

Spirit of the Redeemer

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH, NASHVILLE, TENN.

February 2025

Still Marching for Life

As I write this newsletter article, I am preparing to fly to Washington D.C. tomorrow for the National March for Life. It's my first time. I've been to plenty of rallies and events for life and one rally against transgender child mutilation (which proved to be harrowing), but not the D.C. march, yet.

I'm actually not a big "marching" guy. Perhaps it is just not my thing. Or maybe in the era in which I grew up, I associated marches with rebellion against authority. However, it is an accepted appeal of truth to wayward government power or inaction, at least since the Civil Rights Movement, which was also a righteous cause.

But why are pro-lifers still marching? *Roe v. Wade* was overturned by the *Dobbs* decision in June of 2022. The answer is that the end of *Roe v. Wade* was not the end of abortion. In fact, there are claims that chemical abortions have increased, and a number of states have enacted laws with greater access to abortion since *Dobbs*. So while many children have been saved in some states, abortion remains legal in some form in much of the country. The abortion pill was pushed hard even in the lead up to *Dobbs*. And it continues to be an accessible way for girls and women to end their pregnancies and terminate the life of the child in their womb.

We don't even know how many abortions occur each year in this new era. According the National Right to Life organization: "Counting abortions became more difficult after *Dobbs*. Many clinics the CDC and Guttmacher Institute relied upon for numbers closed, moved, or began sending clients out of state. Abortion pills were being promoted, sold online and shipped to woman's homes, often illegally" (<https://nrlc.org/uploads/factsheets/AbortionStatsFS.pdf>).

We march, then. We march because abortion is abortion whether by pill or scalpel or other instrument, and it is against the Fifth Commandment given by God. Abortion also harms the woman. The abortion pill is not safe! Contrary to the lies of the opposition, it is not safe. According to Charlotte Lozier Institute, "Chemical abortion has a complication rate four times that of surgical abortion, and as many as one in five women will suffer a complication" (<https://lozierinstitute.org/fact-sheet-risks-and-complications-of-chemical-abortion/>). It is horror in a package for the unsuspecting woman to experience. (Watch the movie *Unplanned* or read the book.) Abortion is not physically safe for the woman, nor is emotionally or spiritually safe for her!

As we entered Life Week this year, there was a news report that the former president of Planned Parenthood, Cecile Richards, died of brain cancer. How terribly tragic! To go to one's death proud of sanitized slogans of murder and to have to stand before the Lord God, the Creator and Redeemer, who has promised, "Vengeance is mine"! (Heb. 10:30). Truly, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10:31). May there be no more who are deceived in such a way! No more!

I think it is also important to march in Washington D.C. because there is a federal role in protecting life, and *Dobbs*, while helpful in replacing *Roe*, doesn't make sense with the simple realization that the murder of children is now regulated at the state level. Don't we live in a nation that has a founding document proclaiming, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness"? Aren't the tiniest of us in this nation due their Constitutional rights?

One reason that I am marching this year (in January, in the cold!) is because it is a reminder to me that all things are possible with God. To tell you the truth, I was not a believer that *Roe* would be overturned in my life. So was the Goliath, the prowess of the opponents and their resolve, built up in my mind. It is true that abortion is akin to a sacrament with those rabidly devoted to their Molech-inspired, secular religion. But our God is greater. And in the end, nothing unholy will be left standing. Only the kingdom of Christ and those made holy in Him will endure in the righteousness of God. So it is good to continue the observance of the *Roe* decision, in January, while also celebrating Life Month in June for the *Dobbs* ruling. It is important to confess the sins of not believing all things are possible.

Abortion is the civil rights issue of our time. More than that, it is the image-of-God issue of our time. And one day, when the unthinkable is universally called unthinkable, like slavery, or one day, even if the evil of abortion persists, one day, your grandchildren or great-grandchildren or a person in the old folks' home in the room next to you will ask, "Where were you in the struggle?" And you will not have to say that you marched, but you will want to say that you stood. You stood for life in name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit! You will want to say that you repudiated all false thoughts and ungodly ways, received forgiveness in Christ, and stood for the good by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I would say that the core reason for why I am marching and why this year is that I just have the conviction to go. I guess it is as close to a pilgrimage as I have come, though there is no merit or worthiness associated with the act. Christ is my (and your) Savior. All glory to Him!

So I plan to march with those who still march. I march in repentance for my own egregious shortcomings on the sanctity of life, not to make up for them, but in thanksgiving that God has given me, chief of sinners, another chance to proclaim His truth. I march in the hope of Jesus Christ, the Savior for all who are captive to lies, the Savior for all women and men, young and old, the Savior who does not cast any away as useless or unwanted.

I will march with you in my hearts, dear brothers and sisters, cherishing the life we have together and the grace given to us as children precious to God.

