

Lifelines

Aug/Sept/Oct 2024

President's Column by Pastor Paul Clark, President of Lutherans For Life of Michigan

As I write this to the sound of rumbling thunder, the rain is pattering against the window, rain that is welcome and refreshing during these long, hot summer days. I gaze at the weather app on my phone, and sure enough, the heat and humidity will return soon. Unlike some, I do not welcome this. But I have no choice in the matter, short of relocating to the northern reaches of Canada or perhaps the state of Alaska. In the same way, those who hate the winter's cold and snow have no choice but to bear it, or attempt to escape it by heading south. Yes, man, for all his pomp and arrogance, has no control over the weather.

There are some things we *can* choose. We *can choose* where to live. We *can choose* whether to have pepperoni or mushrooms on our pizza. We *can choose* what color shirt to put on for the day. **But some things we cannot choose.** For example, we *can choose* whether or not to attend a Tiger baseball game, but *we cannot choose* to make the Tigers win. That is not in our power.

Think about this. **What does it mean to be pro-choice?** Well, it depends. Pro-choice *in what?* If it means the right for parents to choose what type of education is best for their children – which school, whether public, private, charter, or homeschool – that is a *good* thing. **Parents** are the legitimate authorities over their children. They – **and not the State** – have the calling from God to determine what is best for their children, as well as the charge to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

But that is not the main way the phrase “pro-choice” is used today, is it? We all know what it means to be pro-choice. It

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is speaking of the right to choose an abortion, **the decision to kill one's child.**

“Well, I personally wouldn't have an abortion, but I think others should have the right to choose.” We've all heard that before, haven't we?

But follow that logic through. Do you think a person should have the right to smother their Grandpa “Jones” because he has dementia? Should a person be able to do away with their 5-year-old child if that child is prone to constant illness, and has become too much of a burden on the parent's personal time and space? Would you say, *“Well, I wouldn't do it, but I think anyone else who wants to make that choice should be able to?”*

Yet, one of the underpinnings of many who currently lead this nation is exactly that – **it is the celebration of the right to choose to murder a human baby.** This forms the basis of their current campaign: *“Restore Roe!”* they cry. *“A woman's right to choose!”* they chant, as they angrily campaign across America.

As baby girls and boys continue to be massacred. In **Old Testament Israel**, children were sacrificed to the false god (*demon*) of Molech. (continued 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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THANK YOU...

Thank you to all our donors this quarter!

The list will be published in the next issue of *Lifelines*.

Your financial support is going toward more gospel-motivated educational events and resources than ever before to equip Lutherans and their neighbors to uphold the value of Life!

Word of Hope

LFL's Post Abortion Healing Ministry

We can help, contact us at:

1-888-217-8679

www.word-of-hope.org

help@word-of-hope.org

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

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

(President's Report continued from p.1)

Anthony Esolen, in one of his poems, writes:

That was when Israel swarmed with evil,
Feeding children through fire to Molech,
While they shook their tambourines to drown the cries.

Nowadays, instead of Molech, we sacrifice our children to the altar of **"CHOICE."** But let's be clear on what *"pro-choice"* means. Choice of *what?*

If a choice has no actual moral significance, like which pizza topping you choose, that is one thing. **But there is great moral significance when it comes to the choice to end an innocent person's life.**

Every life - created by God, redeemed by Christ - has immense value. Remember that, in this critical election year.

When someone says that they are *pro-choice*, we have to ask, what is that choice *between?* In the case of the current abortion debate, it is used to defend the choice to kill a baby, rather than let that baby live and be born. That is a denial of the basic human right to life of the unborn child. That *cannot* be good.

God, of course, can choose whatever He wants. God is God. He *alone* is the Author and Giver of life. No human being has the right to question His will. But though God can choose to do anything He wishes, He acts according to His nature. **God is just,** and must therefore punish sin. **But God is also love** and thus desires our eternal salvation. **That justice and that love come together in one place – THE CROSS.** Jesus, God's own Son, took the punishment for sin – *our sin* – and we are forgiven. God loves us in Christ. We are His people. We have been rescued.

Sadly, many people have abandoned any belief in God, or at least in the true God of the Bible. If there is no God, *then human life is cheap.* We are just freak accidents of an evolutionary enigma, with no real purpose to our existence, and thus no absolute morals of right or wrong, good or evil. In a godless universe, man is nothing more than a bag of chemicals. **Dr. Rodney Brooks,** with a PhD in computer science from Stanford, says: *"A human being is nothing but a machine or a big bag of skin full of biomolecules interacting by the laws of physics and chemistry."* Of course, this begs the question of who designed those laws of physics and chemistry in the first place!

