

## NEWSLETTER – SPRING EDITION 2021



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### **From the President's Laptop**

*Spring, 2021*

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."*

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse." Romans 1:16-20*

It is a beautiful spring day in southern Ontario, as I type these words. The grass has turned from a dead brown to a vibrant green. Tulip and daffodil, crocus and hyacinth are blooming in the parsonage flowerbeds. One looks at the wonders of a world awakening after the sleep of winter and the above words of Romans particularly ring out. God does reveal so much about His power in this re-awakening.

No less is the miracle of the conception and growth of a baby within the womb of her mother. Yet, as the pagan world at the time of Paul was blind to the truth about the one and only true God, so is the pagan world of today. A witness for the sanctity of life is so important in the face of abortion, euthanasia masquerading as Medical Aid In Dying, and the use of the cells of aborted babies in the production of some, though not all, of the vaccines being offered to fight COVID 19 and its variants.

In the midst of this, I have pondered the question of why Lutherans For Life-Canada exists. There are many pro-life groups in Canada. Why has this small group of Lutherans formed another group instead of simply joining with other larger groups? The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod's pastoral letter from President Matthew Harrison and fact sheet on COVID 19 vaccines highlighted the why of our existence – especially the letter. The fact sheet could have been put out by almost any pro-life organization, even an entirely secular one. In dealt with facts from the natural realm.

However, the difficulty with drawing only, or even primarily on the natural realm, is that the natural realm knows only the Law. In the end it can only reveal God's wrath as the Law convicts us.

Rev. Dr. Harrison's letter reminds us that the use of vaccines is not addressed in Holy Scripture and falls in the realm of what Lutheran theologians refer to as an open question. Guided by various passages of Holy Scripture, Christians may have very strong differing opinions on an open question. President Harrison writes:

In a sensitive issue of this nature, we remember the words of St. James: "Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger" (James 1:19). Listen carefully and openly to the points of others. Consider them. Share your positions patiently and objectively. Reflect upon your own penchant for error. Forgive others where they sin against you and ask for forgiveness where you wrong them. *(Harrison, Matthew C., Letter, January 21, 2021)*

When we struggle, when we are weak, not just in body but in understanding, the Gospel is our blessed strength. It is the power of God to save.

And herein lies the difference between Lutherans For Life Canada (and our sister organization in the USA, Lutherans For Life) and many other pro-life organizations. As much as we desire to see a world free of abortion and euthanasia and other assaults on life, our first and foremost goal is the salvation of souls. Jesus died to forgive those who have had abortions or provided abortions. Jesus rose again so as to give hope to those facing death that they don't need to decide how and when they will die, but put their hope in Him who overcame death and the grave, as shown by His resurrection. If abortion and euthanasia were ended tomorrow, many pro-life organizations would cease to have a purpose. Not LFL-C! People would still be tempted by abortion and euthanasia as they were before they were legalized, and will continue to need to be taught how God values not only all life, but their life – and not just for a few years here, but for all eternity.

May God bless you in this Easter season of celebrating Christ's victory over death and the grave.

Yours in Christ, Rev. Richard Juritsch

#### FROM THE PASTORAL ADVISOR'S DESK

## Prayerfully Patient Joy

How do we begin to make sense of all that has been happening around us (and to us) as of late? Should we live in anger over all the good that has been taken away or fear over all the bad that might yet be? Of course not! Instead of living our lives based on what ISN'T, God calls us to stand firmly upon what actually IS. Like the Joy we have in the Hope of what is ours right now in Jesus Christ. A joy that sees us patiently through all the tribulations of life in a world full of what-might-have-beens and what-could-still-be's. A joy that doesn't erase the hardships of life in a broken world, but instead redefines that hardship into something else entirely ... like a chance to pray to God. To begin to see life not through the eyes of what we want or don't want, but by God's gracious and loving perspective. Today we conclude Paul's 3-fold guide to living a god-pleasing Christian Life in any reality:

**Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. [Romans 12:12]**

### **3. Rejoice in Hope!**

#### **What our Hope is!**

People hope for all sorts of things in this life. Some hope for health and wealth. Some hope to be left alone. Others hope for social justice, equity, and inclusivity. Every one of those hopes and every other thing that people wish from this world will be dashed by trials and tribulations sooner or later. We have a hope that is far greater. A hope that has already delivered, and once delivered cannot be taken away from us. Our hope is in Jesus Christ, our crucified, resurrected, and ascended Saviour and Lord.

