



Life Matters

Discussing life matters,
because life matters

July 2020

Editor: Jim Burke
Writers: Jim Burke & Jean Biermann

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**We welcome newcomers to
our meetings and events**

[Donate Here](#)

Board Elections, Plus

We had our annual meeting where we elect our board members. Although we had met through video conferencing during recent months, this was the first in-person meeting we had for a few months.

We renewed the 3-year terms for Pat Semelroth, Jean Biermann, and Rick Delagardelle. We welcome John Perkins as a new member of our board. We also renewed terms for: our president, Sue Martinek; our vice president, Jim Burke; our treasurer, Leo Riester; and our secretary, Mary Cherion. We had a vacancy on our board for about a year, and are happy to move forward with a full board again!

We're also reaching the conclusion of our pro-life training sessions at the end of July. It's been great to discuss the training content, since many questions really helped to clarify things for people. It was also great to practice among fellow pro-lifers. We had to pause a few practice dialogues to regroup. We learn through our mistakes and struggles.

- Coalition for Life of Iowa's Board of Directors

Upcoming Events

Second Tuesdays
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Fourth Tuesdays
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CFLI Board Meetings (2nd Tuesdays)
& CFLI Working Meetings (4th Tuesdays)
Get involved in our organization!
Where: Contact us.
More info: coalitionforlife@gmail.com

Sep 23 – Nov 1
1-hour time slots
24 hours/day

40 Days for Life Prayer Vigil
Join us in praying for an end to abortion in a peaceful prayer vigil!
Where: Sidewalk outside Planned Parenthood
3425 First Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, IA
More info: <https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/cedar-rapids/>

Sun, Oct 4
2 – 3:30 p.m.

National Life Chain
Spread the pro-life message with signs along 1st Avenue!
Where: New location along 1st Ave compared to prior years
Cedar Rapids, IA
More info: <https://NationalLifeChain.org>

National Life Chain

This October’s National Life Chain in Cedar Rapids will change a little from what we’ve done in the past. The main change is the location. We tend to clump up when we gather in front of Planned Parenthood, and some people have reasons not to participate near that location. Many people who live in other parts of the city have never seen us line up for the National Life Chain. So, we wanted to try out a different stretch of 1st Avenue.

We plan to meet on the WEST side of town along 1st Avenue. The first stretch of the road that we plan to cover is between St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and Trinity Lutheran Church. We would love to have enough people to stretch beyond those churches.

One of the most impressive things about a good life chain is the length of it. We often struggle to get people to spread out. We have done better in recent years. We hope that after many months of “social distancing”, this year’s life chain should stretch out more than usual.

We would love to have more churches involved. A church only needs a few people to cover a block or two. Come, join us!

Photo from
LifeSiteNews

Death by Mail

Several years ago, Planned Parenthood here in Iowa “innovated” webcam abortions. Webcam abortions enabled abortion providers to bring abortion to smaller communities that are nowhere near the abortion facilitators. I call them that, since webcam abortions shifted the moral burden of taking the action that ends the lives of children to the women seeking the abortions.

The RU-486 pills provide abortions at a lower cost to abortion providers. It also allows them to get women off their premises before many of the side effects occur. They can tell their clients to go to an emergency room, since abortion providers don’t tend to know how to heal women of the problems they cause.

RU-486 was also tested out in Iowa, originally. It worked out okay for the abortion industry. But when they realized they could easily access smaller communities, they make use of webcam abortions.

As the abortion industry has been shifting more toward the use of the pills in place of surgical abortions, the thing that still got in their way was the critical need to examine their clients beforehand. Former Planned Parenthood manager Sue Thayer has pointed out that underqualified personnel tended to perform the exams. Such exams are important because the pills could be deadly in some circumstances, such as in cases of ectopic pregnancies.

The abortion industry was already trying to circumvent many of these protective measures before the pandemic. They managed to get approval to send abortion pills through the mail and to consult with women via the internet, wherever they were. Some of this was thanks to a study. By experimenting on Iowa’s women, it permitted them to avoid the normal health standards and rules that would apply. Some of this was done in the chaos of the pandemic.

