

Adoption Advocacy in the LCMS

LIFE MINISTRY, OFFICE OF NATIONAL MISSION

SYNOD CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

- 1) **1979 Res. 3-02A**, “To State Position on Abortion.” The first resolved of the resolution calls on Christians “to offer as an alternative to abortion supportive understanding, compassion, and help to the expectant parent(s) and family, and to foster concern for unwanted babies, encouraging Lutheran agencies and families to open hearts and homes to their need for life in a family.”
- 2) **1977 Res. 3-08C**, “To Support Efforts to Protect the Living But Unborn.” Its third resolved encourages “members to become involved in the development of ‘alternatives to abortion programs.’”
- 3) Clear support for adoption appears in the third resolved of **1983 Res. 3-04B**, “To Reaffirm and Implement the Synod’s Pro-Life Position.” It resolved that the Synod help congregations “encourage adoption for those who may regard abortion as their only option, and might provide supportive services for those experiencing an untimely pregnancy.”



Commission on Theology and Church Relations

In 1996, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations addressed adoption in the context of practices such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization. While the gift of procreation is a profound and beautiful testimony to the blessedness of marriage and reveals one of marriage’s most fundamental purposes, marital goodness is not limited by procreation. Where procreation is not possible, many couples choose to adopt a child into their family and, regardless of intention, also reflect the divine love that leads God to adopt us as His own (ROM. 8:15; GAL. 4:5). Note the following more extended quotation:

Contrast to Adoption

Some may argue that contemporary procreative choices are simply a variation on the morally praiseworthy practice of adoption. They would contend, for example, that if we are prepared to welcome an adopted child into the one-flesh unity of a marriage, then we should also accept procreative choices that involve third-party intrusion into a marriage.

This argument overlooks a crucial moral difference between procreative choices and adoption practices. As we have repeatedly emphasized, an important principle in our evaluation of procreative choices involves respecting the one-flesh union of marriage when procreating a child. The practice of adoption does not involve a choice to conceive a child outside of the one-flesh relationship of marriage. Adoption responds to the absence or disruption of a family context in a child’s life by welcoming the already present child into a new home. Persons involved in adoption are thus able to continue to respect the one-flesh unity of marriage as the only appropriate context for conceiving a child.

Adoption is a choice that infertile couples often consider as they prayerfully seek to serve God by caring for a child. Such a choice can be made responsibly without disturbing the one-flesh unity of marriage through third-party interventions into the conception of a child. This is one way for some infertile couples to serve God and the world by responding to the needs of a child through parenting.

“Christians and Procreative Choices” [September 1996],
Page 33; lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=357

LCMS LIFE LIBRARY

Online information on adoption (found at lcms.org/lifelibrary/adoption):

1) “A Letter to My Birthmother”

“I am writing this letter to thank and encourage all the birthmothers who may read it. ... You made the right choice, and I thank God every day for that.”

2) “A Life for Micah”

Through a Lutheran social-service agency, an unwed mother gains a new understanding of God’s hand in her life — and in the life of her infant son.

3) “Helping Families In Need— The Adoption Option”

Adoption isn’t easy. It is one of the most complex emotional arrangements in which someone can be involved. Yet, of the other options — aborting the child or raising the child as a single parent — adoption is the most child-centered. It is a healthy, realistic and sensible choice for all involved.

4) “No Such Thing as an ‘Unwanted Child’”

Americans sometimes seem more passionate about saving whales and trees than saving children. We may not change abortion laws, but we can change hearts — one by one — to remind a misled nation that “there is no such thing as an ‘unwanted child’; there are just those who are merely misplaced.”

Other Resources:

To find Recognized Service Organizations that can help with adoption and foster care, please visit lcms.org/rso/directory.

An Affirmation of Marriage

In 2013, LCMS President Matthew C. Harrison endorsed a joint statement with three other church bodies titled “An Affirmation of Marriage” (available at lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=726&DocID=2384). This document includes the following statement: “While the gift of procreation is a profound and beautiful testimony of the blessedness of marriage and reveals one of marriage’s most fundamental purposes, marital goodness is not limited by procreation. Where procreation is not possible, many couples choose to adopt a child into their family and, regardless of intention, also reflect the divine love which leads God to adopt us as His own (ROM. 8:15; GAL. 4:5).”

