



FAMILY COUNCIL

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MAY 2020
UPDATE LETTER

Dear Friends,

"It's like a daily soap opera. There's something new all the time."

That's how one Arkansas official soberly described the COVID-19 outbreak in a text message to me a few weeks ago. He wasn't making light of the outbreak, either. His point was that we seem to be experiencing one crisis after another.

Over the past two months our country has endured a public health emergency and an economic catastrophe all at once. Stories from Europe sound like something out of a book about medieval plagues while New York, New Orleans, and other major cities have seen thousands of sick and dead.

During the coronavirus outbreak, I have been in daily communication with Governor Hutchinson's office, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's office, Arkansas Surgeon General Dr. Greg Bledsoe, and other state officials. **Family Council is doing its part to help Arkansans during this time.**

I told one of Governor Hutchinson's staff members that I believe his office would be shocked to know how many churches want to help. Arkansans are tired of sitting at home, watching the coronavirus coverage on television. Several ministers have asked me what they can do about it.

We're doing what we can to help churches get in the fight against COVID-19 right now, but this is going to be an ongoing effort. In some ways, this is like a big tornado or an ice storm: The cleanup efforts are going to continue long after the storm itself has passed. But let me tell you about an unexpected turn of events.

Most people know about the run on toilet paper, hand sanitizer, and groceries. Few people know that there was also a run on abortion in Arkansas. Little Rock's surgical abortion facility adjusted its hours to accommodate more people. Cars parked in their overflow parking area. One day, a pro-lifer who regularly prays in front of the facility called the police because he was so concerned about the large number of people crowding into the building. The police came and soon left. The facility kept going as before.

Most people probably don't think about the fact that during the COVID-19 pandemic, **more children have been aborted in one Little Rock abortion facility than the number of people who have died statewide of the Coronavirus—about ten times more.** Both are a tragedy.

The tragedy of abortion has not stopped during the COVID-19 pandemic. We're not stopping either. We're working from home. Our staff is outfitted with computers and webcams that are connected to computers at the office. Our staff members can work from home just as if they were seated at their desks in the office. We begin each day with a staff meeting on Zoom, where we can see one another, pray together, and begin our assigned tasks. We're all connected with cell phones, emails, and text messaging. We are getting a lot of good work done.

Now let me tell you more about it.

The tragedy of abortion has not stopped during the COVID-19 pandemic.

414 S. Pulaski St., Suite 2 • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-375-7000 • info@familycouncil.org



Family Council
President Jerry Cooney

MY THOUGHTS: "FEAR NOT!"

I'm not sure anyone could have predicted that Americans would respond to a global pandemic by panic-buying cases of toilet paper. Stories about people running out of Sam's Club and Costco with cases of paper goods and Clorox wipes or stealing rolls of toilet paper from public restrooms are so bizarre that it's almost funny. The truth is, though, that people are afraid, and that's driving them to do all kinds of things they normally wouldn't do.

One of the most oft-repeated commandments in scripture is "Fear Not!" Those two words—or some variation of them instructing believers to be courageous—appear in nearly every book of the Bible. In some books, like the Book of Joshua, they appear over and over again.

We serve a big God who is in control of everything. He wants us to be ruled by His word and His Holy Spirit—not by fear. We need to make wise choices—washing our hands and keeping a safe distance from other people fall into that category—but we don't have to be governed by our fears.

State of Arkansas Orders Surgical Abortion Facility to Cease and Desist During Pandemic

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Arkansas issued directives to all clinics on April 3 telling them to stop elective procedures. However, Planned Parenthood and Little Rock Family Planning Services both kept performing elective abortions even though the State of Arkansas told them not to.

On April 7, State inspectors visited Little Rock Family Planning Services and discovered that the facility was still performing surgical abortions. On Friday, April 10—Good Friday—the Arkansas Department of Health issued a letter ordering the facility to cease and desist, and Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge promised swift and decisive action against any facility—including an abortion facility—that violated the state's COVID-19 directives.

