

Leaders 4Life – July 2021

A newsletter from Y4Life

Meet Our TWO Y4Life Interns!

Y4Life is excited to announce that we've hired TWO interns this summer! Thanks to generous donations and grant monies, **Y4Life** is investing in the next generation of Leaders 4 Life this summer and moving forward with plans for serving more youth in the future. We hope you rejoice with us over this wonderful blessing!

Meet Bonnie Pool and Katie Reid, our 2021 Y4Life interns:

Bonnie is finishing up her junior year in the nursing program at Concordia University Wisconsin: "I grew up in St. Louis with five rough-and-tumble siblings, whom I love dearly. This past January, I married my husband Eric, and we moved into our first apartment in Cedarburg, Wisconsin! After graduation, I plan to work as a labor and delivery nurse and possibly attend seminary to become a deaconess. My 'dream job,' though, has always been to work for a pro-life organization. I joined CUW's Students for Life group right away as a freshman and have been one of the group's leaders for the past two years. Leading that group has deepened my passion for life issues and strengthened my desire to work in life ministry, which is why I am beyond thrilled to be one of **Y4Life**'s summer interns! I cannot wait to work alongside so many Gospel-motivated voices For Life to testify to the God-given value of every person!"



Katie is from Indianapolis, Indiana. She is currently finishing up her freshman year at Hillsdale College, where she is a member of Hillsdale College for Life and the Scott Klusendorf Fellowship, a program run through Protect Life Michigan. Katie has had a passion for pro-life work since her freshman year at Lutheran High School of Indianapolis, where she was a founding member of Saints 4 Life in her senior year. She is very excited for this chance to work with Lutherans For Life and learn how to best spread the love of Christ and share about the sanctity of human life with a gospel-motivated focus.



Can you tell us a little about your family and where you grew up?

Bonnie: I got married in January, so right now I am 50% of our family of two! My husband Eric graduated from CUW this past December and works as a software engineer for a competitive intelligence company. We're living in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, while I finish up school. I grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, with five siblings, three of whom are grown, and one of whom is getting married this summer! My dad works at the seminary in St. Louis, and my mom is loving getting to homeschool my two younger sisters.

Katie: I'm the youngest in my family with two older brothers. My family moved several times growing up, so I consider my home to be wherever my family is. We have been in Indianapolis since I was 12, which is where most of my family is currently working, but I'm currently attending Hillsdale College in southern Michigan.

What degree are you working toward in college?

Bonnie: I am a senior at CUW working towards my Bachelor of Science in Nursing, with a view towards Labor and Delivery/Obstetrics.

Katie: I am a sophomore at Hillsdale College working towards a BA in English with a Computer Science minor.



What led you to want to be an intern for Y4Life?

Bonnie: When I saw that **Y4Life** was hiring an intern, I immediately combed through all of the requirements and paperwork to see if it would be a good fit. Since middle school, I have wanted to work for a pro-life non-profit, so this seemed like the perfect opportunity to see what it's really like! I also knew Michelle [Bauman] would be an amazing person to work under after getting to know her through leading the life team on Concordia Wisconsin's campus.

Katie: My pro-life journey began when Michelle and the **Y4Life** team helped my high school start a pro-life club with a gospel-motivated focus. While this helped me to understand the sanctity of life from a Christian perspective, my involvement in the pro-life clubs at Hillsdale College allowed me to further understand my values, specifically my view on abortion, from the logical and scientific perspectives. I developed passion for this movement that I'm hoping to pursue in my future career. I was excited to see this opportunity to work with **Y4Life** which would not only give me a glimpse of what a career as a gospel-motivated voice for Life would look like, but also the remote nature of the job allows me to live at home with my family for the summer.

What areas of life ministry are you most passionate about?

Bonnie: I am most passionate about the issue of abortion, because it is most prevalent for mothers in my age group. I know that some of the people I meet on campus and have class with may have some personal experience with unplanned pregnancy or will in the future, so I think it's really important that I be a strong advocate for the unborn in my setting. My passion for end-of-life issues has also increased in the last few years. A couple summers ago, I worked as a CNA at a nursing home and grew to truly love my residents there. That experience both made me realize how valuable and precious people are in their older age and opened my eyes to how badly they need advocates for fair treatment.

Katie: I would say that I am most passionate about the abortion issue, as most of my experiences in college with both Hillsdale College for Life and Protect Life Michigan have been centered on this issue. While I have a deeper knowledge about the arguments surrounding this issue and the tactics for how to discuss them, I am also very passionate about the issues of sex-trafficking, mental health, and the understanding of marriage throughout the United States. I'm hoping my work with **Y4Life** will open my eyes to the many other threats to life and how to best advocate against them.

