

Lifelines

November. December. January 2017

OUR HOPE IS IN GOD ... by Pastor Paul Clark

Johann Gerhard is often considered, along with Martin Luther and Martin Chemnitz, to be one of the three greatest Lutheran theologians ever. In his writing, "Mediations on Divine Mercy," Gerhard gives praise to God for his being "*shaped like clay*" in his mother's womb. He writes, "*You gave me life, and showed me mercy.... You not only marvelously formed me in my mother's womb, but also drew me out from the womb.... From my mother's womb, You have been my God.... When I consider how many die in the womb before coming to the light of this life, I admire and praise Your mercy all the more because You brought me – alive, safe and sound – out of the confinement of the womb into the theater of this world.*"

By God's grace, you and I have been brought into the theater of this world. William Shakespeare once wrote, "*All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances.*" But our entrances and exits on the stage of this world are in God's hands, not ours. It is *He* who creates and brings forth life. It is *He* who takes that earthly life away in His own time. Life is not our "*plaything*" – to do as we want with it. It is holy and sacred...the foundation of the laws of a civilized society. Certainly the founders of this nation, understood that and therefore, those laws were formed and written to protect life. There was an understanding – a very basic and obvious understanding – that ***the right to life*** was a gift *endowed* by our **Creator**, and thus is an ***unalienable*** right. Furthermore, we are more than just players upon a stage; we are those created by God and redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Yes, we live in the *theater* of this world – a world *broken* and *torn* by sin and rebellion against its Maker. ***But into this broken world came the Son of God – the Holy One who became man and gave up His life for us on the cross, so that we might have new and lasting life in Him.***

Thus, as Gerhard understood well, we owe everything to our God. Life is a **gift**, and each and every human being is a person for whom Christ died. We are part of the human family. We are our brother's and sister's keeper. To protect innocent human life is therefore the responsibility of each one of us. We are called to look out for those who cannot look out for themselves – not only babies, but also the sick, and the struggling, and the dying. It is not up to us to forcefully bring to an end the life of an innocent human being – whether it is a violent death to that little baby girl or boy in the womb, or a slow and so-called "mercy-killing" to that frail and helpless man or woman at a nursing home, or anyone whom our culture deems to be "*not worthy of life.*"

This is an extremely critical time period for our nation. The forces against life have rallied in so many ways. Planned Parenthood, and

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 02 – Board Members ... 'Thank You'
- 03 – Life Issues Contest Guidelines
- 04 – LFL-MI Board...
- 05 – LFL-MI Life Leadership Summit information
- 06 – What's Happening...
- 07 – in Michigan?
- 08 – What's Happening in Michigan? cont'd
- 09 – Family of God Lutheran "Luke Project 52"
- 10 – Body of Christ & the Public Square...Owen's Mission
- 11 – Membership ... LIFE-Affirming Resources
- 12 – Notes & Quotes

those who support it, have done and are doing everything possible to ensure that unfettered abortions continue in this country, without restrictions or even medical oversight. Even common-sense laws are opposed as being "*too restrictive*" of the so-called right to abortion. And once again, the propagators of "mercy killing" – euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide – are clamoring for the "*right*" to choose when and how to die, instead of giving emotional support, loving aid, and medical help to manage pain to those who may be suffering an illness, depression, or facing death.

We must find our voice and use that voice to stand for *the unalienable right to life* of our brothers and sisters in this world. For the stage of this world will one day give way to a far greater one, in which death will finally be no more. ***This is ours through Jesus.*** But we are called now to be the salt and light of the world. Like Gerhard, let us give thanks and glory to God for His gift of life. Whatever our nation faces, and whatever we may face in our own families and our own lives, ***our hope is in God.*** The words of Scripture resonate in our ears, "***Remember Your Word to Your servant, in which You have made me hope. This is my comfort in my affliction – that Your promise gives me life***" (Psalm 119:49-50).

God's promise – His Word of grace and forgiveness through Christ – ***DOES*** give us life. And God *never* leaves or forsakes us. Of that we can be sure.

The mission of LFL is to equip Lutherans 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.

LFL-MI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Email address: lflmi.president@gmail.com

Website: www.lflmi.org

THANK YOU...

