



Breath of Life

VOL 26 NO 2 • SUMMER 2009

The JOY of the unknown

A message from Pastor Mark Gartner • St. Luke, Watertown

It's summertime and that means it's time to go fishing. What draws people to fishing? It seems to me that the reason so many people like fishing is because of the unknown. Each time there's a bite, there's a mystery. Reeling in each fish is an adventure, a surprise each and every time. That's what makes fishing fun.

Where would the excitement be if each fish was the same, and you caught a fish on every cast? Where the adrenaline rush if every cast had the same result? What makes fishing exciting is the simple joy of the unknown.

Life seems to be quite the opposite. In life it seems that we want to know everything beforehand. We want to be able to look into the future. We like the security of "knowing." I don't think that this is always a good thing. Today's world has been emptied of so much of that simple joy of the unknown by modern technology. The harder we try to peek into the future, the more we rob ourselves of life's little excitements. The more we mess with what was formerly known only to God, the more ordinary and routine life becomes.

Yet, I have to admit there have been many times when I wished that I could've seen into the future, times when I would've liked to have seen what was around the next corner, over the next hill of life. Wouldn't it be nice if God gave

us a tiny glimpse of what our health, wealth or family situations will be like?

The Lord has kept much of the future hidden, and for good reason. Not to keep us wandering aimlessly through life, but to keep us trusting in him. Not to keep life full of unknown fears, but to keep life exciting and packed with adventure, always trusting that God is working things for our eternal good. Not to keep us in the dark, but to make his saving light ever more bright.

We don't have to know the future, our coming health or financial situations, or any other detail of what is going to happen in our lives. It is, however, very important that we trust in Jesus, who holds the future. As a believer, we rest securely and confidently in the certainty that whatever happens to us in the unknown future is filtered through Jesus' gracious love and sifted through his unending mercy.

Rejoice in the unknown! Appreciate the unknown! Find adventure and excitement in the unknown! Find security in knowing that your Lord knows what kind of fish is on your hook before you catch it. Even more, trust that Jesus holds your future in his loving and gracious hands. Live life to the fullest! Joyously uncover each adventure that Jesus has planned for you. Trust that God is in control of all things for your eternal good.



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And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8

Pray, Praise and Give Thanks



Thank you to Pastor Gartner for allowing us to use his summer newsletter meditation. May we always remember that God keeps the future hidden for our good. May we never falter in our trust that He does indeed mean all things in our life to work to our eternal good.

We continue to have much to give thanks for at the Alpha Center. We were blessed to have the southern Tri-Co. churches run a parallel ad in the Jefferson Daily Union in January, and supported the Center with inclusion in the ad and extra donations. Many thanks to the Watertown business Curves for Women (corner of N Water and Main), who hosted a baby bottle coin collection drive leading up to Mothers Day that raised over \$650 -- what generous women! Our faithful friends at Immanuel, Farmington also hosted a generous baby bottle drive—thank you! St. Luke church, in its inaugural “Power Church” VBS event, chose the Center as recipient of its weekly offerings. What a useful and generous array of items and cash have been offered out of love for the Savior! We are always blessed to have so many believers joining with us in hearts, hands and offerings.

IN MEMORY OF:

- Ron Beck from Jim & Shirley Degner
- Howard & Lucille Buelow from Jim & Bev Buelow
- Founding member Gertrude Eppler from St. John Ixonia Ladies Aid, for her service and commitment to our Lord
- Viola Tietz from Jim & Shirley Degner

IN HONOR OF:

- Gloria Huebner's birthday from Mark & Julie Huebner
- Kim's volunteering at the Center from Elaine Knief

Alpha Center Wish List

- gently used cribs, bassinets, playards
- disposable wipes
- new/very gently used toddler socks
- children's Bibles/devotionals (like new)
- new sippy cups
- People's Bible: Psalms, Isaiah



Donations of any new or clean, gently used baby clothing or maternity clothing or other baby items and equipment are always welcome and can be dropped off at the center during our office hours. Any questions, contact Nancy Schmitz at 920-253-8984.

HUG YOUR MOTHER

In our spring newsletter, we offered the opportunity to honor mother figures in your life with a gift to the Alpha Center. The month of May might seem a long time ago, but just as a mother's love is constant every day, so too is the love we have for our mothers. Therefore, the postings here are never out of season! Thank you, participants, for your support of Alpha, but even more, thank you Christian mothers, mentioned here and everywhere, for your gentle yet unyielding commitment to raising us up in the way we should go!