The abortion industry exploits crisis moments, whether it’s at regional scale like after 9/11; or at a personal scale like when they push abortions on women who feel like they have no options, or a global scale like this pandemic. It will be important to see whether things return to normal after the pandemic and after the end of the study. They are likely to push for these changes to become permanent, likely by claiming it worked out for the limited time period and thus could be done long-term.

When abortion providers avoid the exams, they don’t just put the imminent health of a woman at risk. If a woman has an Rh negative blood type and carried an Rh positive child, she needs some treatments in order to allow her to safely carry future pregnancies without serious consequences. Without an exam, her future fertility is put at risk.

A federal judge ruled in favor of allowing death by mail.



Government Update

Federal

Little Sisters of the Poor won their case in the U.S. Supreme Court for the third time in a row. Between the Affordable Care Act's rules and various states trying to force people of faith to violate their consciences, they have been the target of what I refer to as "litigious harassment". This is where powerful forces will file lawsuit after lawsuit to try to intimidate or wear out people who stand up for what is right.

This year's election is very important. One candidate will continue to maintain the current rules that protect conscience rights. But others are either not likely to do so, or have publicly stated their intention. Oddly enough, the one that has come out the most vocally about intending to force Catholics to violate their faith and consciences is someone who identifies as Catholic.

This election is very important.

Iowa

As stated last month, shortly after the relatively trivial pro-life law was passed, Planned Parenthood filed a lawsuit to try to prevent the law requiring a mere 24-hour waiting period for abortions from going into effect.

Of course, as this newsletter issue points out, the abortion industry is shifting toward providing abortions via the mail, which naturally adds at least 24 hours to the time one can get an abortion.

As a reminder, Planned Parenthood doesn't like to have any regulations. We've seen this time and time again. But it really stood out in Texas, when the abortion giant successfully managed to get a Texas law thrown out. The Texas law is the law that required abortion providers to meet the same minimum standards as other surgical medical sites. Planned Parenthood knew it would cost a fortune for them to rise up to the bare minimum standards that

reputable medical providers routinely meet, that they chose to close most of the abortion sites in the state of Texas. That was easier than doing what the real medical industry meets to ensure minimum, basic care of patients. But that was far too much of a burden on the abortion giant, since they were so far out of compliance with those minimum standards.

The idea of waiting 24 hours doesn't seem too unreasonable. But any regulation is worth fighting for Planned Parenthood, because they have enough judges who side with them that they can usually win. That, in turn, causes them to have fewer rules and oversight.

Indiana

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled against a pro-life law in Louisiana last month. But shortly after that, they ruled in favor of a pro-life law in Indiana.

11 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

10 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

12 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

11 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

9 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

15 Children Died from Abortion Yesterday

Abortion Numbers Rise

The Associated Press reported on Iowa's abortion numbers from last year and pointed out that the numbers rose by roughly 8% to 3,566. This percentage was later corrected to 25%. The press blamed the change on Iowa's withdrawal of the federally-funded family planning program. There are plenty of things to say about this.

It's easy to blame an obvious change for the change in the trend. Even if the blame is correctly placed, it's still a bit early to cast the blame and to assume that it will continue long-term.

They used the 56% drop in abortion numbers from 2008 to 2018 to contrast this shift in numbers. We track the numbers year-by-year, and there are years when the numbers drop by double-digit percentages statewide. The numbers dropped by double-digit percentages in 2009, 2011, 2017, and 2018. With two years in a row of a 12.5% drop per year average, an 8% (but not 25%) increase can be normal variation or something akin to the way the stock market

corrects after overshooting in an upward or downward direction.

If numbers remain steady or continue to climb for a second or third year in a row, that would support their claims more. However, the pandemic situation could skew this year's numbers with extraordinary circumstances.

Access to contraception didn't change that much from the policy change, since it just excluded abortion providers from the program. Women could go to other doctors and still qualify.

A momentary spike in numbers can easily arise when things change. If someone isn't ready for a change in access, they might maintain their normal behaviors, but lack the contraception they depended on in order to prevent pregnancy. Therefore, unplanned pregnancies that are likely to end in abortions would make sense...in year one. This could explain some of the real 25% increase.