We know better. Human beings are *far more* than big bags of skin filled with biomolecules. ***"Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them.'" (Genesis 1)***

Do not think that you can sit this out on the fence, not when it comes to life and death issues such as abortion and euthanasia. As a Christian, **you cannot.** There is no grey area. You are either *for* God or *against* Him. And God is the God of Life. We are called to be those who promote and protect innocent human life. And, yes, that also means taking very seriously which candidates in every level of government will receive your vote. *Right To Life of Michigan* provides a helpful online guide to assist in knowing which candidates for each office are pro-life, or which ones openly support the killing of babies in abortion. *Check it out at <https://rtl.org/get-involved/elections/>.*

Well, the rain has stopped. I hear no more sound of thunder. The earth is refreshed with life. Crops grow, flowers bloom, cows graze, and man thrives in the world God has made, even though sin has altered that world greatly. Daily weather reminds us that **GOD**, not man, is in control. We can *choose* what clothes to wear, and what pizza topping to order, but we cannot select the weather, which is probably a good thing. We'd all disagree anyway.

But by God's grace, redeemed by Christ, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, LET US NOT CHOOSE moral and spiritual evil. But as Scripture says in **Deuteronomy 30:19-20:** ***"Therefore CHOOSE LIFE, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice and holding fast to Him, for HE is your LIFE and length of days."*** Amen.

News from Loving Arms, Macomb County Chapter 94 of LFL

By Karen Hoerauf, President

586-247-5177 51hills@sbcglobal.net

Honoring Lucy Schilling on her 90th birthday July 15, 2024

Matthew 25:40 Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me."

Lucy has been a tireless advocate for many who some might consider "the least." While she and her husband Ray, a Lutheran teacher and librarian, lived in Chicago, they helped find homes for 200 Vietnamese families after the fall of Saigon. They themselves fostered two Vietnamese boys who were without parents in the USA. Then they opened their home to dozens of foreign exchange students.



(Photo provided by Doris August)

Inspired by Dr. Dobson's horrific description of abortion and after viewing *Silent Scream*, they formed a Lutherans For Life group at St. John Lutheran Church in Forest Park. They organized prayer vigils outside abortion clinics.

Upon Ray's retirement, they moved to Fraser to be closer to their family. Lucy survived ovarian cancer and Ray struggled with Parkinson's disease, but their zeal for helping others never wavered. They visited nursing homes and assisted the pastors with worship services there, even as they had done in Chicago. Each August they were part of the Project Compassion group serving picnic lunches to inner city nursing homes.

Ray went home to heaven in May 2018, but Lucy continues to live in her own home and worship faithfully at St. John Lutheran Church in Fraser. She continues to advocate for Life both at St. John and at the local pregnancy center, Compassion Pregnancy.

May God bless Lucy! What an example of God's boundless love for others! *Happy Birthday, Lucy!*

The Grand Rapids Pregnancy Resource Center

published the picture and description to the right in their "PRC 2024 Praise Report" magazine. It is included here with permission. After Our Savior Lutheran Church in



Generosity made this covered bus stop shelter possible! Many moms and their children take the bus to our Wyoming location where they are blessed to leave with arms full of resources: diapers, formula, maternity clothes, baby clothes and more. Thanks to Our Savior Lutheran Church, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Nagel Construction Inc., and The Rapid, this bus stop shelter was completed in the spring of 2023. Our moms and their children now have a dry and warm place to wait for their bus and we could not be more thrilled about it! We want them loved and taken care of in every possible way!

Generosity to PRC allows us to live the truth that people matter to God!



Grand Rapids participated in the bus stop shelter project, a closer relationship has been developed with the PRC. Under the direction of our Life Team Leader, Carla Niemeier, diapers, baby clothing and other items are being collected year round instead of only between Mother's Day and Father's Day. The PRC periodically issues a list of items needed, it is printed in Our Savior's bulletin and members have been donating many items on the list. Also, several Ladies from Our Savior have been doing volunteer work at the PRC. (submitted by Earl Iseler)

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 so far in 2024 is at a near high. We are pleased that we have been able to provide financial support to several 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

When making a general donation, you may just mail your check to the address below and write your return address on it. 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 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

**Online Donating Option
Coming Soon! See the
next issue of Lifelines for
the details!**

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...



