When, "It is not the woman's body that gives her the choice to have an abortion; it is the woman's will—or the will of the person forcing her to abort." The slogan should instead be, "My *will*, my choice," rather than, "My body, my choice."

How do women feel after going through with an abortion? Some rally in the streets, proudly shouting pride for what they've done. Others deeply regret their action. The robbery of their child's life haunts them forever. Some women feel the trauma early enough to reverse/halt the abortion process. The current most common way of having an abortion is through a two-step process of taking pills. Many women have panicked after taking the first pill, but according to Lutherans for Life.org 62% of cases where women seek medical help and reversing it through progesterone are successful. Whether the mother feels regret immediately or later in life, it's something she'll need healing and forgiveness for.

God's Word is clear. Exodus 20:13 states, "You shall not murder." A fetus is not the same as his mother's hair or leg. He is "fearfully and wonderfully made," as revealed in Psalm 139:14. Jesus came so that ALL of His creation may have life, even those who were not "wanted."

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Start planning now for the 2027 Essay Contest!

Theme: Be Bold For Life!

Theme Verses:

Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord! (Psalm 31:24)

AND

He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. (Acts 28:30-31)

Up to 400 words for the Elementary (grades 6-8) Division, up to 750 words for the High School Division

Due February 28, 2027

Send essay submission as a Word document to Lauren at schaidtl@gmail.com.

More details will be available in our next issue of Lifelines!

News from Loving Arms, Macomb County Chapter 94 of LFL

By Karen Hoerauf, President 586-247-5177 51hills@sbcglobal.net

A Marriage Built Upon the Blessing of God

Lord, if You are not the builder, Then the house is built in vain
For a home without Your presence, Shall without true love remain.
Yet when You within a marriage, Come and dwell with grace divine,
There You fill the empty vessels, Changing water into wine.
Hymn #860 vs. 2 LSB written by Rev. Stephen P. Starke

As we enjoy the summer months, we know that also many weddings occur in the summer. What a joyous day when a Christian man and woman are joined in marriage under the blessing of the bride of the church, Jesus Christ our Lord. As parents, grandparents, and other family members, we certainly pray for the couple on their wedding day.

Before that day arrives, maybe long before that day, we pray that our loved ones would find a Christian spouse. Yes, it is good and right to pray even when children are young. And then to pray earnestly as they begin to date.

It seems to be more difficult to meet other single Christians. This is a possible resource to share with your loved ones: **LCMS Singles: LCMS Connections**. This is a free service which seeks to connect faithful, marriage-minded LCMS singles, to encourage and support marriage and family. By completing the comprehensive intake form, connections will be made with organizers and there will be contact with other marriage-minded singles who may be a good "match." Sign up at www.lcms-connections.com.

The President's Column

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

Not all lullabies are sweet and comforting.

One such “lullaby,” sung in Spain, Portugal, and areas of Latin America, warns naughty children that if they do not obey their parents and go to sleep, the *Coco* will come for them. The *Coco* is a shapeless, shadowy monster similar to the “boogeyman.” The legend of the *Coco* seems to have originated in the 17th century, in a “sweet” little poem by Juan Caxes, which, when translated into English, says:

Sleep child, sleep or else...

Coco will come and eat you.

That's not a very pleasant thought to have in your mind when a child is tucked into bed, lights turned off, and the imagination begins to ignite. Not when every corner of the dark room holds its terrors, and one cannot begin to imagine having the courage to peer under the bed. That would be an ideal hiding place for the *Coco*.

Coco exists, but not as a fictional monster dredged up to terrify disobedient children and give them vivid nightmares. The *Coco* of our time is the monstrous plague of abortion. It is the culture of death that lurks not only in the shadowy corners of a darkened room, but in the open, flying its proud banners of *Reproductive Rights*, *Pro-Choice*, and *Women's Health Care*. Like *Coco*, it comes to consume a child, a baby, a human being made in God's image and one for whom Christ died. *That is a very real nightmare indeed!*

Coco exists, and not only in the monster that seeks to swallow up a baby in abortion. It has *morphed* into many other forms. As with abortion, it no longer just walks in darkness, stalking its next victim, but marches forth proudly into the light. It can take the gelatinous form of *gender confusion* and *gender mutilation*, leaving sometimes irreversible damage to a human body, a splendid and miraculous work of art, designed by our Creator God. It can take the form of *depression* and *suicidal thoughts*. Like a vampire, it can drain away, drop by precious drop, the energy, the will, and the courage to live day by day, *until hope itself evaporates* and nothing is left but the thought of *death*.