I will march singing and praying in the name of Jesus, the only name given by which men are saved!

And I will continually march with you in spirit until the day when marching is no more and rest and life are fully enjoyed.

– *Pastor Young*

When a mother is considering an abortion

God of all grace, out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy You have given us life and commanded us not to hurt or harm our neighbor in his body. Teach us to care for this unborn child whom You have created in Your image. Grant Your grace to (Name of Mother) that, by Your Word and Spirit, she may live according to Your will and have the courage to nurture and cherish her child. Surround her with those who will rejoice in this child, and provide for her needs of body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

<https://lutheransforlife.org/for-life-prayers/>

For the comfort of one who has undergone an abortion

Gracious Father in heaven, look with mercy on your daughter (name), who suffers the shame of abortion. For the sake of Christ Jesus, our Savior, forgive her all her sins, and remove all feelings of guilt and despair. Protect her from the accusing voices of others and the accusations from within. By Your Spirit increase her faith that she may entrust herself and her child into Your fatherly hands; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

<https://lutheransforlife.org/for-life-prayers/>

In Peace and Joy I Now Depart

In peace and joy I now depart
 Since God so wills it.
 Serene and confident my heart;
 Stillness fills it.
 For the Lord has promised me
 That death is but a slumber.

LSB 938 st.1
 Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546;
 tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001, alt.
 Text: © 1979 Concordia Publishing House.

On Entering a Church

Lord, I love the habitation of Your
 house and the place where Your glory
 dwells. In the multitude of Your tender
 mercies prepare my heart that I may
 enter Your house to worship and
 confess Your holy name; through Jesus
 Christ, my God and Lord. Amen.

LSB p.289
 Inside front cover.
 (See also PS 26:16, PS 5:7, PS 51:1)



Ongoing Prayer Needs

*Please update Pastor and the church office
 on these needs.*

**Birthdays, Baptismal Birthdays, &
 Wedding Anniversaries
 Birthdays**

Baptismal Birthdays

February 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 The Purification of Mary and Presentation of Our Lord 9:30am Divine Service Door Offering Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Choir	3 6:30pm AA	4	5 9:45am Matins 10am Bible Study 5pm Confirmation	6	7 6:30pm LWML	8
9 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 9:30am Divine Service Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Choir	10 6:30pm AA	11	12 9:45am Matins 10am Bible Study 5pm Confirmation	13	14	15 8:30am Men's Breakfast
16 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 9:30am Divine Service Lutheran High School North Choir Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Luncheon with the choir Choir	17 6:30pm AA	18 6:30pm Council	19 9:45am Matins 10am Bible Study 5pm Confirmation	20	21	22
23 Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany 9:30am Divine Service LWML Mite Collection Sunday School & Adult Bible Study Choir	24 6:30pm AA	25	26 9:45am Matins 10am Bible Study 5pm Confirmation	27	28	TBD:



Proclaiming the Praises of Christ in Prague



Nov-Dec 2024



A Busy Season

We apologize for the amount of time that has passed since our last newsletter. As is the case for most Americans (if not the world), November through December was an extremely busy stretch of time. A lot has happened at church and away from church. So, here are the bright spots in that period.

Krakow Continues

On 2 November, it was Dale's turn to journey to Krakow, Poland, and lead the Divine Service there. That month, we celebrated the feast of All Saints. We are happy to bring a ministry well-grounded in the Scriptures that faithfully confesses what our church body has always confessed. And we have good news. In February, we will be confirming one more young man who has been studying the Small Catechism with Martin. Look for future pictures and story.



Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day

17 November is a national holiday. It marks the beginning of the Velvet Revolution. This revolution was a bloodless turnover of government away from the oppression of communism to the freedoms of democracy. It is always a day of celebration, but this year marked the 35th anniversary, so the crowds were markedly bigger. The tram in the picture is displaying the year (1989) and the location where the confrontation between students and police took place. Please pray for the Czechs that they would cele-

brate the freedom that is in Christ.

Thanksgiving Celebration

In years past, a small gathering of people from America have gathered for a Thanksgiving meal on the Saturday that follows. We have to do it on that day because Thursday is a work day here. It has always been a nice gathering, although small. This year Martin and Shirley opened their house to the entire congregation to come celebrate Thanksgiving. (Martin was an exchange student in Illinois back in high school, so he also likes to mark the day.) We had a nice gathering of people from America, the Czech Republic, and Indonesia. We had all of the American staples: turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, green bean casserole, and pumpkin pie. It was nice to break bread with our friends.

