

Winter 2012 Newsletter

January, 2012

From the President of Lutherans for Life – Canada:

The Celebration of Christmas is behind us and we look forward to another year of God's grace.

On looking on the past year, we are grateful for the accomplishments of Lutherans for Life – Canada. We are constantly challenged to defend life at every juncture in our post-modern society. If we are not dealing with abortion, it is with everything from Stem Cell research to Euthanasia.

Our successes this past year included the passing of two Resolutions at the annual LCC convention. We will now celebrate a Sanctity of Life Sunday on the third Sunday in January. At the same convention we were successful in passing a resolution supporting Adult Stem Cell (ASC) research, but at the same time condemning Embryonic Stem Cells (ESC). ESC involves the destruction of a human life, while ASC does not involve the destruction of a human life.

In Canada, now the focus will be on Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia. We encourage you to contact your MP and express your concern about these issues. We must become more vocal if we want to protect all vulnerable life, including that of the elderly.

Consider visiting the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition website: www.epcc.ca. On the left hand side is an online petition which you can sign to show your support in protecting our elderly from an unwanted and untimely death.

We continue to advertise "Word Of Hope" help line, and we are seeing calls and enquires to Grace Kearns' website. This tells us that we are making a difference.

Please feel free to advertise in your local congregations, newsletters, secular media and with other pro-life organizations in your area.

We are grateful for your past support and prayers, as we can see the progress our organization has made. God indeed has blessed our organization. We will continue the fight for "Life Issues" with God's Grace, even among a hostile secular environment. I would like to quote the words of Lutheran Church Missouri Synod President Matthew Harrison in the November issue of the Lutheran Witness:

"The era of the Church and of Christianity is far from over. It won't be over until the return of Christ. But our privileged position in state and culture is drawing to a close. So be it. The Christian faith flourishes as an opposition movement. And the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

Clifford Pyle
President, LFL-C

A Call for Another Look at Canada's 400 Year Old Law

Many believe Canada has no abortion law. On the other hand, a recent poll disclosed that 79% of Canadians believe that Canadian law protects the fundamental human rights of children before birth in the later stages of gestation.

[In fact, the opposite is true on both counts. You'll be surprised when you see](#)

what Canada's abortion law actually says. You'll be even more surprised when you hear the century in which Canada's abortion law originated.

What do people really want when it comes to abortion? Most Canadians want a just law. Most Canadians want the facts. What obstacles stand in the way of justice? Of facts?

The biggest obstacle is an unhealthy reluctance by many Canadians to even talk about abortion. Past discussions have been characterized by confrontation, insensitivity, and rhetorical heat. We need to change that and to show that Canadians can have a dialogue about abortion with truth, justice and compassion. In short, we need wise speech.

While it is true that Canada has no law that limits abortion, Canada does have a law that permits abortion by denying any human rights whatsoever to a child before the moment of complete birth. It is Section 223 of our Criminal Code. Here it is:

"A child becomes a human being within the meaning of this Act when it has completely proceeded, in a living state, from the body of its mother whether or not it has breathed, etc."

Many will find it odd to read a definition of human being in black and white print on a page.

It is even odder to realize that this law bears no relationship to the medical evidence about when a child actually does become a human being. Instead our law proposes a "magical" moment of transformation when the child's last toe pops out of the birth canal.

Even more amazing is the fact that this "born alive" definition of human being was formulated at least as early as Coke's Institutes of Law in the seventeenth century. In fact there are hints it was part of the Laws of Henry I as early as 1115 – the twelfth century. Even in the seventeenth century, medical science was very primitive compared to what is now known about the development of a child before birth.

At that time this definition was one part of a two part law dealing with abortion. Along with that part, namely, that a child was not a human being until birth, the second part of the law went on to say that it was still a serious offence to take a child's life before birth.

Unfortunately in 1988 the Supreme Court of Canada deleted that second part, but left the other part of our law on abortion. Standing alone, this remaining part denies the protection of fundamental human rights to children before birth (since they are arbitrarily defined as sub-human by our 400 year old law).

Is this a just law? Is it informed by accurate modern medical evidence? Does it reflect compassion?

There can be no doubt that the rights of mothers are totally engaged when it comes to pregnancy, childbirth and abortion. But can any one person's rights be validly secured by totally denying the rights of another person? In fact, rights sometimes do conflict, and modern legal principles have evolved to mediate justly between conflicting human rights. Canadians are quite capable of engaging in a national dialogue about the 21st century medical evidence and modern legal principles which should be used to review our existing seventeenth century (or earlier) law on abortion.

It should be everybody's priority to ensure that a law which involves fundamental

human rights is based on modern medically accurate evidence rather than a 400 year old arbitrary legal definition.

Parliament has a responsibility and duty to ensure that laws with important human rights implications, such as our definition of who is a human being, are informed by modern medically accurate evidence, not out-dated seventeenth century medical and legal principles.