As of this writing (April 13), the facility appears to have stopped performing surgical abortions, but their lawyers are at the Federal Courthouse asking U.S. District Judge Kristine Baker to block the state's order so they can resume surgical abortions. It's very likely by the time this letter reaches your mailbox, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge

will be in a legal battle with lawyers from the ACLU. If this case goes to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals there is hope for a good outcome. Texas has had success shutting down abortion facilities in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, so I think Arkansas' prospects are very good.

Abortion facilities put public health at risk in three ways by doing abortions during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- They sometimes employ doctors from out of state at their facilities. If abortionists travel across state lines to Arkansas to perform abortions, Arkansans are at an increased risk of being exposed to the virus.
- Women travel to Arkansas from other states for abortions. I have personally seen cars with out-of-state license plates at the surgical abortion facility in Little Rock. When women travel for an abortion, they risk being exposed to COVID-19 or exposing others to the virus.
- Abortion facilities use valuable protective equipment. Doctors and clinics have been asked to stop performing elective surgeries in order to conserve medical resources. Abortion wastes these resources.

On Good Friday, the State issued the cease and desist order against the surgical abortion facility. That morning, half-a-dozen state legislators gathered in front of the clinic to pray. Never have so many elected officials gathered in front of that facility at once.

The fact that abortion facilities would ignore guidelines and directives from public health officials and force the State to issue a cease and desist order just goes to show how extreme the abortion industry is. It also underscores why we need to continue to work not only to make abortion illegal, but to make it unthinkable as well.

A full parking lot at Planned Parenthood's chemical abortion facility in Little Rock during the coronavirus outbreak.



State of Arkansas Orders Surgical Abortion Facility to Cease and Desist During Pandemic (continued)

Arkansans should be proud that Governor Asa Hutchinson, Attorney General Leslie Rutledge, and Secretary of Health Dr. Nathaniel Smith have taken such a strong position against surgical abortion in Arkansas. Not every state is as fortunate as Arkansas to have such excellent leaders on this issue.

Take Action: I hope you will contact their offices to tell them thank you. You can leave a message for Gov. Hutchinson at (501) 682-2345. You can leave a message for A.G. Rutledge at (501) 682-2007. You can leave a message for Dr. Smith by calling the Health Director's office at (501) 661-2400. Again, please thank them for their courageous leadership against abortion facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Lawmakers and concerned citizens stand outside Little Rock Family Planning Services on April 10, 2020.

COVID-19 Stimulus Helps Churches and Nonprofits

In March Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act. The measure provides approximately two trillion dollars in relief and economic stimulus in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak. Here are a few of the ways in which the measure helps churches and other non-profits:

- Direct loans to small businesses, nonprofits, and churches
- Incentivizing giving to churches and nonprofits
- Unemployment insurance assistance for those who work for nonprofits
- Encouraging and aiding churches' responses to the coronavirus outbreak

You can learn more about how the CARES Act affects churches by going to COVIDChurchAid.org.

Governor Hutchinson Calls On Arkansans to Pray During COVID-19 Crisis

On March 27, Governor Asa Hutchinson issued a proclamation calling on Arkansans to pray for the state of Arkansas and for the nation amid the COVID-19 outbreak. The proclamation reads in part:

"As Arkansans, we strengthen our faith through prayer, and today, we come together united as a state seeking God's reassurance and thanking Him for his guidance... In Deuteronomy 31:8, we are reminded of God's promise, 'The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.'" I think it's great that the governor is asking Arkansans to pray, and I hope you will continue to join us in praying for the many people whose lives have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resources for Churches Amid the COVID-19 Outbreak

Our friends at Florida Family Policy Council have put together a website to help churches navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Their website covers everything from applying for financial aid to serving the community. Their information tackles tough issues, like:

- How churches can think and lead biblically during a pandemic.
- How to talk to young people about the coronavirus outbreak.
- How to address the coronavirus outbreak from the pulpit.
- How churches can serve their communities during this time.

You can learn more by going to COVIDChurchAid.org.

Arkansas Churches Step Up During Pandemic

Arkansas' churches have stepped up in a big way during the coronavirus outbreak. We emailed several hundred ministers and church leaders, asking them what their congregations are doing to serve their communities during this time. They responded by telling us that they are doing things like:

- Creating care packages for single parents and the elderly
- Making sure that people have groceries and other essential supplies
- Providing food for emergency room personnel
- Praying over healthcare workers
- Checking in with neighbors regularly to see how everyone is doing

Besides that, they've been calling, texting, holding virtual church services online, and taking other steps to keep their churches connected. All of this shows how the Body of Christ still comes together to help their neighbors in times of crisis.