Have you always had a passion to uphold life, or was there a specific instance that led you to be a Gospel-motivated voice For Life?

Bonnie: I was raised pro-life but didn't participate in much activism aside from the annual life-chain until college. The older I got and the more I considered the implications of my faith on the value of life, the more horrified I was by abortion. I remember watching some of the undercover videos from The Center for Medical Progress as a sophomore in high school and feeling like there really could not be more important work than fighting for the rights of these unborn babies. That was one time where I consciously thought, "This cause is something worth devoting a piece of my life to," and over time that conviction has just grown.

Katie: This might not be the most conventional answer, but it was the dystopian novel *Unwind* by Neal Schusterman that first introduced me to the horrors of abortion and how this connects to the overall sanctity of life. It's a thought-provoking novel about a potential future after a second civil war has erupted in the United States over the issues of abortion and the death penalty. The resolution of this conflict is that if a child between the ages of 13-18 is deemed unfit to contribute to society, their body is "unwound," and the parts are used for medical purposes. At times gruesome, it's brilliant in its discussion of what makes a person's life valuable and how the misunderstanding of this discussion can have grave consequences. I would highly recommend it to anyone who may not have much experience in life issues or really anyone who enjoys a good story.

Not everyone agrees that human life is sacred. How do you handle opposition to this truth when you encounter it, especially among your peers?

Bonnie: I try to be as gentle as I can while remaining firm in what I believe. I think asking questions



is a good way to strike this balance. The other person cannot very well accuse me of being close-minded and hateful if I am calmly and kindly asking them to tell me why they believe what they do. If they feel heard, they are less likely to lash back quickly at me when I start to explain what I think. I also think these conversations happen best when you already have a relationship with the person with whom you're speaking. I wouldn't bring up life issues in my first conversation with someone if I know I have the chance to build a relationship with them over time.

Katie: A lot of times these extremely different views result from an informational echo chamber, so the other side simply hasn't fully heard our side or doesn't have a great understanding of it. One of the first things I try to get across in a discussion is that I am willing to hear their point of view and even have my mind changed if they're willing to do the same. The best way to counter the echo chambers of our age is open and honest discussion, and of course the compassion to walk alongside someone in a journey that could lead to faith.

Okay, now it's time for some favorites. What is your favorite ...

Bible verse?

B: Job 19:26

K: Romans 12:2

Hobby?

B: Anything active, and baking. They balance each other out.

K: Reading, playing my flute, and hiking (or any activity that gives me time to think).

Food?

B: Any rich, chocolatey dessert

K: Potatoes in any form.

Podcast?

B: I am not really a big podcast person! I have tried to get into true crime podcasts before because it seems like a thing that every girl my age enjoys, but it's not for me. Issues, Etc. is what I put on for long car trips sometimes.

K: My friend recently introduced me to the Magnus Archives. I'm not usually one for horror but this one is really addictive.

Influencer?

B: I also don't follow a lot of influencers! But during COVID, I discovered this fitness account called Blogilates, and I think she's the absolute coolest. She has a ton of great workout videos and talks about what she bought at the grocery store that week through the whole video to distract you from the pain.

K: Sadly, I've fallen victim to the Tiktok trap, so I enjoy anyone who can keep my attention. I watch mostly comedy and book recommendation videos (too many book recommendations and not enough time!).

Music?

B: I like a huge variety! Favorite artists are Vampire Weekend, Sufjan Stevens, and Novo Amor.

K: I also listen to a wide variety, but recently I've been listening to a lot of modern rock like Hozier or Arctic Monkeys.

Show on Netflix?

B: Great British Baking Show! It is the most wholesome content.

K: I recently watched Avatar: The Last Airbender for the first time, and I'm obsessed!

God has certainly blessed Y4Life with the gift of these two interns, and I'm looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish this summer. Be on the lookout for more news from both of them soon!



Lessons from a Bird's Nest

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

There's a bird sitting in my herb tower, a robin to be exact. As I write this article, I can see her nestled down and half-hidden between the parsley and dill I planted early last week. Though I admit I'm taken in by the intimacy she's allowed me through her proximity, as a gardener, I am not amused.

It all began four days ago when I found the beginning of a nest being built in my planter. I quickly pulled the dead grass out of the divot she'd hollowed and refilled it with dirt.

"Nope," I said aloud, "you can't nest here." But when I came back a few hours later, I knew she had returned. More grass and a feather had been left behind.

A battle of the wills ensued. For two days we fought over the space—she'd begin building and I'd excavate, pulling out scraps of half-finished nests. On the morning of the third day, her work was more complete, and my concern grew. Her persistence had become alarming.

Deciding to up the ante and end the argument, I untangled my herbs from her weaving and buried a plastic cup upside down on her preferred site. "Find another spot," I told her. "This isn't a safe place."