Coco exists, in many forms and many places, but there is only one sure way of driving it back into the diabolic darkness where it belongs. ***“Be gone, Satan!*** For it is written, *“You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.”* (Matthew 4:10)

When dragged out into ***the true Light of Jesus Christ***, the culture of death in every form begins to ripple and fade. Its beastly manifestations must slink back into the dark corners, until such a time when they will be banished forever ***when the Son of Man comes again in Glory***.

For the Light of Jesus Christ, shining forth from the words of Holy Scripture, clearly reveals that ***every life is sacred***. Every human being is fearfully and wonderfully made. The unborn baby, the gender-confused teen, the man or woman contemplating suicide, the lonely old man in the nursing home, the woman surrounded by a thick cloud of depression, the cancer-patient considering physician-assisted suicide – *every one of these is one for whom our Lord Jesus died*. Their sins have been paid for by the holy blood of Jesus. Each one of them – *each one of us - no matter how great the cross and trial may be at the present time* - has a future *in Jesus* that is bright with the promise of new life and eternal splendor. In the crucified and risen Christ, the chains are removed that kept us locked and burdened under the ominous cloud of eternal death. We have been declared righteous by faith in Christ. We spring forth in a new direction – one that leads to the Promised Land. As citizens of God's kingdom, we are deployed on what may truly be called the ***WALK OF LIFE***.

So, be gone, Coco! Be gone, Satan! You have no power here when the mighty Word of God sounds forth in its awesome power and might!

(continued on p.9)

Do you know what Satan cannot stand? He cannot stand it **when** we reach out to that young woman with compassion instead of indignation and judgment. He can't stand it **when** we sit down with someone who is in the throes of severe depression and tell them that we care, and that their life has meaning. He cannot stand it **when** instead of celebrating and glorifying sin, we apply God's Law and Gospel to bring that sin into the light of Christ, so that the tide of God's healing and peace can flow.

Satan cannot stand it **when** – by Christ's mercy, grace, and power – we embrace our identity and calling as God's holy, chosen, baptized people, who, wearing the Armor of God, and bearing the Sword of the Spirit, unflinchingly take their place in the battle between good and evil – those who are not *for death*, but who are **FOR LIFE**.

Daily life may be a struggle. *Our Lord never said it would not be.* But remember, like baby Moses, we have been drawn out of the water and saved. In **Holy Baptism**, we have been united with our Lord in His death and resurrection. We belong to Him now. Body and soul - **we are His**. He has placed a barrier around us, one which Satan's poison arrows cannot pierce.

"...instead of celebrating and glorifying sin, we apply God's Law and Gospel to bring that sin into the light of Christ, so that the tide of God's healing and peace can flow."

Instead, they pierced Him. He took them all. Every arrow. Every drop of poison. All that we by our sins deserve – *He received* – for us. Crucified for us, He absorbed those sins, *your sins and my sins*, and He buried them deeply into the grave, and when He rose in victory, those sins had vanished. **LIFE triumphed!** We are **FREE** - *free* to live in His name; *free* to walk in His ways; *free* to love and serve our neighbor; *free* to speak and fight on behalf of unborn children; *free* to find ways of showing compassion, that those who are depressed or contemplating suicide might know that their life has value; *free* to patiently counsel and assure someone with gender-confusion that they have not been placed in the wrong body, and to help them understand that the God who made them is the God who loves them and will help them through every trial.