Anthony Pauza, *West Bloomfield*

Pastor Timothy & Betty Loewe, *Temperance*

Marion Meilaender, *Marshall*

[in honor of Vera Knuth's 90th birthday]

Martha Huber, *Frankenmuth*

[in memory of Kenneth Simmerman]

St Paul Lutheran Church, *Fowler*

[Life Team donation for Linda Bartlett events]

Janice Hough, *Kalamazoo*

[in memory of her mother, Ethel Kocman]

Joyce Adams, *Bay City*

Delphine Mallinson, *Rochester Hills*

[in memory of Jerry Brown and Bob Evans]

Pastor Terry & Shirley Hoes, *Grand Rapids*

Earl & JoAnne Iseler, *Rockford*

[in honor of Marion Friedrich who served faithfully as Life Ministry Coordinator at St James Lutheran Grand Rapids and as secretary of the Greater Grand Rapids LFL chapter]

George & Judy Schneider, *Cedar*

Our Savior Lutheran Church, *Hartland*

Boyd & Pauline Terry, *Vassar*

Thank you to all those who continue to financially support the ministry of Lutherans For Life of Michigan. Your contributions enable us to provide resources, free of charge, whenever and wherever we are invited to host an exhibit table.

PLEASE NOTE ... AND ... CHANGE IN YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS BOOK

Lutherans For Life of Michigan has a new email address. Please take note and make the change in your email address book. Our new address is:

lflmi.president@gmail.com

Thank you! We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Life Issues Contest

Sponsored by: Lutherans for Life of Michigan

As part of the mission of Lutherans for Life of Michigan to educate and equip our young people to be Gospel-motivated voices on Life issues, we are sponsoring a **Life Issues Contest!**

All Lutheran congregations are encouraged to participate in this contest by presenting this information and opportunity to their 7th and 8th grade students. **Projects should be created under the guidance of the pastor or teacher, and submitted by the deadline of March 15th.**

Pastors or teachers should judge their own students' projects first and then send their **one** winning entry in the artistic project category and/or **one** winning entry in the essay category to the state contest. \$100 for the top essay and for the top artistic project and \$75 for the runner-up in each category will be awarded at the state level, according to the criteria below.

Step 1: Pick a LIFE ISSUE

- * Abortion
- * Sexual Purity
- * Euthanasia
- * Assisted Suicide
- * Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Step 2: Pick a Project

Essay **OR**

Artistic Project

- * T-shirt or jewelry design
- * Video
- * Poster
- * Work of art
- * Technology (i.e. Prezi, Vine, PowerPoint, Flipagram)

It is our hope and prayer that this contest will be a valuable exercise in teaching our young people the value of human life, the need to protect that life, as well as the need for sexual purity and marital faithfulness.

Please submit the essay to:

Lori Looker
43078 Hartwick
Sterling Heights, MI
48313
lori61high@yahoo.com

Please submit the artistic project to:

Jeff Davis
1000 Bagley
Rochester Hills, MI
48309
jdavis@lhsa.com

Essay Guidelines

- * Write 400-500 words
- * Research your subject well
- * Develop your theme clearly
- * Show how this issue relates to you
- * Use clear Biblical references and teachings
- * Use proper spelling and grammar
- * Be convincing and personal
- * Include a title page with the following information:
title of essay, student's name, name of
congregation/school with address, telephone
number and email address

Artistic Project Guidelines

- * Research your subject well
- * Develop your theme clearly
- * Show how this issue relates to you
- * Use clear Biblical references and teachings
- * Be convincing and personal
- * Exhibit excellent craftsmanship
- * Creativity
- * Send a few pictures (photographs or JPEG) and a paragraph OR a short video (in the .mov format) in which you display your project and explain its meaning
- * Include a page with the following information: title of project, student's name, name of congregation/school with address, telephone number and email address



Meet your LFL-MI Board of Directors [from left to right]...

Dorothy Zink [St Matthew Holt], Pastor Paul Clark [St Paul Fowler], Chris Schultz [Zion Harbor Beach], Nathan Beuschel [Our Savior Grand Rapids], Lauren Schaidt [St Luke Clinton Twp], Connie Davis [St Peter Macomb], Laverne Santangelo [St Peter Eastpointe], Earl Iseler [Our Savior Grand Rapids]. Inset: Susan Hill [Christ Our Savior Livonia & Family of God Detroit]

At the LFL-MI Board meeting on July 30th, Pastor Paul Clark installed and welcomed Nathan Beuschel as the new Technology Coordinator on the Board.