- In Honor of all the mothers at St. John's in Ixonia
from St. John's Ladies' Aid
- In Honor of Susan & Lori Luetzow, the mothers of our dear grandchildren
from Harry & Frieda Luetzow
- In Memory of mom Elizabeth Lenius
from Judy Tremaine
- In Honor of Esther Bock
In Memory of Corella Hahn
from Jerry & Anita Hahn family
- In Honor Gram Elaine Knief
from Moe, Ki, Ty and Izzy Winters

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News on life issues...know it, use it, share it!

Urgent Action Needed

Two federal "health care reform" bills have been unveiled, one in the Senate and one in the House. The full House is expected to vote on its version on or about July 29 and Senate action could occur shortly after that.

These "health care reform" bills contain the most sweeping abortion provisions since Roe v Wade. If these "health care reform" bills pass in their current form, the results will be catastrophic:

- *countless more lives lost through abortion*
- *federally mandated insurance coverage of abortion on demand with massive federal subsidies*
- *the mandated creation of many new abortion clinics*
- *the nullification of some state limitations on abortion*
- *taxpayer funding of abortions*

Every American who believes in the sanctity of human life and who objects to Obama's plan to "mainstream" abortion in our nation needs to contact their House member and their two U.S. Senators TODAY!

TIME IS SHORT. IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED:

E-mail and call Wisconsin's two U.S. Senators, Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold and your own representative in the U.S. House of Representatives. Urge them to oppose any federal "health care reform" legislation that does not explicitly exclude abortion.

Go to <<http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/w3asp/waml/waml.aspx>> to find out who your own representative in the U.S. House of Representatives is and to obtain contact information. You will enter your address. The first legislators you will see are your state legislators; do not contact them regarding this issue. Scroll down to find information for your U.S. House member. You will be taken to your own House member's website. Each House member's website homepage is set up slightly differently but all of them have a "Contact" button which you should click on to send them an e-mail. Remember to also call your U.S. House Representative.

E-mail Senator Kohl at <<http://kohl.senate.gov/contact.cfm>> and Senator Feingold at <http://feingold.senate.gov/contact_opinion.html>. In addition, please call the offices of Senators Kohl and Feingold. The offices of any U.S. Senator can be reached through 202-224-3121.

Alternative phone numbers for Senator Herb Kohl if the number above is busy: You can call any one of these numbers and leave a message for Senator Kohl: 920-738-1640 or 715-832-8424 or 608-796-0045 or 414-297-4451.

Alternative phone numbers for messages Senator Feingold: 920-465-7508 or 608-782-5585 or 414-276-7282 or 715-848-5660.

7/20/09 e-mail from Wisconsin Right to Life

CLR is on Facebook

Change is indeed coming, but it's nice there are some good changes among some of the not-so-good. If



you're a part of the changing Facebook generation, you'll be interested to note that our National Affiliate is now on Facebook. Search using "Christian Life Resources" or go to www.facebook.com/pages/Christian-Life-Resources/104233719611?ref=mf and become a fan!

Here's a good news headline from CLR (find it on Facebook too): Wisconsin Once Again Leads Nation in Abortion Decline! - Abortions are down again in 2008, the fifth straight year of decline! Although the percent drop was less than 1% in 2008, any drop is significant following the 14% decrease in 2007.

Or how about this: ALERT! The National Institutes of Health (NIH) today issued its government standards on the use of embryonic stem cells that qualify for taxpayer-funded research, after President Obama issued an executive order to lift restrictions on the field last spring. The final rules – which go into effect July 7 – allow federal dollars for research using stem cells derived from leftover embryos created at fertility clinics.

"Back to Basics" CLR conference planned for November 7, 2009



Save the date: "Back to Basics" is the theme for the 2009 Conference conducted by Christian Life Resources on Saturday, November 7. The conference is designed for people wanting to learn the basics of life issues and how they can become involved.

Affiliates of CLR will find the conference a valuable opportunity to network and learn more about facing the challenges of operating a life center or pregnancy counseling center.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn and grow as we present a day of informative workshops and plenary session as we guide you to better understand life and family issues from a God-pleasing perspective.

WHEN: Saturday, November 7

WHERE: St. Paul Luth. Church, Slinger, WI

Join CLR for a day of inspiration. A special teen tract is also planned for all pro-life youth. Registration begins soon (only \$15 per person, lunch included).

from www.christianliferesources.com/?8220



Inside Alpha

WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE CENTER, HOW IT AFFECTS YOU

We all scream for Ice Cream!