*When dreams turn into sighs, or even into cries, **Jesus is there** to help us, to hold us, to lead us forward.*

The legend of *Coco* may only be a scare tactic for disobedient children, but this world is haunted by real monsters that seek to consume human lives, born and unborn. **The question is: *Will we just ignore them and hope they go away, or will we confront them with the truth of God's Word and the power of Christ as the Light that dispels the darkness? Will we ignore the suffering of others, or will we show true compassion for those for whom our Lord gave His last breath?***

*We know the answer. **We belong to Christ now.*** We have been **saved by His blood**. Marching onward by faith, we will speak for the speechless, stand for the persecuted, fight for the defenseless. We are **FOR LIFE**. We walk with the **LORD OF LIFE**. We walk under the banner of the **WORD OF LIFE**. And that is something that the *Cocos* of this world *cannot* overcome.

*Carry on, fellow warriors, carry on with the **WALK OF LIFE!***

LFL of MI at the Annual Regional Pastors' Conferences

By Earl Iseler, LFL of Michigan Board Member

LFL of Michigan had displays at each of the Michigan District's three regional Pastors' Conferences in 2026 as is our usual practice. The West Michigan conference was held in Battle Creek on May 5-6, the South and East conference was held in Frankenmuth on May 11-12, and the North and East conference was held in Frankenmuth on May 19-20. We are at those conferences to encourage the pastors to proclaim the sanctity of all human life from fertilization until natural death, to make them aware of the resource that are available to support life ministries, and to provide updates on life issues.

This year in addition to the numerous Lutherans For Life brochures on marriage, foster care, adoption, disability, miscarriage, cohabitation, human trafficking, birth control, suicide, end of life issues, abortion, etc. we also had copies of articles from our *Lifelines* newsletter. The articles address how a congregation can become a House of Refuge and the resolution passed by the national LFL Board on In vitro Fertilization.



Toni Gibbons and her children, Mayla and James, visited our display at the South and East Pastors conference (pictured left).

Toni Gibbons is the wife of Pastor Nikolai Gibbons who serves at Immanuel, Macomb. Mayla and James each took a 10-week fetal model. We talked about how each of us was the size of this model when we were in our mother's wombs. We also discussed that Jesus was the size of this model when he had been in His mother Mary's womb 10 weeks after the Holy Spirit appeared to Mary and the Son of God was conceived and became true man.

When pastors and others came by our display, we handed them a brochure or one of the articles and asked if they were familiar with the issues being addressed. Many of the pastors said that they are aware that several of the issues will be the subjects of resolutions that will be presented at the Synod Convention in July.

At the conferences in Frankenmuth our display was in an area near where beverages and snacks were available and near the entrance to the rest rooms. As a results workers came by to replenish the snacks and to do housekeeping. Some of the workers stopped at our display to look at the brochures and fetal models and take a piece of candy that we had for visitors to our display. One worker said that a fellow worker was pregnant with twins. I encouraged her to take fetal models for her which she did. A lady stopped by whose daughter had recently suffered a miscarriage. She took a copy of the brochure *Miscarriage: An Empty Cradle and a Full Hope* for her daughter.

Next to our display Solid Grounds, Student Ministries at Western Michigan University had a display. I put together a group of brochures that address issues that college students are likely to encounter and gave them to the Director. I showed him where he could obtain additional copies on the Lutherans For Life website.

Donations from those that support LFL of Michigan enable us to have displays at the Pastors' Conferences and other events and to provide life issue brochures and other information about life issues free of charge. Below is a typical Lutherans For Life of Michigan display table at Pastors' Conferences and other events.

Would you like to host a Life Issues event at your congregation? We would like to assist you and provide a display for your event, contact us at lflmi.president@gmail.com or (517)420-4826.



What's Happening in Michigan?



Pictured above left to right:

1st Place High School Essay Contest Winner Clara Brown, 2nd Place High School Essay Contest Winner Lydia Klamer receiving her award from Pastor Paul Clark, and 1st Place Elementary Essay Contest Winner Adalena Allen



Diaper Drive Donations pictured above left to right:

St. John Lutheran Church in Grand Haven (submitted by Paula Cate), St. John Lutheran Church in Rochester (submitted by Dale and Wes Griffith), and Grace Lutheran Church in Wyoming (submitted by Ashley Beffrey)

The Annual Diaper Drive

The following **congregations** reported that they collected a total of **45,825 diapers** along with *generous donations of other baby items and cash.*

St. John Lutheran Church, Grand Haven

Grace Lutheran Church, Wyoming

Trinity Lutheran Church, Wyandotte

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Clinton Twp.