Nathan is currently a chemical engineering student at Western Michigan University. He is a member of Our Savior Lutheran in Grand Rapids, and attends Immanuel Lutheran in Kalamazoo while at school. As a Board member, he hopes to help protect the lives of those who cannot protect themselves. He is excited to join the Christ-centered Board in promoting life at all stages.



Statewide Diaper Shower Update

Since the last issue of *Lifelines*, additional congregations forwarded their tally for the Diaper Shower. They are: St Martin Port Huron and Trinity Monroe

The final total: **24 congregations** participated in the Diaper Shower
33,434 individual diapers were collected

Please note that this quarterly newsletter is also available to you digitally. If you would like to receive your newsletter by email, please contact us at lflmi.president@gmail.com

Please consider 'friending' us on Facebook at Lutherans For Life of Michigan (Religious Organization) with pre-natal baby icon. [There appear to be a number of different pages entitled Lutherans For Life of Michigan!]



Life Leadership Summit

March 25, 2017

**St Matthew Lutheran
2418 Aurelius Road
Holt, MI 48842**



“The Body of Christ and the Public Square”

Guest Speaker: *Pastor Chris Thoma*

Now is the time for Christians to boldly share what God’s Word says about LIFE issues. Abortion, euthanasia, physician assisted suicide, same sex marriage, transgenderism are all issues to which our culture speaks...mostly in a non-Christian manner. We need to encourage each other in our Christian walk and witness.

Pastors, Life Chapters, Life Teams, Life Advocates, all those interested in promoting LIFE...Lutherans For Life of Michigan would be so pleased to meet you, to encourage and help equip you to be strong, Biblical voices For LIFE in your families, congregations and communities.

Please RSVP to lflmi.president@gmail.com or call 586-949-9261 before March 10th to assist us in planning for materials and the luncheon.

Schedule

- 9:30 – 10:00 – Registration
- 10:00 – 10:15 – Opening Devotions
- 10:15 – 11:15 – Pastor Chris Thoma
- 11:15 – 12:00 – Lutherans For Life Ministry [Sharing goals & activities of National LFL & LFL-MI]
- 12:00 – 1:00 – Lunch [provided by the LWML ladies of St Matthew]
- 1:00 – 1:45 – Breakout Session 1 [Small group brain-storming ideas on getting congregations/individuals involved]
- 1:45 - 2:00 – Break
- 2:00 – 2:45 – Breakout Session 2 [Sharing ideas in the larger group]
- 2:45 – 3:00 – Closing

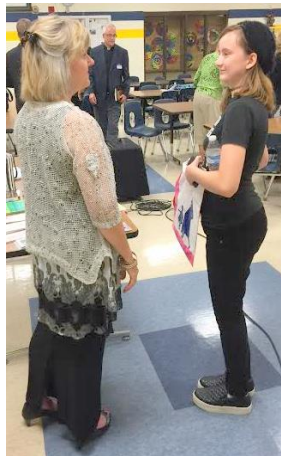
“We encourage all citizens to embrace their citizenship not merely as a duty and privilege, but as an opportunity to meaningfully participate in building the culture of life. Every voice matters in the public forum. Every vote counts.” [*Father Frank Pavone*, National Director of Priests For Life]

What's Happening...

On May 19th, Pastor Paul Clark, who serves as LCMS MI District Life Coordinator and Spiritual Counselor to LFL-MI, was guest speaker at the Pastors' Luncheon sponsored by Downriver Right to Life of Michigan. Pastor Clark's message, *Standing Up For Life*, was enthusiastically received by those in attendance. Pictured with Pastor Clark are RtL-MI Board Director Paul Miller and President Barbara Listing.



Susan Hill, LFL-MI Board member, hosted our exhibit at the 2016 LWML Michigan District Convention held July 29 – 31 in Boyne Falls.



