



FAMILY
COUNCIL

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DECEMBER 2019
UPDATE LETTER

DEAR FRIENDS,

Growing up in the 1950s five miles out in the country near a sawmill town meant we didn't have much, but some had less than we did. Around Christmastime, my thoughts take me back there. Just the other day I thought about that place and some of the good people who lived there—those some might call “The least of these.”

I think of mill workers on the poor side of town living on the banks of Holly Creek. I think of the black kids who lived across the tracks on the road to Possum Holler. I think of an old man named Zeb who lived in a shack beside the stave mill—the little girls who came to school in dresses made from flowery, patterned cloth sacks—the boy who didn't have a coat—the old man who hitchhiked to town—the beggar on the sidewalk with his tin cup and pencils to sell—the ragged hobo who just got off the train—the least of these.

I wonder about their Christmas—what it was like.

I remember how good it made me feel when we gave a used mattress to a family living down on the creek bank.

My dad always picked up the old man hitchhiking to town.

A little money dropped into the beggar's tin cup or given to the hobo didn't seem to hurt us any. In fact I remember looking over a table of beans, cornbread, and chicken and knowing that God always rewards our kindness and generosity. My mother said so, and I knew it was true.

Once in a while, my memories go back to the front porch of our old house. It didn't even have indoor plumbing, and we heated it with a wood stove. Lots of nights I fell asleep to the sound of my mother's treadle Singer sewing machine. My sister wore those homemade dresses, too. I can still hear the sound of rain on that tin roof and think about the fact that we, too, were “the least of these.” But it didn't seem that way, because we had all that we needed, and we had enough to share with others. God just blessed us that way.

Our Christmas wasn't big, but it was great. Our Christmas wasn't flashy, but it was wonderful. Our house was drafty and cold, but at Christmas it was so very warm.

We know that Jesus has a special place in His heart for the least of these. He told us so. Maybe it's because he was born in a barn.

The least of these—they're all around us. And Jesus reminds us that as we have done unto “the least of these” we have done the same unto Him.

Our mission at Family Council has always been about helping the least of these—the unborn, the folks in the nursing homes, home schoolers, families trying to raise children, good people who want religious freedom—those without a loud voice or a paid lobbyist at the Capitol. In 30 years, here is what I've learned. When we help the least of these, we lift them up, and we elevate everyone else at the same time. Then before we know it, we find ourselves seeing a little more clearly just how blessed we really are.

**As we have done
unto “the least
of these” we have
done the same
unto Him.**

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IT'S THE MOST *wonderful* TIME OF THE YEAR!

Christmas really is the most wonderful time of the year! It's a time for love and fellowship with family and friends. Best of all, we get to celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ. This year our team has put together a list of some of the memories and traditions that make the Christmas season special for each of us. Enjoy!



A Collie Puppy for Christmas

Toy trucks, candy, socks, and gloves—cameras, BB guns, and new sweaters are all gifts that pale compared to that little collie Christmas puppy I got when I was 10 years old. When I loved him, he loved me back, and that made all the difference.

Jerry Cox, President

Christmas Cookies

Every Christmas our family makes spiced shortbread cookies. Just mix ½ cup of sugar with one cup of soft butter, two cups of flour, a teaspoon of vanilla extract, a teaspoon of cinnamon, ½ teaspoon of ground cloves, and ½ teaspoon of allspice. Knead the mixture until it forms a firm dough. Roll it out, cut the cookies, and bake them at 300° for 30–40 minutes. Our kids always enjoy eating these cookies and sharing them with neighbors.

David Cox, Assistant Director



Family, Friends, and Helping Others

My favorite part about Christmas is the extra time to visit with family and friends and the increased opportunities to help those less fortunate. Both of those help me realize how blessed I am, affording me the opportunity to really consider what's important in life.

Luke McCoy, Development

Celebrating With Family

Growing up in southern Arkansas, Christmas Day was a joyous celebration. From the time that I was in lower grade school until I was in my late thirties, all of my aunts, uncles, and cousins would gather at my parents' home for Christmas lunch. Most of them would stay to eat leftovers that evening. There was always Christmas music, games, and a lot of visiting.

Doris Cox, Bookkeeper





The Joy of the Season and Spreading the Word

Every Christmas season I look forward to spending time with my family and my friends and hoping for a white Christmas. It is truly a joyous season, and the atmosphere wherever you go is typically filled with Christmas spirit. It is also an amazing time of the year and a time where we can talk and spread the word of our savior, Jesus Christ, even more.