But we've seen enough statistics to show that most women who seek abortions were on

contraceptives at the time they became pregnant. The U.S. Supreme Court and top religious leaders made it clear, one after abortion was legalized in the U.S. and the other beforehand, that contraception leads to the claimed "need" for abortion. Individual cases of pregnancy from a single act might decrease, but that sense of safety leads to more acts, and with that and the mindset that one failed to avoid pregnancy...it leads to abortion being used as a backup plan.

We like to see when the number of abortions drop, but we try not to get too excited until we see numbers drop in an expected trend. A single year's worth of statistics doesn't provide much useful information. If nothing else, if women in the month before the year began postponed abortions, thus causing a bigger drop the prior year, those numbers would get added to this other year.

We would like to see another year or two of statistics.


 The logo consists of the words "SPEAK LIFE" in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Each letter is contained within a black rectangular box, and the boxes are arranged in a grid.


To Speak or Not to Speak

By: Jean Biermann

We are living in a very noisy time, yet few are speaking. Where is all the noise coming from? And what would happen to the noise if a few thoughtful ones would speak? ...and be heard.

Former intelligence analyst Stella Morabito wrote, "As a nation, we need to talk openly and clearly about the reality of coercive thought reform. *We must understand how easily our minds can be molested when isolated from real conversation and debate.* The only people who profit from such conditions are powerful elites in their never-ending quest to control the lives of others."

I recently saw a video image of a stick person, not made with a skinny line, but rather as if it

was drawn with the tip of one's index finger: two wide and rounded vertical lines made up the torso and legs, resting upon them was another line in the shape of an upside-down "U" making up the arms and shoulders, and finally dotted on top with a round head. Then the video zoomed out to show that this stick person, each arm, leg, torso, and head, was actually comprised of hundreds of the same little stick people of varying colors and textures. It's the perfect image of how we are all part of each other. We support each other and influence each other, but only when we live in communion.

In order to live in communion, we need to communicate. Share ideas. Apparently, it takes a good pandemic for me to realize how

important this is, and how easily it can be taken away.

Actually, pandemic or not, people seem to be less and less willing to discuss _____. (Fill in the blank with your own meaningful topic that you find difficult to discuss.) In the context of a pro-life newsletter, abortion and end-of-life issues are a few obvious possibilities. Despite the difficulty, it's still important to share your convictions. According to Saint Paul,

"I believed, therefore I spoke," we too believe and therefore speak...
2 Cor. 4: 13

With hot topics though, the trick is to speak but at the same time listen, listen to understand the other. When we feel

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Pro-Life Challenge



Prayers

Please pray for God to work in the lives people.

In particular:
 Jenifer (pro-lifer with health issues);
 Çantana (pro-lifer);
 St. Louis, MO PP;
 State of Iowa

VOLUNTEER



Help Us!

Use your skills to help pro-life efforts, and invite friends and family to attend our events. Invite them to help us out. Many hands make for light work!

Speak Up!

Speaking (continued)

understood, no matter the conversation, we are left with a feeling of contentment. So, I'd like to encourage us all to share our convictions with each other, and here are a few strategies, taken from Dr. David Cochran, Professor of Politics and Director of the Archbishop Kucera Center, Loras College, to help along our future conversations:

- Listen – being truly heard breaks down defenses – listen to understand not only what positions others hold but *why* they hold them
- Rephrase another person's position in the best possible terms
- Acknowledge the different deep moral intuitions others may have (liberty, loyalty, order, authority, purity, sanctity, etc.)
- Re-frame yes-no/either-or discussions as scaled/how-much discussions to avoid all-or-nothing positions in favor of allowing participants to modify their positions without giving them up entirely

Tough issues are important to discuss because we are all part of each other. When one of us hurts we are all hurting a little more, and when one of us makes a better choice we all thrive a little more. Let's help each other by speaking. If you have the *gift* of a deeply-held conviction, share it!

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Spread the Word!

Do you know other pro-life people who might like to subscribe to this newsletter?

- Tell them about it
- Forward a copy to them
- Print a copy to hand to friends

Do you have ideas you want discussed in future issues? Contact us with your suggestion. We may consider including your article if you prefer to write your own.

Did you spot some issues with this newsletter that really bug you? Then perhaps you'd like to help edit it. Contact us to see how you can help.

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Coalition for Life of Iowa

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