"Every Tuesday, immediately after school, we take cars full of students and teachers over to the abortion clinic about 2 blocks from our school. On an average day, we have around 12 students and 2 teachers join the cause. We all stand in a circle in the parking lot across from the center. We can see the building clearly, but we don't stand directly on their property. We begin with a devotion that comes from one of the Right to Life devotion series. After that we go around the circle and everyone prays for whatever lays heavy on their heart about the pro-life cause. This is our second year doing this and we will continue this tradition until we get that facility shut down.

Please pray for us and God bless you in all the wonderful work you've done in honor of Him. On behalf of everyone at Valley, we will continue to pray for this cause and the work you are doing. God Bless..."

[Article submitted by Ruby Yantz, student leader of the Students For Life group at Valley Lutheran High School in Saginaw. Photos submitted by Bess Winter, faculty advisor to Students For Life at VLHS. Cris Urbytes also serves as a faculty advisor to the group.]

...in Michigan?

Susan Hill, LFL-MI Urban Outreach Coordinator, hosted an exhibit table at the Urban Family and Community Health Fair on September 12th, sponsored by Our Savior Lutheran Church in Flint.



On September 10th, Trinity Utica hosted a Day of Remembrance for the Unborn. The prayer vigil was led by Pastor Norman Koy.



Lutherans For Life of Michigan hosted author, speaker, and past National LFL President Linda Bartlett in a series of presentations and pastoral panels discussing her recent book *"The Failure of Sex Education in the Church: Mistaken Identity, Compromised Purity"*.



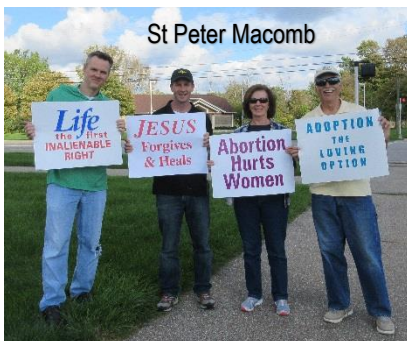
September 18th at St Mark Kentwood: Pastor Jeremy Swem [Our Savior Grand Rapids], Pastor Ken Bomberger [Mt Olive Walker], Pastor Michael Wentzel [St Mark Kentwood]. Inset: Pastor Jeffrey Wilhelm [Mt Calvary Greenville] served as moderator.

September 20th at Valley Lutheran High School in Saginaw: Pastor Chris Thoma [Our Savior Hartland], moderator Pastor Paul Clark [St Paul Fowler], Linda Bartlett, Pastor Jon Bakker [Zion Mt Pleasant], Pastor Daniel Burhop [Trinity Reese]

September 22nd at St Peter Macomb: Pastor Bert Thompson [St Luke Clinton Twp], Pastor Brad Smith [St John Fraser], Linda Bartlett, moderator Pastor Mark Wuggazer [St Peter Macomb], Pastor Joel Eden [Christ Our Savior Livonia]

Linda's presentation and some of the panel discussions were recorded and will be available on our website shortly.

What's happening in Michigan? continued



Several churches in Macomb County hosted a Life Chain on October 2nd. Life Chain is a peaceful and prayerful public FOR LIFE witness to the church and community, where individuals stand for 90 minutes praying for our nation and for an end to abortion.

[St John Fraser also hosted a Life Chain, but no photos were available for publication.]

On Sunday, October 9th, St Luke Clinton Twp hosted an event entitled *Life Issues and the Voter*. Pastor Paul Clark, LFL-MI Spiritual Counselor, addressed the topic “*The Time is Now*”. Pictured on the right, introducing Pastor Clark, is Karen Hoerauf, president of the Loving Arms LFL Life Chapter in Macomb County.



Upcoming Events in 2016/2017

November 16 – Presentation of Owen’s Mission fetal models at Trinity Lutheran Elementary School in Jackson

January 11, 2017 – Chapel at St Peter Lutheran Elementary School in Macomb

January 15 – Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

March 15 -- Life Issues Contest entries are due [for more information on the Life Issues Contest see p. 3 or go to www.lflmi.org]

March 25 – LFL-MI Life Leadership Summit [see p. 5]

April 19 – Chapel at Trinity Lutheran Elementary School in Utica

May 14 – June 18 – Annual Statewide Diaper Shower

**Family of God “Luke Project 52”
8941 West Vernor Hwy
Detroit, MI 48209-1439
586-722-3996**



New Pregnancy Center...“Luke Project 52”...Opening at Family of God in Detroit

There is big news for all of us supporting LIFE in meaningful ways. **Family of God Church in SW Detroit** is a newly formed Lutheran church now expanding its ministry to include a **fully functioning pregnancy center right in the church**, scheduled to open in late October 2016. It is called “Luke Project 52” which refers to Jesus’ feeding of the 5000 through the resources available.

