Overturing Roe

If Roe were overturned tomorrow, will we have won? Should Life Matters Worldwide close shop? Will our mission have been accomplished?

Our mission is to fully articulate the biblical pro-life message, in word and deed. A political victory concerning abortion is one way of putting pro-life thought into action, but it’s not everything that’s needed. Elderly, disabled, and terminally ill people will still be pushed to hasten their deaths through euthanasia and assisted suicide. Abortion will still be a problem in other parts of the world.

But what of the bills to ban virtually all abortions that are making their way to our Supreme Court? Is our job nearly done?

If abortions were suddenly illegal, women would still need help dealing with the realities of pregnancy, as well as guilt and remorse over past abortions.

I recently heard the story of a post-abortive woman who wanted her pastor to announce from the pulpit that she was willing to pray with and counsel other post-abortive women. At first, he put her off. “I would know if there are any women who have had abortions in my congregation.” But after weeks of her pleading, the pastor finally gave in.

Twelve women approached her for prayer and counseling after that first announcement. Thankfully, the pastor was humble enough to admit he’d been wrong. “I’m so sorry, please forgive me. Whatever you need, we’ll move forward.”

If you have had an abortion, I’m deeply sorry that you were in a situation where you felt that was your only option, and that you didn’t have the support, love, and encouragement to make a different choice. Your life matters to me! We’d love to walk down that road of healing with you. The Father doesn’t want you to bear this burden alone.

If you or someone you know are facing an unplanned pregnancy and considering abortion, let us come alongside you in this difficult time. We want to help you find the support you need for making a life-affirming decision. Help is available.

I want Life Matters to lead the way in calling all pro-life people to radically change the culture by welcoming babies into the world, no matter the circumstances of their conception, and to welcome their moms and dads into their homes and churches.

If Roe is overturned, unplanned or crisis pregnancies will not go away. What are we going to do to help?

Of course, there’s really no such thing as a crisis pregnancy because all pregnancies are created by God. But they do test our faith and resolve. Do we really believe all human life is precious? What will we do about it?

—Adapted from an interview on Mission Network News

Strengthening pregnancy care centers

When Life Matters Worldwide began back in 1984, there were relatively few pregnancy care centers (PCCs) in existence, but we knew it wasn’t enough to simply speak out against abortion. Our aim was to open a center in Grand Rapids that would serve as a model for other cities.

The Lord enabled us to do that, and today the pro-life movement supports approximately 2500 PCCs across the U.S. Life Matter’s work is focused less on starting new centers and more on strengthening existing ones.

One way we do that is through The Summit, an annual conference in May for PCC directors, staff, volunteers, and board members. We aim to provide additional training, networking opportunities, and spiritual refreshment. Centers say the spiritual component is vital and something the Lord enables us to do well.

Women from Another Way Pregnancy Center in Farmington Hills, Michigan, enjoyed attending The Summit together

MISSION: Life Matters Worldwide helps the Body of Christ articulate the biblical pro-life message in word and deed.
VISION: To see local churches all over the world engaged in compassionate sanctity of human life ministry as they fulfill the Great Commission.
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When The Summit is over, we provide audio recordings of the sessions for international PCCs and others who were unable to attend. In this way, the impact of the 2-day conference lives on.

Another way we build up PCCs is through At the Center magazine. The Lord allowed us to take over this online publication in 2015, which includes an impressive archive of 500+ articles on topics related to PCC ministry. We publish new articles twice a year and share them free-of-charge with hundreds of centers.

At our March banquet, representatives from two Michigan PCCs told how the consultation we provided strengthened them to continue ministering in their communities. Both were struggling, one on the brink of closing. Life Matters joined them around the boardroom table for some hard discussions, and advised them on best practices. Through changes in leadership and renewed commitment, we’re glad to report that both centers are on better footing.

Simplifying care ministry for busy churches

The same principle that guided Life Matters to establish PCCs also led to the development of LIFT, a ministry to people at the end of life. We don’t want to oppose assisted suicide and euthanasia without also providing caring alternatives.

Feedback from churches has prompted changes that make implementation of LIFT easier. Some users were apprehensive about medical-related aspects of care. As we train going forward, our emphasis is more on the importance of spending time with people, and on helping them with non-medical tasks that nearly anyone in a congregation can do.

We also created a LIFT Starter Kit, which we’d love to place into the hands of every church. May we send you one? Call our office or email lifemattersww.org.

In April, Eric Verstraete and Kevin Manning conducted somewhat of a refresher course for First Baptist Church of Lowell, Michigan. They took about 12 veterans and newcomers from the introduction of LIFT to its implementation in one morning. We can do the same for your church.

Meanwhile, Debbie Sutton of Marcel Fund Ministries in Ukraine asked if they could create a Russian translation of the LIFT manual. “It is really well done and quite a great resource…. some of these sections would be extremely helpful for our team of workers.” We said yes, and now the translation is nearly complete! The Marcel Fund’s 40 volunteers serve 2,000 elderly people each week—providing prayer, Bible reading, food, medicine, and fellowship.

Special events

Life Matters partnered with area business leaders to offer free showings of the Unplanned movie on April 13. Four theaters at Celebration Cinema were rented out for the entire day. As a result, over 2,000 people were able to view this powerful pro-life film. If you haven’t seen it yet, Unplanned is now available for purchase at seeunplanned.com.

We helped spread the word about the movie and were on hand to answer questions and pray with anyone who was emotionally or spiritually moved by the presentation. We also created a resource page on our website (Need Help? > Resources) for people who needed help or wanted become involved in pro-life ministry after viewing the film.

We always have a great time at the Classic at Pilgrim’s Run, and this year we tried something new. Representatives from area pregnancy care centers were on the course to meet golfers and make a closer connection between the event, the great work PCCs are doing, and how Life Matters strengthens them.

Funds raised at the August 12 event enable Life Matters to develop and sustain PCCs and other pro-life ministries here and around the world.

For our 2nd Lift Life Disc Golf Tournament on August 24, we created a relaxed yet competitive event that both experienced players and novices could enjoy. We also stirred up conversations with young people about why life matters and what Life Matters Worldwide is doing.

Financial matters

As a result of our annual audit and 990 prepared by CPA James Quist, we can give you this overview of Life Matters Worldwide’s fiscal year that ended December 31, 2018:

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<th>Category</th>
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You may download our latest 990 from the website, by going to lifemattersww.org, clicking the ‘Donate’ button, and selecting the link beneath ‘Recent reports’.