The LFL of MI display at the LWML Michigan District convention in Grand Rapids on June 28, pictured left to right: Kaye Wolff and LFL of MI Board member Chris Schultz (left, submitted by Earl Iseler)



The LFL of MI display at the Southeast Pastors Conference in Frankenmuth, pictured left to right: LFL of MI Board members Chris Schultz and Susan Hill (right, submitted by Chris Schultz)



The Our Savior Life Team in Lansing served cake in honor of moms on Mother's Day. We're planning something similar for Father's Day but with cookies. (left, submitted by Deb Kamm)



The LFL of MI at the North and East Pastors Conference, pictured left to right: Joanne Walsh and Chris Schultz (right, submitted by Earl Iseler)

Members of St. Paul in Fowler sorted items from their Playpen Project including their handmade blankets and quilts (pictured below left) and then donated them to Shared Pregnancy Center of Lansing (pictured below middle). (submitted by Pastor Paul Clark)



Pictured below: Rev. Keith Knea, Nancy Bierlein, and Dianne Stresman (Life Ministry Coordinator, St. Michael in Richville, submitted by Dianne Stresman)



...in Michigan?

The Annual Diaper Drive

The following **congregations** reported that they collected a total of **32,579 diapers** along with *generous donations of other baby items and cash.*

THANK YOU!

Trinity Lutheran, Sawyer

St. Paul, Fowler

Christ the King, Southgate

Trinity, Wyandotte

Grace, Coopersville

St. John, Au Gres

St. Luke, Clinton Twp.

St. Peter, Macomb

St. John, Rochester

Zion, Tawas City

Immanuel, Britton

Grace, Wyoming

Our Redeemer, Washington Twp.

Zion, Holland

St. Michael, Richville

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

Compassion Pregnancy Center, Clinton Twp.

Shared Pregnancy of Lansing

CareNet, Detroit

Crossroads Care Center, Auburn Hills

Lincoln Park Pregnancy Center

Arenac County Baby Pantry, Standish

Harbor Lights Pregnancy Center, Tawas

Adrian Pregnancy Center

Life Clinic Community Resources, Bay City



Pictures above (left to right) from Grace Lutheran in Coopersville (from Joni Hoyer), St. Peter in Macomb (from Ruthann Bettcher), St. John in Rochester (from Dale Griffith), and Zion in Tawas City (from Betty Kentworthy)

Lutherans For Life of Michigan is pleased to announce a double event!

Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, Executive Director of The Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (lcrfrees.org), will present in Clinton Twp. and Kentwood.



Speaking the Truth in Love on Life Issues During Elections

Saturday, October 5th from 10:00am to 2:00pm

St. Luke Lutheran Church

21400 S. Nunneley Rd.

Clinton Twp., MI 48035

The event is free. Lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP to Lauren by September 8th at schaidt@gmail.com or (586)214-3116.

Presented by Lutherans For Life of Michigan and the St. Luke Life Team.

FOUNDATIONS OF FREEDOM –

MEETING THE CULTURAL CHALLENGES FOR THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL!

Presently, virtually all “conscience” issues are being politically weaponized to make the biblical worldview illegal in the American culture. Not only is this a threat to every American’s constitutionally protected liberties, but it is also a threat to the preaching of the Gospel too. This presentation speaks to “putting our temporal liberties to work in service to the preaching of the whole counsel of God, the eternal liberties of Christ for ALL.” Come, hear how to take politics out of many of these issues so as to share your faith without government coercion or interference to the contrary.

FROM VICTORY TO VICTORY – LIFE ALWAYS WINS

The message of “Pro-Life” has been politicized to merely mean “anti-abortion.” It is so much more. The message of life is the sanctity of life, the pursuit of life, the gift of life received from God as a gift and shared. The Church stands at a moment in time in America where a “death cult” has arisen that cloaks itself in notions of healthcare and benevolence when its actions are dismissive and violent. As God’s “salt and light” amidst this darkness, children, women, men, and the blessing of family itself are at risk, yes, but so also is the great opportunity to rekindle the truth of the sanctity and dignity of life as the blessing God has meant it to be.

Come learn how to rise to the challenge! Why? Because life always wins.

Life Issues Today and in the Upcoming Election

Sunday, October 6th from 2:00-5:30

St. Mark Lutheran Church

1934 52nd St. SE

Kentwood, MI 49508

The presentation will focus on ***Life Issues Today and in the Upcoming Election***. The event is free. Refreshments will be provide before, during a break, and after the presentation.