Family of God Church is supported by the Michigan District and includes approximately **24 churches** who provide help in the form of food, clothing and other needs. The church is shepherded by **Pastor James Hill**, who, along with **Tyler Cronkright**, a recent graduate of Concordia Ann Arbor, share the Gospel of Christ with hurting souls. **Christ Our Savior in Livonia**, where Pastor Hill is on staff as “Missionary to Detroit”, has also promised support as the pre-natal clinic is planned. There are others as well that volunteer. They are doing amazing work with the help of the Holy Spirit, including serving meals 6 days a week [approximately 16,000 meals a year], and most importantly, offering the love of Christ unconditionally through services, Bible study classes, separate men and women’s nights and more.

The pregnancy center is for women who have **chosen to keep their babies rather than aborting them**. Most are young, live in a culture that does not see marriage in their future, and are searching for love. They find love through the **Word and Sacrament as well as pre-natal care** at Family of God church. They will be given pre-natal care from excellent doctors and nurses. Ultrasounds, timely examinations, vitamins, parenting care, diapers and other baby needs will be provided. This will be offered until the new born is one year old. Hopefully they will become a **life-long part** of Family of God church and its ministry.

You may ask? Why don’t the women just go to an existing clinic? The answer is that in the city of Detroit transportation is among the worst in the nation. Women also fear violence, especially if they are alone before or after work.

LFL-MI with Connie Davis, and Loving Arms LFL Chapter with Karen Hoerauf as leaders are moving forward in helping this LIFE ministry. Look for opportunities such as diapers, all kinds of paper products, women’s gloves to give to Family of God “Luke Project 52” pregnancy center.

Please pray for this inspiring LIFE ministry.

[Article and photo submitted by Kathy Zappitell, leader of the Life Team at Trinity Utica]



On October 1st, Our Savior Lutheran Church in Hartland hosted a conference entitled ***The Body of Christ and the Public Square***. Keynote speaker for the event was Dinesh D'Souza, bestselling author and filmmaker. Other featured speakers (pictured with Mr D'Souza from left to right above) were William Wagner [internationally recognized expert in constitutional law & good governance and president & chairman of Salt and Light Global/Great Lakes Justice Center], Lana Theis [Michigan state representative from District 42], and Patrick Colback [Michigan senator for Michigan's 7th District]. Presentations included: "*The Meeting of the Two Kingdoms & the Tragic Assumption*" [Pastor Chris Thoma from Our Savior Hartland], "*An Exercise in Religious Liberty*" [Representative Lana Theis & Senator Patrick Colbeck], "*God, Man, and the Constitution*" [Prof William Wagner], and "*The Future of Freedom*" [Dinesh D'Souza].

LFL-MI Board members Lauren Schaidt and Connie Davis hosted an exhibit table at the conference.

Videos of the presentations are now available on Our Savior's website. You may view them by visiting http://www.oursaviorhartland.org/public_html/WordPress/conference-2016/

Owen's Mission

Owen's Mission is a very special project of Lutherans For Life. The goal of this project is to honor Jesus by presenting a set of *Touch of Life* fetal models to every Lutheran elementary and high school in the country. (That's 1078 schools affecting 139,000 students!) We want students to understand the God-given value of each life from the moment of conception. We want students to be motivated by what God has done as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier that gives value to life. We want students to value themselves and to value others as persons because of this God-given value.

Where did **Owen's Mission** come from? From a very small and special baby named Owen. Rev Dr James Lamb, former Executive Director of Lutherans For Life, shares his story:

"I held my little grandson, Owen, in the palm of my hand. He died at twenty-one weeks during pre-natal surgery to remove a large tumor. The nurse brought him to our son as we waited in the recovery room for Owen's mother. I find it difficult to describe what I felt when I was able to hold him. I had held the twenty-week Touch of Life fetal model in my hands hundreds of times in front of students from preschoolers to seminarians. Holding Owen revived in me the reality behind those models. I will never hold them in the same way again."