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Southgate

Faith Lutheran Church, Whitehall

St. Martin Lutheran Church, Birch Run

St. Peter Lutheran Church, Eastpointe

St. John Lutheran Church, Rochester

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fowler

St. James Lutheran Church, Montague

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Britton

Mt. Hope Lutheran Church, Grayling

Diapers and other donations were given to the following pregnancy centers:

Positive Options

Lincoln Park Pregnancy Center

Family Life Services, Ypsilanti

Compassion Pregnancy Center, Fraser

CareNet, Detroit

Muskegon Pregnancy Services

Saginaw City Rescue Mission

Crossroads Care Center, Auburn Hills

Shared Pregnancy Center of Lansing

Adrian Pregnancy Center

New Life Pregnancy, Gaylord

Thank You!

Upcoming Events

Who WILL Care For Your Family? (Getting Your Household in Order).

On September 12, 2026, Our Savior Lutheran Church, 2900 Burton St SE, Grand Rapids Life Team is sponsoring "Who **WILL** Care For Your Family? (Getting Your Household in Order)". 8:30am -12 pm. This is for all age groups. Childcare and activities for the children and snacks will be provided.

Please register at Eventbrite by going to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/who-will-care-for-your-family-getting-your-household-in-order-tickets-1993715746467> or go to www.eventbrite.com and use the Search bar. Alternatively, you can RSVP to Our Savior Life Team Leader Carla Niemeier by email at carla32133@gmail.com or by text or call at (586)383-5167.

As Christians we know that since the fall, illnesses, injuries, and death occur. We are not to worry or despair of what may happen in the future. God has given us intelligence and resources to thoughtfully prepare for worldly challenges in a manner that helps our loved ones through giving direction and a clear confession of faith that reduces the potential for conflict and ensures our religious beliefs are honored in the darkest of valleys.

Two presentations are being offered:

Christina Shourds, Attorney, Pathway Law PLLC, a member of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, will present on Estate Planning topics including:

1. Trusts
2. Wills (with emphasis on setting up a Will that names their Trust as beneficiary)
3. Powers of Attorney for Finances (and general legal decisions)
4. Powers of Attorney for Health Care (with advanced health care decision guidance)
5. HIPAA Authorizations
6. Designation of Funeral Representatives
7. Nomination of Guardians and Conservators for Minors

Rev. Jeremy Swem, pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Church will present on Funeral Planning.

These topics, which may seem morbid or dark, acknowledge the reality that we live in a broken and sinful world. By attending you will have a better idea how to provide for your family in case of an accident or death. By preparing documents and providing them directions, you will bless them and you will have the opportunity to give a final confession of your faith in Christ.





(from <https://lutheransforlife.org/lfl-events/>)



Redeeming Grace Retreat

01 Oct

Wildwood Hills Ranch, St. Charles, Iowa

We invite you to join us for the Redeeming Grace Retreat, which offers a safe, confidential, and Christ-centered space for women to process their abortion experience, find healing, and receive the comfort of God's forgiveness. Through guided sessions, worship, reflection, and supportive community, participants gain renewed hope, restored identity, and tools to continue their healing journey. Thanks to our generous donors, the only attendance cost is \$75, and there is travel assistance available.

Learn more about the retreat [here](https://word-of-hope.org/event/redeeming-grace-retreat/?_gl=1*1e5jaqb*_gcl_au*NDkwNDgyMTgxLjE3NzczMDQxMDI). (from https://word-of-hope.org/event/redeeming-grace-retreat/?_gl=1*1e5jaqb*_gcl_au*NDkwNDgyMTgxLjE3NzczMDQxMDI.)

A YA For Life event!

Defending, Defending Life – October 23-25, 2026

Join us for our fall event, **Defending, Defending Life**, held with Higher Things at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne! This event will help you learn more about defending life from a Gospel-motivated perspective, meet other for-life young adults, and worship our God of LIFE.

Keep an eye on our website and social media pages for more information, coming soon!