Our hope is in the very Son of God, incarnated in human flesh who spent His time among us overcoming every trial and temptation of that flesh we all share. Our hope is in the forgiveness, life, and salvation He purchased and won for us by sacrificing that flesh and blood on the cross of Calvary. While sin is real, it is also really paid for and we are free of the consequences of its debt!

Our hope is in that Holy Word of the Scriptures heard, studied, sung, proclaimed! The plan of salvation accomplished in the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. A plan put in place for YOU before the world even began.

Our Hope is in the Blessed Sacraments, where that very same resurrected Christ comes among us with His heavenly gifts. In Holy Baptism we are blessed with Christ's own life and death and resurrection. We are adopted as heirs of heaven and given a place in the Family of God. In the Lord's Supper we are set at God's own table to enjoy a heavenly foretaste of the great feast to come. We are given the medicine of eternal life! We are reunited with all the blessed saints who have left this world of tears to be with the Lord in His Joy! In the Sacraments we are given a hope not just in the paradise to come, but in the fact that it is already here among us, and we are welcome any time!

#### **Joy to the World!**

Sometimes rejoicing is the scariest and hardest thing to do. Often this is because we confuse joy for happiness. They are not the same. Being happy, while great, is shallow and fleeting. Joy runs deep. Happy can be washed away by fears and doubts. Joy remains firm even in the face of hardships and trials. Happy is, in the end, all about me. Joy comes only from leaving the self behind to rest securely in Christ Jesus.

Joy is the one thing this world needs more than ever. We have enough nags and scolds to tell us how terrible everything is and how we are all going to die (and should die for the convenience of our loved ones). And they are right in that one day we will all die. Even if we make it through pregnancy where abortion is thrown at our mother every day as a virtuous choice. Even if we live out our old age without the pressure to cash it in early and avoid suffering or being a burden to our loved ones. Even if we navigate this culture of death from beginning to end, one day will still dawn as our last in this terribly broken world. But the nags and the scolds and party-poopers are also very wrong. For we can still rejoice even in the midst of suffering and death. We can cling to Christ in prayer and worship, receive His heavenly gifts in Word and Sacrament and let the world be miserable if they want. As for me and my house ... we will rejoice in the Lord!

And we will rejoice because sin no longer has that final word in our lives, nor does its many effects. Even death itself must take a backseat to Christ who rose from the grave as only the first among us. Let this world do its worst, our true home and everlasting life awaits! Rejoice in Hope, be Patient in Tribulation, and be Constant in Prayer!

## **For Reflection:**

- How is our Christian Hope not at all like wishing? How can we be sure in that hope, even when things seem so wrong? How does Life win?
- What can we as individual Christians, and congregations, do to spread joy (not happiness) in this culture of death? What do we do with those who want nothing to do with our joy?
- What makes life worth living? What makes life worth defending? What makes life worth celebrating?

## **Prayer:**

Our Father in heaven, we give thanks to You for Your boundless love shown to us when you sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Lord grant this to us in Jesus name. Amen.

## **A Matter of Compassion**

*Still Your children wander homeless; Still the hungry cry for bread; Still the captives long for freedom; Still in grief we mourn our dead. As, O Lord, Your deep compassion Healed the sick and freed the soul, Use the love Your Spirit kindles Still to save and make us whole.1*

Many people get the wrong impression about Life Issues. Those who are pro-life are often seen as uncaring and demanding. They are after all the ones who keep insisting that people shouldn't be allowed to do whatever they want (usually killing or dying), just because they want to do it. Sometimes even pro-lifers can get caught up in debating God's Law (which is always good and right and should be defended as such) to the point where we do come across as only caring about the Law and morality.

But nothing could (or should) be further from the truth. What we do is not done to prove "rightness" or "wrongness", but as a matter of compassion. Pro-life issues are a matter of compassion. In the Greek New Testament the word for compassion is "splanchnizomai" a churning or flip/flop of the bowels. You probably know it as that deep down feeling of ache when you see others in distress or suffering.

It was this compassion that led our Lord Jesus Christ to heal the sick (Mt. 14:14), to feed the hungry (Mt. 15:32), and give sight to the blind (Mt. 20:34). It was by that very same yearning to show compassion that Jesus taught the crowds (Mk. 6:34), cast out demons (Mk. 9:22) and even raised the dead back to life (Lk. 7:13)!