As Owen's grandpa, Dr Lamb wanted to do something special to remember Owen, honor Jesus, and help others understand the value God gives to even the smallest of lives. With the help of Owen's family, **Owen's Mission** was born. We are training facilitators to present these fetal model sets along with a DVD message from Dr Lamb.

This is a mission opportunity for individual, congregational, and/or school offerings. For more information on how you can obtain a set of these fetal models for your school, contact Chris Schultz at ckay.schultz@gmail.com or 734-241-1607.

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 *



Y4Life Servant Events are a wonderful opportunity for chapters, life teams, schools and churches to reach out to youth and engage them in making a meaningful difference for Life in their community. They are adaptable to your area and your students and, best of all, they lay the foundation for future ministry opportunities with youth. Laura Davis, national Y4Life director, will help equip youth to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life! Email Laura for help with life-affirming youth servant events nationwide: ldavis@lutheransforlife.org.

Life Sunday Materials

Available at Concordia Publishing House: A \$5 CD which contains the following Life Sunday resources based on the theme "Here We Stand": Bulletin Inserts – Here We Stand (in English and Spanish) and Just For Kids (a new, four-page insert for kids); Bible Study; sermons (including one PowerPoint sermon; worship service format; and children's message). The official Life Sunday is January 15, 2017. However, LFL materials may be used any time during the year. Note: Life Sunday resources are also available as free downloads at www.lutheransforlife.org. To learn more about Lutherans For Life please visit www.lutheransforlife.org.

WORD OF HOPE...

LFL's Post Abortion Healing Ministry

If you are in a crisis situation, have had an abortion, are pregnant right now, or have been hurt by someone, here you will find hope.

Please contact Word of Hope
1-888-217-8679

www.word-of-hope.org
help@word-of-hope.org

Lutherans For Life of Michigan

23775 – 24 Mile Road
Macomb, MI 48042



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Notes and Quotes

* “Only one force, only one truth can neutralize and counteract (the) sin and death (of abortion). The Gospel of Jesus Christ is greater than governments, media, public opinion, and personal preference. The grace of God is more than a message: it’s a Person. It’s not just a movement but relationships. His love given in crucified sacrifice changes minds, claims imaginations, heals hearts, and saves souls. His power shown in resurrected presence assigns infinite value to all bodies and ultimate sanctity to every human life. Not only will He treat the culture, He will cure the people, because He has defeated the Devil and hell itself.” [*Pastor Michael Salemink*, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life, in LifeDate Spring 2016]

* “In the end, the debate is not really about abortion or homosexuality or even postmodernism. The literal ‘crux’ of the matter is the Cross: so do we attempt to justify ourselves by redefining morality to fit our lifestyles, or do we regard ourselves as sinners in need of Christ’s forgiveness and ask Him to send His Holy Spirit so that we may be empowered to live a new kind of life?” [*Ryan MacPherson*, in LifeDate, Fall 2015]

* Abortion is the #1 killer of children in the world.

* “For those of us who have had abortions, our lives have never been the same. The dirty little secret behind what they call ‘choice’ is that the baby isn’t the only one who dies; part of our soul dies, too. We must make abortion, not just illegal, but unthinkable.” [*Vera Lord*, director of the Pittsburgh chapter of Orthodox Christian for Life]

* “Each woman who chooses life for her child affirms our reverence for human life and ennobles our society. Each child is a unique, unrepeatable gift, and every child who escapes the violence of abortion is an immeasurable victory for life.” [*Ronald Reagan*, former president of the United States]

* “Given the climate of our times where the humanity of the unborn is denied and the value of the humanity of the disabled is questioned, it becomes more important than ever to focus on God’s gracious fulfillment of these promises (Malachi 3:1 & Isaiah 7:14) for they give value to all humanity, born and unborn, healthy and frail.” [*Rev Dr James Lamb*, former Executive Director of Lutherans For Life]

* “God’s moral law does not change with time and place, with opinion polls, or even with court decisions.” [*Col John Eidsmoe*, Senior Counsel and Resident Scholar at the Foundation for Moral Law]