Ken Yang, Government Affairs



A Snowy Christmas at My Grandmother's House

My favorite Christmas memory was at my Grandmother's in Mena. That year it snowed one foot. Many family members were there and were snowed in at the house. The electricity went out, pipes froze, and we stayed warm by the fireplace and gas heaters. We slept on pallets, cots, pullout beds, and couches. It was an old fashion Christmas! Grandma fed us with her home cooking. We laughed, ate, opened gifts, drank hot chocolate, and played in the snow. I would love to have one more Christmas at my Grandmother's house.

Lisa Crook, Home School Director



Mama's Homemade Cinnamon Rolls

One of my favorite childhood memories is falling asleep on Christmas Eve to the whirl of our mixer and to Mama singing hymns while working through the night to bake dozens of sweet rolls for family and friends, and then waking up to the smell of freshly baked cinnamon rolls made just for us on Christmas morning. Now, it's one of my favorite things to do for my family around the holidays.

Charisse Dean, Government Affairs

The Reason for the Season

Christmas is one of my favorite times of year, because of what is celebrated and because of the special family traditions that go with it. Large family dinners, Christmas movies, the smell of homemade pies, gift-giving, Christmas lights, and old '40s Christmas music as well as the classic carols and candle light services. It is a blessed time to celebrate the birth of our Savior and the salvation that He brought to us. Merry Christmas to you and your family!

Erin Hogan, Administrative



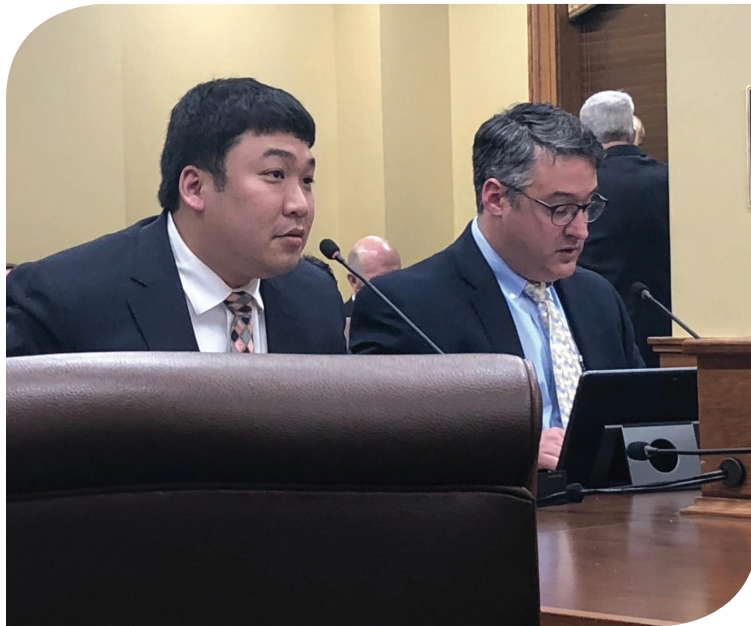
Family Council's Greatest Hits from 2019

We wrapped up a great legislative session last spring, and we've been hard at work ever since. Here are just a few of our greatest hits from the past year:

Passed: Act 180 (Abortion). This good law by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) prohibits abortion in Arkansas once *Roe v. Wade* is overturned.

Passed: Act 493 (Abortion). This good law by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Elm Springs) and Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) prohibits abortion in Arkansas during or after the eighteenth week of pregnancy unless the mother's life or physical health is in serious jeopardy.

Passed: Act 801 (Abortion). This good law by Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) and Rep. Spencer Hawks (R – Conway) expands the waiting period for an abortion from 48 hours to 72 hours.



From Left: Family Council staff member Ken Yang testifies in favor of Act 801 in the House Public Health Committee alongside Rep. Spencer Hawks (R – Conway).

Passed: Act 700 (Abortion). This good law by Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch) and Rep. Sonia Barker (R – Smackover) requires abortionists to be board-certified or board-eligible OB/GYNs.

Passed: Act 953 (Abortion). This good law by Rep. Clint Penzo (R – Springdale) and Sen. Kim Hammer (R – Benton) requires abortionists to give women information about perinatal palliative care when their unborn child has a life-threatening condition.

Passed: Act 653 (Pro-Life). This good law by Rep. Kari-lyn Brown (R – Sherwood) and Sen. Scott Flippo (R – Bull

Shoals) prohibits public funds from being used to clone or kill unborn children for scientific research.

Passed: Act 930 (Anti-Assisted Suicide). This good law by Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R – Rogers) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) strengthens Arkansas' laws against physician-assisted suicide.