It is the same compassion that leads us to look at the world around us and try to do the same. Everywhere you turn there is suffering and pain to make even the strongest of bellies flop. We cannot raise the dead, but we can sit with the dying and point them to the one who has. We can care for the sick and suffering, yes even in (especially in) a time of pandemic! We can feed the hungry. We can teach others about the sanctity of all life and our Lord's great love for every human life. We can speak up for those who do not have a voice.

But there is another dimension to compassion that is just as important. The English word compassion literally means to "suffer with" This is the very reason for Jesus' incarnation among us ... to come alongside us in our sin and suffering and suffer with us. To suffer FOR us! Jesus, the very Author of Life was willing to set aside His own life, to suffer and die and rise again because of His great compassion for us. And in doing so He shows us the value of all human life. Every single human being ... the lost, the

lonely, and the scared ... the sick, the feeble, and the aged ... the little, the poor, and the defenseless ... each has the value that Jesus Himself paid for them. His own life.

Are we, as pro-lifers ready to do the same? Are we ready to risk our reputations, our freedoms, our personal happiness, to come alongside others and suffer with them? Suffer for them? In this world where people's hearts and lives are broken by sin, we cannot take suffering away (no matter what the other side may promise). But we can make sure that no one ever has to suffer alone. We can dignify every life and death by standing with them and pointing them to the one who lived and died and rose again to give them life beyond all this suffering. In short, we can show them compassion.

*As we worship, grant us vision, Till Your love's revealing light In its height and depth and greatness,  
Dawns upon our quickened sight, Making known the needs and burdens Your compassion bids us bear,  
Stirring us to tireless striving, Your abundant life to share.<sup>2</sup>*

1 LSB 848 "Lord Whose Love Through Humble Service" v.2 Text: © Oxford University Press. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110017455  
2 Ibid v.3



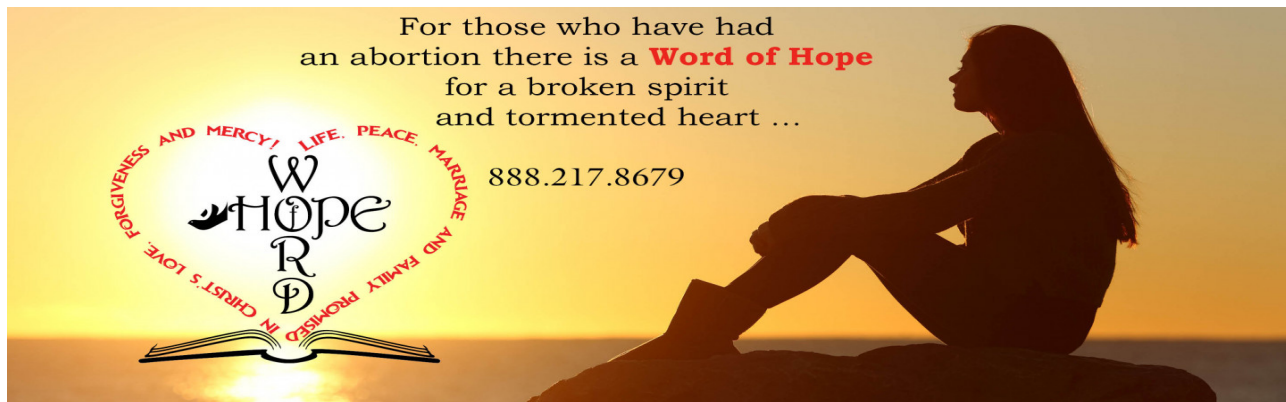
Have you considered leaving a planned gift within your estate to support the work of Lutherans for Life - Canada? Are you passionate about the work they do? Have you considered how even a small percentage of your estate would allow this vital work to continue? Lutheran Foundation Canada, an organization of LCC, assists individuals who are considering a planned gift, but are unsure of how best to create the gift. Coupled with other gifts you might leave to your home congregation or others, these combined gifts can generate significant tax savings. Call Lutheran Foundation Canada to find out how, at 877-711-4438 or visit our web site at [www.lutheranfoundation.ca](http://www.lutheranfoundation.ca). Plan. Make a difference, for your loved ones, and the ministries you value.