The cup seemed to work. All morning I caught her flying from fence to planter with dry grass in her beak trying to figure out what to do next. When no new nest was begun by the end of the day, I went to bed certain I had won.

But the next morning, it was apparent she hadn't listened. A new divot beside the cup showcased a single bright blue egg.

There are certainly many applications for this story; I could talk about how nature always wins or how silly and unobservant birds, and humans, can be. I could also talk about the creative order, the authority we humans have over nature. After all, I could have removed that egg, refilled the hole, and walked away justified. The planter is mine. The herbs would benefit my family. A bird and her baby are not of greater import than human beings.



On the other hand, I could also argue that the order established at creation not only gives humans dominion over nature, but it also makes them husbands of the land. And good husbandry means protecting resources, nurturing growth, and managing nature in a beneficial way. Does purposely destroying a robin's egg depict husbandry at its finest? Probably not.

Whether or not to remove the egg is certainly a topic up for debate, and we all might end up with different but equally valid conclusions based on our experiences and Christian conscience. What isn't up for debate, though, is the reality that two lives exist in my planter now, and even though I have the right to do so, I'm loath to end one of them.

This internal debate, this recognition that new life exists and that I have the opportunity, perhaps even the obligation, to protect it, has niggled at the back of my thoughts for the last two days. *It's a bird after all, not a human baby*, I remind myself.

But it's still a life. And we know that all life is good; all life is a gift. God affirms again and again that He loves life, even the birds He created. And if birds are valuable to Him, then they should also be valuable to us. Yet even as He points out that He cares for the birds, God proves He loves humans much more. Matthew 6:26 states, **"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"** No, Jesus didn't come to die for the birds; He came to die for you and me. God's creative work and Christ's redemptive work give human life great value, and that is a message we are called to share in every way possible.

We can even use robins nesting in herb towers to do it.

Though it's true, most high school and college students have outgrown tree climbing and nest-peeping, youth still have an innate and intrinsic awe of new life. Don't believe me? Hand a puppy to a high schooler and watch him grin; place a kitten in the palms of a college student and watch the two of them cuddle.

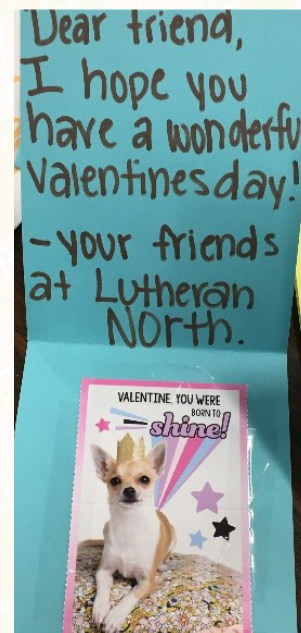
In fact, reflecting on the joy of new life with youth can create a path for important conversations about human life, conversations that include our natural propensities for protecting and providing for the unborn or newly born. Noting the birth and development of animals when children are young can help teens later verbalize and recognize the continuum of growth and developmental stages that occur both inside the womb and after birth. Even the appearance of a robin's egg can open the door for a conversation about when human life begins and how it should be preserved. The more we speak the truths of life with youth today, the more we help them build a faith-based, logical, foundation for discussing life issues with others tomorrow.

So go ahead, let the silly bird roost. Marvel over the bright blue egg once more. And invite the youth in your circle to contemplate and revel in the miracle of life once again.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Inspired by the **Chats4Life** presentation on the elderly by Virginia Flo, the **Y4Life** group at Lutheran North in Macomb, Michigan, hosted an event to make valentines for residents of a local nursing home. We wanted to remind our elderly neighbors that they are loved and valued, especially since, at the time, many may not have had visitors in several months.

Students and faculty stopped by to create cards combining boxed valentines and personal messages of encouragement. Favorite Bible verses were John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"), 1 John 4:19 ("We love because he first loved us"), and 1 John 4:9 ("This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him"). We pray that they were a blessing and brought Valentine love and joy to the recipients!



God's Nevertheless

by Michelle Bauman, Director of Y4Life

I don't know about you, but I'm a big fan of conjunctive adverbs. Words like *therefore*, *consequently*, *furthermore*, and *likewise* get my adrenaline flowing. They're bold and flashy sports car words—the five-cylinder, rev-your-engine type. A solid conjunctive adverb can instantly transform a list of bland statements into a cohesive, driven argument.

This is especially true of conjunctive adverbs like *however* or *instead*, those that compare, contrast, and undo what's just been done. Like a sleek Lamborghini or a classy Mustang, a single conjunctive adverb can turn a sentence on a dime, changing its direction and argument instantly.

And the most grandiose grandfather of them all? *Nevertheless*.