Passed: Act 429 (Home Schooling). This good law by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) prevents schools from charging home schooled students extra to take concurrent credit courses for college credit.

Passed: Act 430 (Home Schooling). This good law by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) makes it easier for home schooled students to access academic courses offered through the local public school system.

Passed: Act 989 (Marijuana). This good law by Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R – Rogers) and Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Elm Springs) prohibits marijuana stores from selling marijuana-infused candy and other foods that are likely to appeal to children.

Passed: Act 928 (Marijuana). This good law by Sen. Cecile Bledsoe (R – Rogers) and Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Elm Springs) restricts medical marijuana advertisements similarly to tobacco advertisements.

Defeated: Bad Assisted-Suicide Proposal. H.B. 1536 by Rep. Dan Douglas (R – Bentonville) would have let doctors prescribe lethal drugs to terminally-ill patients who want to end their lives. After intense outcry, the bill was soundly defeated in the House Public Health Committee.

Defeated: Bad Contraceptive Bill. H.B. 1290 by Rep. Aaron Pilkington (R – Clarksville) and Sen. Bart Hester (R – Cave Springs) would have let pharmacists dispense oral contraceptives to women without a prescription from a doctor. The fight against this bill lasted literally until the end of the session.

Defeated: Bad Federal Equal Rights Amendment. S.J.R. 18 by Sen. Joyce Elliott (D – Little Rock) and Rep. Jamie Scott (D – North Little Rock) would have made Arkansas the 38th state to ratify the federal Equal Rights Amendment. The measure was defeated in the Senate State Agencies Committee in February.

Defeated: Bad Sex-Education Bill. S.B. 304 by Sen. Will Bond (D – Little Rock) and Rep. LeAnne Burch (D – Monticello) would have made it possible for Planned Parenthood to worm its way into Arkansas' public schools under the auspices of teaching sex-education and teen pregnancy prevention. We narrowly defeated this bad bill in committee, but the fight lasted until the final days of the session.



Left: Church leaders gather for Family Council's 2019 Pastors Day at the Capitol.

Supporting Our Friends: Our friends at Arkansas Right to Life and in the Arkansas Legislature championed legislation that protects newborn babies from being abandoned, provides women with options besides abortion, prohibits abortions performed because the baby has Down Syndrome, requires abortionists to report complications arising from an abortion, and ensures women know how to find information about chemical abortion pill reversal. We were glad we could highlight these good bills and support their pro-life work.

Distributing Thousands of Report Cards: Arkansans always ask us how their elected officials are voting. This year we distributed thousands of copies of Family Council Action Committee's legislative report card.

This report card shows how lawmakers voted on important bills. This is just another way we help Arkansans understand where their representatives and senators stand on the issues that matter to all of us.



Bringing Pastors to the Capitol: In February we brought hundreds of ministers and church leaders to Little Rock as part of our annual Pastors Day at the Capitol. This is one of the best things we do all year! Christians gather for prayer and worship in the Rotunda of the Capitol Building. The Arkansas Legislature can be a very dark place. Pastors Day at the Capitol is one way to share a little of God's light.

The Arkansas Legislature can be a very dark place. Pastors Day at the Capitol is one way to share a little of God's light.

Bringing Home Schoolers to the Capitol: In February we hosted our 2019 Home School Day at the Capitol. This was a wonderful event. Home schoolers from all over the state drove to Little Rock to meet their elected officials, tour the Capitol Building, attend committee meetings, and observe the legislative process. When the Arkansas Legislature legalized home schooling 34 years ago, I'm not sure any of us could have imagined the incredible places that road would take us. Today we have sitting state lawmakers who home school their children. We have policymakers and leaders in Little Rock who were educated at home. Home School Day at the Capitol is a way for home schoolers to learn about government and make a good impression on their elected officials at the same time.

Home schoolers gather with elected officials on the steps of the Capitol Building for Home School Day at the Capitol 2019.

This is just another way we help Arkansans understand where their representatives and senators stand on the issues that matter.

Thousands of Letters, Emails, Media Interviews, and Phone Calls: This year we mailed more than 50,000 letters like this one to households and churches all over Arkansas. We sent 250,000 emails to friends across the state. We spoke with thousands of Arkansans over the telephone, we published videos online twice every week, and we posted more information on social media than we can count. We also participated in dozens of media interviews in print, online, on television, and over the radio. In the past five years, we have communicated with Arkansans on a scale like never before.





Arkansas' Incredible Christmas Nativity

The Arkansas Capitol Building has one of the most incredible Christmas traditions in the country: Every year a one-of-a-kind, life-size Nativity scene is placed on the Capitol lawn.