Ambulance, Hearse Seen at Little Rock Abortion Facility On Same Day

On Friday, February 28, pro-life volunteers say a woman was taken via ambulance from the surgical abortion facility in Little Rock. Later that afternoon, volunteers also saw a hearse at the surgical abortion facility. One pro-lifer told us the hearse picked up a small box from the facility. The box presumably contained the body of an aborted baby. It is highly unusual to see a hearse at an abortion clinic. One pro-life volunteer said it was only the second time she had seen one in nearly 20 years of praying regularly outside abortion facilities.

Stories like these remind us that abortion hurts women and kills children. That's why Arkansas has passed several laws that protect women from unsafe abortion practices and help give women real options besides abortion. Arkansas Attorney General Leslie Rutledge's office is currently defending some of these good laws from legal challenges by the ACLU and Planned Parenthood.



The hearse photographed at Little Rock's surgical abortion facility.

Throwback: Rally for Life 1990

Thirty years ago on April 28, 1990, an estimated 700,000 pro-lifers gathered in Washington, D.C. for the Rally for Life. Americans traveled by plane, car, and chartered buses for the event—including four busloads of Arkansans. All told, about 300 people from Arkansas attended the rally in Washington.

The rally at the Capitol Mall featured several guest speakers—including President George H.W. Bush, who addressed the crowd via telephone. In his remarks, President Bush called abortion on demand “a tragedy.”

Dr. John Willke, President of the National Right to Life Committee, talked about a proposal to permanently ban the use of body parts from aborted babies in transplants. Failure to do so, he said “would create a huge demand for ‘spare parts’” from unborn children. Dr. Willke passed away in 2015, just months before undercover videos showed Planned Parenthood officials discussing the sale of organs and tissue harvested from the bodies of aborted babies.

Jacki Ragan with National Right to Life in Washington, D.C. played a key role in the event. “I was in charge of the Rally for Life in 1990,” she said. “In 1989, Congressman Henry Hyde came to our office the week following a fairly large pro-abortion march in Washington, D.C.” Congressman Hyde told Dr. Willke that pro-lifers had to have a rally of their own. “He said if we ever want to pass another piece of pro-life legislation, we have to bring out the pro-life movement.” That's how the 1990 Rally for Life came about.

Jacki said Right to Life spent a year working with volunteers and churches to promote the event. In many ways, the 1990 Rally for Life represented a milestone in the modern pro-life movement. At a time when the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress, and state legislatures generally had not handed America any pro-life victories, pro-lifers still turned out by the hundreds of thousands to defend the unborn. That's something worth remembering.



Nearly three-quarters of a million people—including several hundred Arkansans—attended the 1990 Rally for Life in Washington, D.C. (Photo Credit: Arkansas Citizen, June 1990)

July Trial Date Set for Arkansas' Ten Commandments Monument

A trial will take place this July in the lawsuit over Arkansas' monument of the Ten Commandments. In 2015 Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) sponsored a measure authorizing a monument of the Ten Commandments, which was constructed and placed on the State Capitol lawn. However, several atheist groups have filed a lawsuit against the monument.

Arkansas' monument of the Ten Commandments was not publicly funded. The American History and Heritage Foundation paid for the monument with private donations from more than 800 individuals. And the monument is identical to one the U.S. Supreme Court ruled constitutional in Texas in 2005.

With that in mind, there just shouldn't be anything controversial about a monument honoring the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are one of the earliest examples of the rule of law in human history, and we ought to commemorate them. Hopefully the federal court will agree.



Three Facts About the Arkansas Lottery

In 2009 Arkansas rolled out a state-run lottery to fund college scholarships. Since then, the Arkansas Lottery generally has turned out to be an unmitigated failure. Here in no particular order are three facts about the Arkansas Lottery.