Serving at a Retirement Ceremony

Dale has a soft spot for the military, having grown up in the Air Force. It was, therefore, a great honor to be asked to lead the invocation at the retirement ceremony for Col. Patrick Fairfax, US Army, serving in Wiesbaden, Germany. Patrick and his wife, Amy, are dear friends of ours. They were members of the congregation Dale served in Jacksonville, Florida. Patrick was a key leader as elder and president. It was wonderful that we are all in Europe at the same time. Distance back to America would have prevented us from going. It also gave Dale a chance to give a witness for Christ to those who attended. We pray that God will provide Patrick and Amy with new opportunities to serve Him.



Good News: Full Remission!

It has been two years since Dale's stem cell transplant to treat his multiple myeloma. During this time, Dale has been seeing a Czech oncologist every three months. This has included blood work and a maintenance dose of chemotherapy. Each time we have visited, the doctor has said that he is still in remission. In December, Dale had a bone marrow biopsy taken to test for the presence of any cancer cells. We received wonderful news. He is in full remission. The doctor even used the word cured! This allows Dale to come off the medicine and to cut back his visits to once a year. We thank and praise God for seeing both of us through this challenging time. Going a whole year between visits is a little scary, but we are trusting God.



Fellowship Movie Night

In December, the congregation held a fellowship night. We gathered in Mathesius Hall to watch a Christmas movie. We enjoyed a pizza dinner while watching "Elf". This may not sound a lot like mission work, but there is a wonderful growth among our members as we share time together. It shows that the confession we make on Sunday is likewise the confession we make throughout the week. We thank God for these moments of growth.

Our Christmas Celebration

This year, our daughter, Gretchen, and her family were able to join us for the annual celebration of our Lord's birth. Our congregation was full to hear the Gospel of God's coming to our rescue. A special treat was Dale sharing the chancel with our oldest grandchild, Isaiah. Because of a last-minute delay in public transportation, the scheduled acolyte came too late. So, Isaiah was pressed into service with coaching from his grandfather. It was a happy time for both.



A Possible Move for the Congregation

Due to a bit of tension between the Slovaks (who are our landlords) and the English and Czech congregations, a move out of the church building of St. Michael might be necessary. There is too little space to discuss all of it here at this time. We simply ask for your prayers either that tensions would ease and we would be allowed to stay or God would lead us to a new location.



Our email addresses are
 Dale.Kaster@lcms.org
 Suzanne.Kaster@lcmsintl.org

Our address in Prague:
 Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster
 Bubenečská 365/41
 160 00 Praha 6
 Czech Republic

The church address in Prague:
 St. Michael's Lutheran Church
 V Jirchářích 14/152
 110 00 Praha 1
 Czech Republic

Home Service Spring of 2025

As we have reported, we will be home in the spring of 2025 in order to share our work here with supporters back home. We have already received several inquiries, and we are hoping for more. Please talk with your pastor(s) and your outreach committee and let them know we would be thrilled to put you or your church on our schedule.

We thank you for reading our newsletter. We ask for your prayers for all our work. And we pray that you, too, will be richly blessed as you hold out the Word of life to a world trapped in death.

Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster, missionaries to the Czech Republic

To support the LCMS through the work of the Kasteters, send a tax-deductible gift to:
 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod **OR** Mission Central
 P.O. Box 66861 40718 Hwy E16
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 Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Kaster – Czech Republic," in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at www.lcms.org/kaster.

Jesus Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light. (2 Timothy 1:10)



In him was life,
and the life was the light
of all humankind.

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has
not overcome it. (John 1:4-5)



Come out of the shadows and into the shine.
Rejoice like Lutherans and
embrace the sanctity of every human life!

of life situations like surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis confront us with uncomfortable realities. Serious and genuine threats emerge: pain and labors, poverty and obligations, abandonment and abuse, disgrace and sacrifice. We get pressed against our limitations, failures, and needs. The voice of the devil, the spirit of this age, and the weakness of our flesh tempt and pester us to use death as the solution to the difficulties.

Yet the darkness reaches deepest right before the dawn. And shadows only show up where the light arrives. The hour has come to wake from slumber because the daylight is at hand (Romans 13:11-12).

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light (Isaiah 9:2). Jesus Christ has conquered death and brought life—both immediate and immortal—to light (2 Timothy 2:10).

calls every human life special, precious, and priceless, no matter what age, appearance, or ability, from fertilization to forever.

He delivers blessings of truth and love, joy and hope, community and purpose, grace and faith even in humanity's shortcomings.

To live is Christ, and He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In Him is life, and this life is the light of all humankind (John 1:3).

His power perfects wherever we lack (2 Corinthians 12:9).

We get to receive each neighbor as gift and privilege, just like He embraces us, speaking courage, showing compassion, and sharing every good.

God bless our Gospel-motivated voice For Life, for it shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it!



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FOR LIFE**

Equipping Lutherans and their neighbors to be Gospel-motivated voices **For Life**
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Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church

800 Bellevue Road

Nashville, TN 37221

(615) 646-3150

www.redeemernashville.org

rlcnashville@outlook.com