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**Please consider supporting Lutherans for Life-Canada through your prayers and making a financial contribution, or becoming a member. You are then placed on our mailing list and will receive our newsletters.**

***PLEASE NOTE: In an effort to curb some of the producing and mailing expenses of the LFL-C newsletters we are happy to offer it in both formats; online in an e-mail OR a mailed hard copy via Canada Post. Please indicate your preference by providing your email address to the treasurer when you make your next donation***

**or remit your yearly membership. We appreciate your help in this matter. PLEASE ALSO FEEL FREE TO FORWARD AND SHARE WITH OTHERS ON YOUR CONTACT LIST.**



LFL-C has a Facebook page. Just type in Lutherans for Life-Canada on your Fb search bar or Google it.

**LFL-C WEBSITE.** Please check it out at: [www.lutheransforlife-canada.ca](http://www.lutheransforlife-canada.ca).  
**Email LFL-C:** [info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca](mailto:info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca)

**LUTHERANS FOR LIFE-CANADA, IS A MINISTRY AND A LISTED SERVICE ORGANIZATION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH CANADA.**

#### **SOME LIFE QUOTES TO PONDER:**

“Death is the one thing no Christian has to do on his or her own. Jesus has already been through suffering and death before us. He knows the way through death and the way back to life, too. Our friends and family cannot go with us—but Jesus can. He will never let go of our hands. And He will bring us back to life with Him because He has promised, and He will never lie.” *Dr. Kari Vo, Lutheran Hour Ministries – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

“William Shakespeare once reasoned, ‘Love sought is good, but given unsought is better.’ How do you know that God loves you? While you and I were yet wandering, Christ was wandering after us, pursuing us, even by way of the cross: love seeking the lost in human flesh. It is this sacrifice that stands as the greatest marker in all time.” *Ravi Zacharias, evangelist – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*

“It’s a terrible thing to see any life that is used and abused instead of being protected and cared for. The value of life should not be based on the benefits it can offer. So we pray to the Lord to move all people to value and appreciate all life as God’s gift.” *Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org*



**IMPORTANT DATE!!!! PLEASE RESERVE**

# **Lutherans For Life Canada**

## ***Annual General Meeting***

**Grace Lutheran Church,**

**213 Linwell Rd., St. Catharines, ON**

**Saturday, November 6, 2021**

*Hopefully in person, online and via telephone*

*Guest Speaker and Topic as well as special arrangements to be announced at a later date.*

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**PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP THIS MINISTRY OF EQUIPPING LUTHERANS TO  
BE GOSPEL-MOTIVATED VOICES FOR LIFE, IN YOUR PRAYERS.  
WE GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS**

**Memberships, Membership Renewals and/or Donors to LFLC December 16, 2020  
to April 12, 2021**

Ilse and Rolf Cantrup  
Rev. Mark and Helga Danielson  
Faith Lutheran Church, London, ON  
Lavinia Henderson  
Historic St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran  
Church, Kitchener, ON  
Rev. Wayne and Pat Geick  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, London, ON  
Helga Judt  
Rev. Richard and Tracey Juritsch  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Klages

Sheila and Dave Lindsay  
Bruce and Brenda Marshall  
Judith Obelnycki  
Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Etobicoke, ON  
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Anna Wissing  
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## Lutherans For Life - Canada



Yes, I would like to make a gift offering to **Lutherans for Life - Canada** to assist with the witness to the sanctity of all human life through education based on the Word of God.

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*Please make cheque Payable to Lutherans for Life - Canada, 75 Blackthorne Cres., London, ON N6J 4B3*

Membership: \$15/Person per Year \_\_\_\_\_ \$30/Family per Year \_\_\_\_\_ \$50/Group per Year \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form with cheque to:  
Lutherans for Life-Canada  
C/o Mr. Alan Schmitt, Treasurer  
75 Blackthorne Crescent  
London ON N6J 4B3

### **Eight Objectives of the LFL-C are:**

1. 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;
2. To strengthen the existing common bond of concern by bringing Lutherans of like mind into contact with one another;
3. To gather and share pertinent information with its membership and develop strategies for witness and response;
4. To develop and distribute educational materials based upon the Word of God;
5. To identify resource people who can write and speak on behalf of the organization;
6. To monitor public and private action in order to enhance the right to life;
7. To respond to and co-operate with other groups in society who share similar concerns; and
8. To examine and correct popular but misleading stereotypes regarding pro-life advocacy.

To contact LFL-C please email us at:  
[info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca](mailto:info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca)

To order Prolife materials;  
Concordia Publishing House – [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)