[Defending, Defending Life FAQs](#)

Registration details – coming soon! (from <https://yaforlife.org/event/defending-defending-life-october-23-25-2026/>)

Introducing... Congregational House of Refuge



Shine your light internally and externally, sharing how your congregation is a safe place for pregnant mothers. Your support will give them hope to raise their baby. Walk with them should they decide adoption is their choice. During this special time you and your church are there as their child develops and they prepare for this next stage in life.

How do you do this?

- The pastor reviews the program carefully recommending it to church leaders.
- The congregational leaders review and approve the program.
- The leaders share the program with the congregation for approval.
- The pastor submits the Congregational House of Refuge agreement.
- The pastor reads a commitment statement in worship twice a year.
- The congregation gets involved through mentoring, praying, and providing a representative to handle the program details.
- The congregation is listed on a locator map of other Lutheran congregations engaged in this program.

Program Guide

- Download: [Congregational House of Refuge Program Guide](#)
- Download: [Congregational House of Refuge Statement](#)
- Download: [Congregational House of Refuge Representative Commissioning and Installation Litany](#)

Pastor, as you have reviewed the program guide, are you are ready to become a Congregational House of Refuge? If YES, click below.

Register ►

(from <https://lutheransforlife.org/congregational-house-of-refuge>

Visit this site to download and read the information shown above.)

Find them at www.cph.org, search for "Lil' Lutherans 4 Life"

Three overlapping prayer cards are shown. The top card is dark blue with the text 'Night Time Prayer' and a small 'S' icon. The middle card is light pink with the text 'Morning Prayer' and a sun icon. The bottom card is light blue with the text 'Thank You for this new day' and a small 'S' icon. The cards are slightly offset from each other, creating a layered effect.

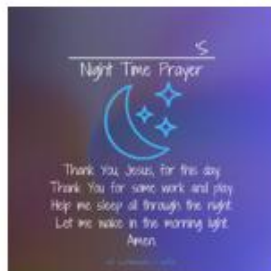


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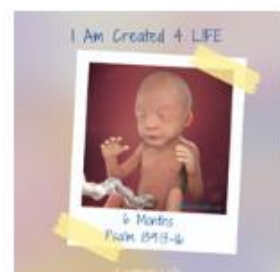


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Frontline Playbooks

Find the *Belonging* Playbook at <https://lutheransforlife.org/frontline-playbook-belonging> and look for the *Hopeful* Playbook soon!

Frontline Playbook Series

This is a collection of life-affirming resources in a series of programs with each having its own theme. All items are usable in group settings or one-on-one activities. Each life topic has multiple elements. Use them as a complete program or as a stand-alone resource.



BELONGING

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God."
(Ephesians 2:19)

Welcome to the Frontline Playbook!

Within each Frontline Playbook issue will be four topical presentations and associated resources. You have available to you a video presentation, devotion, fact sheet, and activity sheet for each of the four topical resources. Use these to plan or implement an event, a Bible study, or another creative way to use the material provided.



You may use the entire Playbook as an educational opportunity for your life group during your meetings. Consider sponsoring an event at church and include the video presentations and other useful resources. Talk to your pastor about using these during a Bible study hour for either large or small group studies. Each video will run about 40 to 50 minutes, giving you time to review the fact sheets and do an activity. You may choose to engage people in an activity either pre- or post-event to spur interest in the actual event. We suggest you use the devotion provided as an opening followed by the video, which can be accessed from a video link on our LFL website.

And there will be more ... We have been asked for more ways to assist you in planning For Life activities at your churches, and we are thrilled to provide the Frontline Playbook series.

As you plan your For Life goals for this coming year, please consider including the Frontline Playbook series in your plans. We have provided detailed steps, but if you have questions or suggestions on how to make this even better, please reach out to the [Volunteer Relations Team](#).

(Article from <https://lutheransforlife.org/frontlineplaybook/>):

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Verba Vitae



A Serious Christian Journal of Life
and its Significance

Verba Vitae: A Serious Christian Journal of Life and its Significance

Everywhere we look these days we see conversations politicized. Reasoned argument is skipped in the effort to discern what an author's political opinions really are, and whether they accord with what they *should* be. The Left and Right collide, hurling slogans at each other, often baiting and belittling the other to advance their own agendas. Throughout vast regions of academia, power has seemingly replaced reason, with all thinking now being understood ideologically.