#1. The State Lottery Has Never Delivered on Its Promised \$100 Million Per Year for Scholarships. Back in 2008 then-Lt. Governor Bill Halter promised Arkansans a state-run lottery could provide \$100 million per year in college scholarships. However, the Arkansas Lottery consistently has fallen short of that promise.

The Arkansas Lottery consistently has fallen short of its promise.

#2. Only a Fraction of the Arkansas Lottery's Revenue Goes to Scholarships. Most of the Lottery's money pays for lottery prizes. This fiscal year, the Arkansas Lottery has

given college students about 14–15 cents out of every dollar it has made. About 69 cents out of every dollar has been spent on prizes for people who buy lottery tickets. For perspective, the average state lottery spends about 30% of its revenue on education and allocates much less than Arkansas does for prizes.

#3. Since July the Arkansas Lottery Has Paid Enough in Mileage Reimbursements for Its Employees to Drive to the Moon. Since July 1, 2019, the Arkansas Lottery Office has spent more than \$143,000 on mileage reimbursements. By law, the state has to reimburse its employees when they drive their personal vehicles on official business. Considering that state employees get 42 cents for every mile they travel on state business in their personal vehicles, the Arkansas Lottery has paid its employees enough in mileage reimbursements drive to the Moon and much of the way back to earth. It's just another example of wasteful spending at the state-run lottery.



Assistant Director
David Cox

POLICY POINTS: LOOKING AT PRESIDENT TRUMP'S JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

By David Cox

In the 1987 movie "The Untouchables," Sean Connery's character remarks, "If you're afraid of getting a rotten apple, don't go to the barrel. Get it off the tree." In a way, that's what President Trump has done when it comes to picking judges. The Trump Administration isn't exactly getting judicial nominees "off the tree," but they also aren't nominating lawyers who have spent careers courting the favor of groups like the left-leaning American Bar Association either. The Trump Administration has chosen federal

judges from attorney general offices, state supreme court benches, private law firms, and other sources that previous administrations might have overlooked. This strategy appears to be making a difference.

All told, the Trump Administration has appointed 193 judges to the bench. Some of them—like U.S. District Judge Lee Rudofsky of Arkansas—are only in their 40s or 50s and may not retire for 20 or 30 years. And several of these judges are in the Eighth Circuit, which presides over Arkansas. All of this bodes well as lawsuits regarding Arkansas' pro-life laws make their way through the federal court system.

Here's Some of What We Want to Accomplish in the Coming Weeks

Between now and the end of this summer we have a lot we want to accomplish, such as:

- Surveying candidates for our Arkansas Voter's Guide ahead of the elections in November
- Helping churches navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath
- Drafting pro-life legislation that will make Arkansas the most pro-life state in America
- Assisting pro-life efforts that give women real options besides abortion

Last year Family Council supported the passage of 13 pro-life laws at the Arkansas Legislature. Next month the Arkansas Department of Health will release its annual abortion reports. Those reports will help us gauge how effective Arkansas' new pro-life laws have been. Look for more information about that in our next update letter.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to work from home, our team has not slowed down. We've been monitoring Arkansas' abortion facilities, keeping an eye on the Arkansas Legislature, sending regular email updates and letters to our friends, and much more. Back in March I told my staff I want us to come out on the other side of this outbreak stronger and more effective than ever before. I believe we are doing that. That's why we need your help.

I realize this may not be a good time for me to ask you for a donation, but if you are able to give a generous, tax-deductible gift to Family Council, please know that we would really appreciate your help. Your support will help us defend the unborn, assist home schoolers, and make Arkansas a better state to live, work, and raise a family. We always work hard to stretch every dollar as far as it possibly will go.

Thank you for standing with us. In these challenging times, it is comforting to know we have good friends like you who believe in what we do. Please let me know if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!



P.S. We have not let the coronavirus outbreak slow us down at Family Council. We have been in communication with state officials almost daily, and we have continued to share important information with Arkansans in print and online. We're gearing up to survey candidates this summer for our 2020 Arkansas Voter's Guide. We want to draft the best pro-life laws in the country in the coming months so lawmakers can pass those laws next year. Your generous support makes all of our work possible. Thank you for your financial gifts, your friendship, your kind words, and your prayers.