

# Pastor Kory's Page

Faith Lutheran Church – January 23-24, 2015

## “God’s Gift of Life”

*“I believe that God has made me and all creatures ...”* With these words from Luther’s Small Catechism, we’re reminded that our lives are wondrous gifts and creations of God. And these words, also from the Small Catechism, remind us that our *neighbor* is also God’s wondrous creation: *“We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.”*

“And who is my neighbor?” a young man asked Jesus (Luke 10:29). Jesus went on to tell a story about a Samaritan man who recognized that his neighbor was *whomever* God placed in his path for him to love and serve. Recurrently, Scripture teaches us, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:29). God’s Word intentionally avoids putting any restrictions on who your “neighbor” or my “neighbor” might be. This means that your neighbor includes those dearly loved and wondrous creations of God in our own homes and families. Your neighbor includes precious lives across the hall or across the street. Your neighbor is both the friend you’ve known all your life and the stranger you’ll meet today. Your neighbor sits next to you in the classroom and your neighbor lives on the other side of the world. Your neighbor may be very young, even unborn, or your neighbor may be very old and helpless.

January is a special month for remembering our neighbors, especially as Fri, Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> marked the 43<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Supreme Court’s Roe vs. Wade decision to legalize abortion. Millions of our neighbors have lost their lives due to that landmark ruling. Such evil can seem overwhelming and discouraging, yet Paul reminds us, *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”* (Rom. 12:21).

There *is* a lot of good being done to affirm and cherish God’s gift of life. What can you do? Pray that God would use you to value the lives of voiceless or defenseless neighbors. Pray that God would change the hearts of those who see other lives as inconveniences or burdens or commodities. Support the life-affirming work and avail yourself of the resources produced by Lutherans For Life ([lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)). Volunteer or donate supplies in support of Sioux Falls’ Alpha Center ([alphacenter.org](http://alphacenter.org)). Prayerfully consider the possibility of adopting children or providing foster care or how you might support those who do so (see the information from Bethany Christian Services, [Bethany.org](http://Bethany.org)).

Because the Lord values human life, so do we. How might the Lord use you to put that truth into action for your neighbor’s sake?

Peace in Christ,

*Pastor Kory Janneke*