Please register by September 23rd at iselerea@comcast.net or text or call (616)485-9589.

2024 LUTHERANS FOR LIFE REGIONAL CONFERENCES

FROM 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)

A Childless World: Utopia or Disaster?

On Saturday, October 19th, Pastor Michael Salemink, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life will present, “A Childless World: Utopia or Disaster?” at Hope Lutheran Church, 1180 W Herbison Rd., Dewitt, MI 48820. Registration will be from 8:00-8:30 followed by a Matins service at 8:30am. The presentation will be from 9:00am – 2:00pm and will include lunch. Please pre-register at revsikora@gmail.com or (517)-669-3930. The registration cost can be paid upon arrival. More information will be available on Hope’s website (www.hopelutherandewitt.com).

March to the Polls

As the second anniversary of Proposal 3 approaches, Right to Life of Michigan is organizing a March to the Polls event. It will take place October 26, 2024 @ 11 a.m. at your local early voting place. The following is from <https://rtl.org/event/march-to-the-polls>. Please visit that website for more information.

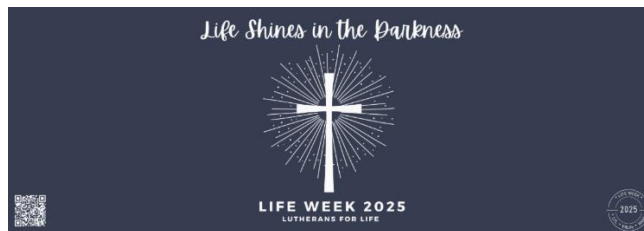
“On the one-year anniversary of the passage of Proposal 3 and the enshrining of abortion in our state constitution, 5,000 prolife Michiganders rallied in Lansing for the first ever Michigan March for Life. This year, to commemorate the second anniversary, we are marching to where it all started – the ballot box.

The **2024 March to the Polls** is an opportunity for prolife Michiganders from all corners of the state to speak with one voice and tell the world that we support the choice for life. Pro-abortion politicians have spent the last two years eroding the rights of women, men, children and parents and we have the opportunity to stop it. **We March to the Polls** because we believe in a Woman’s Right to Know. We believe that health and safety regulations must apply to all medical facilities. We believe that parents have the right to be involved in their minor child’s health decisions. We believe in supporting women in making a courageous, hope-filled choice for life.

So, gather your friends, family and neighbors and join us at 11 a.m. on October 26 as we march to our local early voting place and cast our ballots for life. [Click here](#) to find your polling location.

More information coming soon.”

Life Week: January 2025



Each year, Lutherans For Life plans events for both churches and schools during the week of the March For Life. The events are online as well as live in Washington, D.C. for both youth and young adults. We would like to personally invite you to join us in celebrating Life Week this coming January 19-25, 2025. This year's theme is "Life Shines in Darkness", based on John 1:4-5. Each day will have a featured topic and expert speaker, along with downloadable resources for you to use at your church or school throughout the year. (from email communication from LFL)

Announcing: *Verba Vitae*



A Serious Christian Journal of Life
and its Significance

Volume 1, Numbers 1-2
Spring/Summer 2024

***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.

Check out this **NEW Resource from Lutherans For Life** that will guide you with all you need to lead a variety of For Life events and activities *made easy*!

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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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 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 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.

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 – 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

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In the Next Issue...

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Legislative Report

What's Happening...in Michigan

Report on Recent Michigan Events

Announcing Online Donating Option

And More!

Quotes

"Not only does Scripture provide God's intent and meaning, it also encourages us to be truthful (Proverbs 12:19), timely (Proverbs 17:28; Matthew 18:15), gentle (Titus 3:2), and more. Most importantly, it reminds us, in God we find the strength to speak truth in the face of evil (Psalm 118:6; Ephesians 6:13). Stand strong, choose words carefully, and remember the Lion's [Jesus] got your back." *James MacGregor, COL, USA (RET), Director at Large, LFL of Kansas Director-at-Large – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life •*

lutheransforlife.org

"When we engage in the political process, we as Christians rightfully assert these rights, knowing that in doing so we are defending not only or even primarily ourselves, but our neighbors ... By asserting the right to life, and to other natural rights, we are in fact confessing God's given order." *Rev. Dr. Peter Scaer, Concordia Theological Seminary – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life •*

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