But while people on opposite ends of the political spectrum organize to persuade, they eschew the less glamorous task of *analysis*. However, for conversation to proceed rationally, presuppositions from each side must be examined calmly, and words must be understood properly. Analysis can allow disputants to become conversation partners, for common ground can often be found where none seemed possible before.

Verba Vitae is committed to bringing the classical Christian tradition into conversation with life issues now confronting us. Modeling the reasoned *logos* of the theological tradition, *Verba Vitae* explores the truth-claims made by thinkers and examines the grounds upon which these assertions are made. It is interested in what is being talked about when thinkers employ the language of rights and goods, or when thinkers speak of God. It is accordingly interested in fostering and modeling *informed* conversation. How do people talk to each other respectfully when holding differing conceptions of the good? (from www.verba-vitae.org, accessed June 29, 2024)

Lutherans For Life is collaborating with the Institute of Lutheran Theology to launch the *Verba Vitae* journal. It continues the Lutheran legacy of rigorous and responsible intellectual inquiry. This is especially relevant to current consideration of human dignity, which remains essential to Western civilization and Christian witness. (Salemink, Michael. "A Statement of Support for Verba Vitae". *Verba Vitae Journal* 1, no. 1-2 (March 29, 2024): 15. Accessed June 29, 2024. <https://verba-vitae.org/index.php/vvj/article/view/7>.)

Visit <https://verba-vitae.org> for more information, to read the journal, to subscribe, and to submit an article.

To Donate to Lutherans For Life of Michigan:

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.

We are pleased that we have been able to provide financial support to fourteen 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.



Lutheran For Life of Michigan has now opened up a secure source for **online giving!** Scan the QR code or go to www.lflmi.org/donate and click the "Give" button to access our Tithely giving portal. From there, you can enter the information to donate. **If you would like your donation to be in honor or in memory of someone**, after you have submitted your donation send an email to our Treasurer. His email is bmcMahon61@gmail.com. Please provide the following information: whether it is an honorarium or a memorial, the name of the person(s), the name(s) and address or email of the person(s) you would like to be notified of the donation, and your name.

If you prefer to donate **by mail**, you can do so by writing a check to Lutherans For Life of Michigan. If the name(s) and address on the check are correct, no other information is required. If not, please provide the name(s) that are to be acknowledged as the donor(s) on a separate sheet of paper. Also, if your address has changed, please note that and 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.

Mail your donation to:

Lutherans For Life of Michigan Treasurer

c/o Brendan McMahon

25646 Castlereigh Dr.

Farmington Hills, MI 48336

Thank you for your support in bringing a Gospel focus to promoting Life!

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 _____

Donations to National Lutherans For Life

With so many great new resources and projects, expenses have increased. Please consider donating to National Lutherans For Life by using the "I WANT TO SPEAK FOR LIFE" form provided below. When using that form you need to provide your own envelope and mail it to the 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 LFL 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.

You can also donation to national Lutherans For Life by going to www.lutheransforlife.org and clicking the Donate tab.

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 I 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 – 5th Street, Nevada, IA 50201-1816
1-888-364-LIFE * (515) 382-3020 * E-mail: info@lutheransforlife.org *
Website: www.lutheransforlife.org

Lutherans For Life of Michigan
331 North Sorrell Street Box 317
Fowler, MI 48835



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In the Next Issue...

Life Week 2027 and Life Sunday
Information

Legislative Report

What's Happening in Michigan

Upcoming Events

And More!

Quotes

"And so, our life finds its meaning in Him. Our path is directed by Him. Our future is secure in Him. Though life may take a very unexpected turn, whether with a pregnancy, an illness, depression, or sudden loss, there is hope, there is peace, and there is comfort in the compassion and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us." *Rev. Paul Clark, Lutherans For Life of Michigan – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

"Do not be silent. You have the most positive, powerful, life-giving, and life-affirming message in the universe! It is a message of love for every sinner, i.e., everyone! It is a message of forgiveness for everyone and every sin. It is a message of the certain hope of a paradise whose reality surpasses the most beautiful of words." *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, former Executive Director of Lutherans For Life – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*