Of course, plenty of states put up Nativity scenes at Christmastime, but Arkansas is the only state with a life-size Nativity scene hand-carved by some of the finest artisans and craftsmen from the Ozarks. The beautiful scene depicts Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus in a stable with the three Wise Men. It's more than just a Christmas decoration. It's a true work of art and a part of Arkansas' history.

If you've never visited Arkansas' one-of-a-kind Nativity scene in Little Rock, I encourage you to check it out this Christmas season. It's on the southeast corner of the state capitol lawn. While you're there, you can drop by our office just a few blocks away in downtown Little Rock. Just give us a call at (501) 375-7000 to let us know you're in the neighborhood.

Planned Parenthood Could Try to Impact 2020 Elections in Arkansas

In October the nation's largest abortion-provider, Planned Parenthood, announced its super PAC will spend at least \$45 million on political campaigns in 2020. In September Planned Parenthood's political action committee in Arkansas raised about \$1,300 from individuals in northwest Arkansas. All told, Planned Parenthood has a little over \$11,000 available to spend on electioneering in Arkansas, and could get more from its main offices in New York. That might be enough money to impact a particularly close race at the local level. We're winning the fight to protect unborn children, but the nation's abortionists aren't giving up. That's why we need to stay vigilant.

Planned Parenthood Moves into New Facility in Little Rock

Planned Parenthood has moved its abortion operation in central Arkansas to a new facility on Aldersgate Road in west Little Rock. The new location is just a mile from Arkansas' last remaining surgical abortion facility. Opening this new abortion facility is one of Planned Parenthood's biggest moves in Arkansas in many years. However, the abortion giant is showing some real signs of struggling. Abortion in Arkansas has declined significantly in the past 20 years. In 2018, Arkansas' abortion numbers hit a 42-year low, and public opinion polling shows most Arkansans believe abortion ought to be completely illegal or legal only under certain circumstances. Planned Parenthood might be doubling down by opening new facilities and funding pro-abortion candidates, but we're still winning the fight to protect unborn children from abortion in Arkansas.



Director of Governmental Affairs
Ken Yang

Help Us Find Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple

By Ken Yang

We're searching for the man and woman in Arkansas who have been married the longest. The competition is pretty fierce! This year we honored ten wonderful couples who had each been married more than 75 years. The couple married the longest—Cleovis and Arwilda Whiteside of White Hall—had most recently celebrated their 79th anniversary. Who knew there were so many men and women who had been married more than seven decades? If you or someone you know has been married more than 70 years, send me an email at ken@familycouncil.org or call me at (501) 375-7000. Send me the couple's name, address, email address, phone number, and wedding date, and I will put them in the running for Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple in 2020. We will honor the ten couples who have been married the longest at a special reception in February, so we need to receive all nominations by February 3, 2020. Give me a call or send me an email if you have questions.



Groups Support Marijuana, Casinos, Gambling Machines at State Fair

This year groups supporting recreational marijuana and casinos were at the Arkansas State Fair. A casino company had a booth in the fair's Hall of Industry promoting their proposed Russellville casino. Elsewhere, marijuana supporters circulated petitions to place a recreational marijuana measure on the 2020 ballot, and a group that wants to legalize casino-style gambling machines under Arkansas' state lottery gathered petition signatures as well.

Gambling and marijuana are multibillion dollar businesses, and powerful corporations from out of state are fighting to bring more gambling and marijuana to Arkansas. Once these businesses have a toehold in Arkansas and start exerting their influence, it's going to be very hard to stop them. That's why it's so important that we not give them even a toehold.

Pope County Quorum Court Caves to Casinos

In October the Pope County Quorum Court voted to repeal a local ordinance that requires voter approval before a casino can be built in the county. Amendment 100 to the Arkansas Constitution authorizes casinos in Jefferson County and Pope County, and it converts the racetracks in Garland and Crittenden counties into full-fledged casinos. Last November voters in Pope County soundly rejected the casino amendment and overwhelmingly supported a local ordinance that requires county officials to let voters decide whether or not to authorize a casino in the county.

The day after the quorum court voted to repeal the ordinance, a circuit judge declared that the ordinance was unconstitutional anyway. Under normal circumstances, the judge's bad ruling on the ordinance could be appealed to a higher court. Since the quorum court voted to repeal the ordinance, there's really no point in asking a higher court to overturn the judge's ruling. Repealing the ordinance helps pave the way for a corporation from out of state to open a casino in Russellville. That's clearly not what Pope County's voters want, and it's going to hurt the community.