I'm simply asking the question "Does it make medical sense in the twenty-first century to say that a child is not a human being until the moment of complete birth?" Let's at least examine the evidence. If you agree that respectful dialogue about this is a good thing, please add your voice to mine.

Stephen Woodworth
Member of Parliament
Kitchener Centre

Editor's note: Mr. Woodworth spoke at the Church Workers Conference of the East District of Lutheran Church Canada in November, 2011. The editor and Rev. Robert Bruer of our Board of Directors heard him speak and asked him to write this article for this newsletter. Mr. Woodworth is trying to get his message out to as many places as possible, so feel free to share this.

If you wish to encourage him in his efforts, his email is stephen.woodworth@parl.gc.ca. If you wish to encourage Prime Minister Harper to allow the debate on abortion to reopen, his contact information is:

Office of the Prime Minister (postage free and effective)

80 Wellington Street

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2 Fax: 613-941-6900

E-mail: pm@pm.gc.ca



Lutheran's For Life Canada's Annual General Meeting for 2011

The Annual General Meeting took place on October 22 at Grace Lutheran Church in St. Catharines, Ontario. Following the opening worship, we watched and discussed a video on the selling of human eggs in the U.S., a practice exploited by some infertile Canadian women. Following lunch, we heard reports from our officers and discussed two possible projects: distributing a DVD on Canadian pro-life protester, Linda Gibbons, and a distributing a pro-life computer game. Elected to our Board of Directors were Bertha Bruer, JulieAnn Hartburg, Pastor Richard Juritsch, Pastor David Mellecke, Marian Obeda and Clifford Pyle. We give thanks to God for the faithful service of Pastor Steven Alles and Linda Welke, who chose not to run for re-election.

Editor's Note: At its first meeting, the new board elected Mr. Pyle as president, Mrs. Obeda as secretary and Pastor Juritsch as treasurer. Pastor Robert Bruer was reappointed as pastoral advisor to the board.

2010 Financial Report Lutherans for Life Canada

Opening Balance – January 1, 2010		\$16,557.21
Receipts		
Donations	\$3,397.50	
CEF Interest	\$308.42	
Total Receipts		\$3,705.92
Expenditures		
Teleconferencing	\$202.79	
Materials	\$1,401.53	
Website	\$166.42	
AGM	\$697.03	
Love Life Conference	\$1,000.00	
Advertising	\$985.45	
Newsletter	\$61.00	
Conferences/Displays	\$1,275.83	
Receiver General	\$30.00	
Total Expenditures		\$5,820.05
Closing Balance, December 31, 2010		\$14,443.08

Financial Report for Lutherans for Life Canada – Jan. 1 – Oct. 21, 2011

Opening Balance – January 1, 2011		\$14,443.08
Receipts		
Donations	\$3,013.44	
CEF Interest	\$261.94	
Total Receipts		\$3,275.38
Expenditures		
Teleconferencing	\$114.64	
Materials	\$340.66	
Website	\$33.90	
Love Life Conference	\$1,000.00	
Advertising	\$782.71	
Newsletter	\$219.10	
Postage	\$36.35	
Word of Hope	\$250.00	
Conferences/Displays	\$1,192.62	
Receiver General	\$30.00	
Total Expenses		\$3,999.98
Closing Balance, October 21, 2011		\$13,718.48

Your Thoughts Are Appreciated

Letters to the editor and articles on life issues are always appreciated. They can be sent to info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca.

Make the Connection...Join Lutherans for Life Canada!

Please consider assisting LFLC by making a financial contribution. Unfortunately, we cannot issue a charitable receipt for tax purposes, as the Canada Revenue Agency refuses to grant us official charitable status, even though we are incorporated by the federal government as a non-profit organization. You can send your donation to:

Lutherans For Life Canada
c/o Rev. Richard Juritsch
1 Jefferson Drive
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 3T8

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

CONGREGATION: _____

MEMBERSHIP: \$10.00 _____ DONATION: _____

If you aren't already, become a member of Lutherans for Life Canada by subscribing to our objects. Simply sign and send the following with your membership cost.

I support the objects of Lutherans for Life – Canada, namely:

- (a) to provide an organization through which Lutheran Christians can unite to share dialogue and give common witness within the Church and society to their concern for the value and dignity of all human life;
- (b) to strengthen the existing bond of concern by bringing Lutherans of like mind into contact with one another;
- (c) to gather and share pertinent information with its membership and develop strategies for witness and response;
- (d) to develop and distribute educational materials based on the Word of God;
- (e) to identify resource people who can write and speak on behalf of the organization;
- (f) to monitor public and private action in order to enhance the right to life;
- (g) to respond to and cooperate with other groups in society which share similar concerns;
- (h) to examine and correct popular but misleading stereotypes regarding pro-life advocacy; and
- (i) to operate exclusively for Charitable and educational purposes. It will not participate in political campaigns for or against any candidate for public office or devote a substantial part of its activities to influence legislation.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature: _____ Date: ___/___/2012