Kimara Winters, Center Director

The recession, hurting wallets, broken families, uncertainty all around. We're seeing it at the Center; people who have lost jobs or driven wedges in relationships come into the Center, trying to find something they can rely on. On our own different but parallel concern, volunteers wondered, "what would the Social of 2009 bring? Should we approach it differently this year?" For answers we can turn to Psalm 112:7 where we're reassured, "He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD." What a blessing that the Center exists to be able to share that reassurance with visitors!

And sure enough: another wonderful social Sunday, filled with people and pies, sandwiches and socializing, smiles and sundaes. For those of you who supported us with lunch at St. Mark that day, THANKS! For everyone, remember the second Sunday in July is Ice Cream Sunday!



Steve Georgson and son serve up the Mullen's ice cream



Smiling server Nancy Schmitz conquers an army of turkey and cow to supply our homemade sandwiches. Yum-mee, Nance.



Dozens of homemade pies and tortes donated by ladies' groups and individuals make up the selection for diners. Will it be raspberry? Key lime? Schaum torte? The list goes on and on, and everything can get a big scoop of...well, you know.



Lots of time to catch up with friends too seldom seen.



Information about the Center, issues and wearables such as "Little Feet" are available at the Social. This year also saw a collection of items for our Home for Mothers in Denver. Thanks to everyone who brought a wish list item or fed the box!

Alpha Life Resource Center EVENTS

Education/Action: What does "Change" mean for us proliferers?



Tuesday, August 18, 2009

St. Mark's Parish Center • 615 Jones St. • Watertown
6:30 PM

Have you been wondering what's down the line for pro-life issues in Madison and Washington DC? Alpha Life Resource Center hosts an evening of education and awareness as legislative staffers including Jolene Churchill, assistant to state Rep. Mark Gundrum and Sen. Glenn Grothman, share the current state of the pro-life state here in Wisconsin and beyond. Whether it be info on the Family Planning Waiver (Teen Birth Control Program) or sex ed in our school district, the importance of effective community organizing, the legislative process and the importance of voting, the UW 's plan for late-term abortions and how we have been able to halt the plan thus far, or the hype behind Gardasil (the HPV vaccine), there is much to be learned. Please join us for a presentation, time for questions, and refreshments. Spend a short evening to see how you might be useful in this new world of "change!" No RSVP required, but call the Center at 261-9207 with any questions.

Volunteer: Am I ready to work with the Alpha Center ministry?

Monday, August 17 or Wednesday August 19 or
Saturday, August 29, 2009

Alpha Life Resource Center • 313 E. Main St. • Watertown

7 PM weeknights or 9 AM Saturday

Three sessions for veteran or new receptionists, hotliners and counselors: just choose the one day that's most convenient for you. If you have volunteered for Alpha, this is what we like to call a "refresher." If you've never volunteered, these sessions are the perfect opportunity for you to hear about what it takes and talk to other volunteers. We're never high pressure at the Center; we always want the Spirit to be driving your willingness. These approximately two-hour sessions will have us spending some time in the Word, where our motivation and our ultimate Resource is found. We'll review places and procedures, offer tips and experiences to grow from. We'll have time for questions and ideas. Is this the right time for you? Come ask others how they fit it in to their schedules and what it means to them to work with Alpha. Perhaps you'll even find a non-traditional niche to fill to further the work. You don't need to bring anything to the session...just an open heart. RSVP requested: please call the Center at 261-9207 with any questions or to reserve your spot. We want to be ready for you!



Pro-life legislative update • Tues, August 18 • 6:30p
Join us for an evening with Madison legislative staffers as they address concerns at the Capitol that are affecting pro-life efforts here in the state and beyond. Informational presentation, Q&A and light refreshments. What can you do? Come find out!

Volunteer Training • August 17, 19 OR 29 (times pg. 5)

Have you been thinking about being a part of the vital ministry that is Alpha Life Resource Center? We are awaiting meeting new and old volunteers to serve as hotliners (your own cell phone makes this a portable opportunity) receptionists and counselors. No pressure opportunity to find out about how you can touch lives!

Banquet & Auction • Saturday, October 17 • 4:30p

This year we move to the Luther Prep gymnasium for another night of wonderful food, entertainment and shopping. Quickly becoming a fun tradition!