Here Are a Few of Our Goals for 2020

Make Arkansas the Most Pro-Life State in America.

Arkansas is the second most pro-life state in America, according to Americans United for Life. We want to be number one. In 2020 we hope to see some of Arkansas' pro-life laws upheld in court. That means they will be enforced, and we can save babies and shut down abortion facilities that kill unborn children.

Support Pregnancy Resource Centers. We are working with state agencies and our new foundation to make grants available for crisis pregnancy centers.

Distribute Thousands of Voter's Guides. People need to vote—and vote wisely. We plan to publish voters' guides for the 2020 elections to educate voters about where candidates stand on social and moral issues.

Build a Grassroots Network of Volunteers. We are building a Rapid Response Team that will contact lawmakers and elected officials whenever an important issue comes up.

Host Pastors Day at the Capitol. In a couple of months we plan to hold our annual Pastors Day at the Capitol. This is an opportunity for pastors to minister to and pray over elected officials.

Recognize Arkansas' Longest-Married Couple. In February we plan to recognize Arkansas' longest-married couple

at a special reception. This is an opportunity to show the world that marriage really can last a lifetime. If you or someone you know has been married 70 years or more, call our office at (501) 375-7000.

Stop the Expansion of Gambling. Gambling has expanded a lot in Arkansas over the past two years. We want to stop that expansion in 2020.

Equip Pastors, Churches, and Citizens. We plan to empower churches to take a strong stand on social, moral, and economic issues.

Strengthen Education. We're promoting home schooling through our Education Alliance division.

Promote Religious Freedom. We are promoting religious freedom and rights of conscience, and we're going to blunt the Human Rights Campaign's efforts to normalize the LGBT lifestyle in Arkansas.

Stop Marijuana. We're going to oppose any effort to legalize recreational marijuana in Arkansas.

Oppose Public Drinking. We are committed to helping Arkansans block efforts to legalize public drinking in their communities.





Order Your Free Arkansas Voter's Guides!

Since 1990, Family Council has produced the state's leading nonpartisan voter's guide. We survey the candidates on a wide variety of issues, and we publish their survey response in print and online. Because our guide doesn't favor one candidate over another, churches can distribute

it to their members. If you are on our mailing list, you will get a free copy of the Arkansas Voter's Guide after the first of the year. If you would like to request free guides to share with others, call us at (501) 375-7000.

Donate Stock, Property or Appreciated Assets to Family Council

Some of our supporters like to donate personal property or appreciated assets like stock shares. Gifts of stock or other securities may result in less taxes for donors than an equivalent donation made in cash. If you are interested in sup-

porting Family Council and maximizing your tax benefits, consider donating stock or assets. Call our office at 501-375-7000, and we will help you work out the details.

Join Our Rapid Response Team!

We are looking for a few good Arkansans who will partner with us in our new Rapid Response Team. The Rapid Response Team is a group of volunteers we will notify whenever important issues come up in Arkansas. Team members will receive special briefings and information,

and we will help them contact their elected officials when lawmakers need to hear from folks back home. If you want to make a difference in Arkansas, we could really use your help. See the flyer enclosed with this letter for more information, or call our office at (501) 375-7000.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

As you can see, there's no shortage of work to do. As Jesus said, the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. If we're going to do everything we've been called to do, we need the help of all our friends, if they are able.

There's simply no way we would have made it 30 years without good friends like you backing us. Our money has been tight this year. That's why I hope you and your family will send a generous, tax-deductible donation to Family Council before the end of the year. I promise I will do my best to use your gift wisely and stretch every dollar as far as it possibly will go.

Here are some of the ways you can give to Family Council between now and December 31:

- Use the enclosed return envelope and response card to mail a check to our office.
- Go to FamilyCouncil.org and click on the Donate link.
- Simply text the amount you want to give to 501-292-2851.
- Donate personal property or appreciated assets like stock to Family Council.

Thank you so much for supporting our work. I cannot tell you enough how much your friendship and support mean to me and my staff. Please keep us in your prayers, and let me know if there is ever anything we can do for you.

I hope you and your family have a merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!

P.S. We're celebrating our 30th year of ministry at Family Council. We helped pass a long list of good laws this year, and we're gearing up for 2020. We're building a grassroots network of volunteers, and we're preparing to honor Arkansas' longest-married couples. We couldn't do this without you. That's why I hope you will send a generous, tax-deductible donation, if you are able. **Thank you for standing with us. Merry Christmas!**