Now, I admit my pronouncement might seem a little hasty. After all, *nevertheless* is just three words smooshed together. But the cool-factor inherent in this adverb doesn't rely on its looks; instead, it rests squarely on what happens under the hood.

Nevertheless admits everything and concedes nothing. It turns reality on its head. Instead of disproving all that came before, it simply unveils a greater claim. Here's an example:

Sure, I stayed up until 3:00 a.m. the night before my final; nevertheless, I'm going to ace the exam, it declares. And it does.

True, we're down by 12 points with 30 seconds left on the clock; nevertheless, we're going to win, it promises. And sure enough, we do.

Nevertheless is a Tesla in a sea of minivans. It's not just smart; it completely outclasses the competition. And when God uses *nevertheless*, we should be prepared for the extraordinary because He almost always uses it for our benefit.



For example, take a look at Nehemiah 9. Go ahead and read the whole chapter. It records the history of God's people—how they turned away from Him again and again—and it recounts how He continued to forgive. Pay close attention to verses 17-21 and 27-31. Could there be a more rebellious people?

Yet verse 31 declares, **“Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.”** They deserved to be forsaken; *nevertheless*, God showed mercy to His people.

Still not convinced of the prowess of *nevertheless*? Read Psalm 73:22-23: **“I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.”** Despite the psalmist's anger and impatience with God, God *nevertheless* drew the psalmist close and led him by his hand.

Perhaps no passage proves the power of God's *nevertheless* more poignantly than Luke 22:39-42: **“And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him ... And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, ‘Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.’”** God's *nevertheless* sent Jesus to the cross; God's *nevertheless* means we live.

God's *nevertheless* is powerful enough to leave burnouts on the pavement of destiny. Though we were headed to hell, Christ changed our course, redeeming us for heaven. And this reality, God's *nevertheless*, not only gives us reason to rejoice, but it also becomes the only real antidote to fear.

Our theme for the summer 2021 edition of *LifeDate* is “Fear Not!” and it's a poignant one. We are entering a time in American history when being a Christian and holding to conservative, Biblical values will be difficult. Christ reminds us that the cost of discipleship will be great: **“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God”** (John 16:1-2).

Despite this foreboding statement, Christ didn't leave His disciples in a state of hopelessness and fear. Nor does He do so today. Instead, Christ employs His *nevertheless*: **“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me ... But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you”** (John 16:4-7).

Christ followed through on His promise. We have the helper, the Holy Spirit, who lives in us and among us. The Holy Spirit is, even now, strengthening us unto salvation. It is the Holy Spirit who will give us the courage to stand firm in the face of trials and profess Christ and LIFE to the world.

Christ Jesus, our great *nevertheless*, has paved the way for salvation and LIFE. Because of Him we have nothing to fear. We may face persecution and hardship; *nevertheless*, Christ is greater than the suffering we may meet. He is our certain hope during times of uncertainty.

May we rejoice in the *nevertheless* Christ guarantees, and may it make us bold confessors of LIFE.



March and Conference:

Open to all High School and College Students!
Register with Y4Life for free conference and reduced rates on rooms!

Location:

Hilton Crystal City at Reagan National Airpt.
2399 Richmond Hwy, Arlington, VA 22202
(703) 418-6800

<http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/D/DCANAHF-Y4L-20220120/index.html>

Reservations:

Contact Hilton at the link or number above for our Y4Life group rate! \$120 Per Night w/ Breakfast. Up to 4 people per room. Limited availability; reserve soon!

Schedule:

Thursday

7-9PM: Gathering – Introductions, Music, Devotions, Games, Sign-Making

Friday

9-10AM: Pre-March Devotion & Directions

10:30AM: Metro to March for Life

11AM-4PM: March for Life (Rally, March, and Testimonials)

7-9PM: Music, Devotion, Post-March Discussion, Life Conference Session

Saturday

9AM-12PM: Life Conference Sessions, Group Discussions, and more!

To register for the conference or for more information, contact Michelle Bauman by January 1:

mbaum@lutheransforlife.org or (812)350-2732

www.y4life.org



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For Life Live! – The first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. These 90-minute events allow speakers to go in-depth with plenty of opportunity for Q & A.

Chats 4 Life – Offering high school and college youth an opportunity to learn about contemporary life topics from expert guest speakers. Held every first and third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET.

What about ... Mondays? – On the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. CT/7:00 p.m. ET, students gather to talk about life issues they'd like to address and to find hope-filled, Gospel-motivated answers.

Frontline Call – For all LFL Frontline volunteers! Monday, July 12, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, guest speakers, and Q & A.



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4 Steps to Becoming a Y4Life Messenger

I'm 4Life ... Now what?



5 Steps to Becoming a Y4Life Messenger

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