



**FAMILY  
COUNCIL**

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**AUGUST 2020  
UPDATE LETTER**

## *Dear Friends,*

When I was thirty-three, I lost my job teaching history and government.

I should have been more concerned than I was. Instead, I just figured God would work it out, and He did. I never missed a paycheck. Through the loss of my job, He did what I lacked the courage to do—to step out of the boat onto the water. Instead, He sort of threw me overboard. From there it was faith all the way. Immediately, He led me into pro-life work and four years later into starting Family Council. What looked like a setback was really a big four-lane highway leading to more than I could imagine. If God had told me early on what he was doing, I probably would not have believed it. Now, I view the loss of that job as one of the best things that ever happened to me.

In the Old Testament we read about how God told the prophet Habakkuk that Habakkuk wouldn't believe what God was about to do even if God told him. God goes on to warn Habakkuk that difficult times are coming—but God has a plan. Even when trials and adversity come our way, we can trust that God has a plan.

It feels like there's been a lot of adversity in our country lately. Headline after headline speaks to the social and political unrest our nation faces. We've seen panic from the coronavirus and violence from racial tensions. Americans are so divided at times that we almost can't seem to agree which direction is up and which is down.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently issued two really terrible opinions—one redefining the word "sex" in Title VII of the federal civil rights law, and the other overturning a pro-life law from Louisiana. These are bad rulings, and they feel like serious defeats. It's easy to turn on the news and think that the world is so wrong that it could never be made right again. But I believe better days are ahead.

In the 1980s, a lot of people said public school students and teachers did not even have the right to bring a Bible with them to school.

They argued that students lost all of their religious liberties the moment they set foot on school property—thanks to bad rulings from the courts. Last year thousands of students took their Bibles with them to school as part of the national Bring Your Bible to School Day, and students in Arkansas can study the Bible in an academic course at school.

In the 1990s, Arkansas aborted more than 6,000 unborn children per year. From 1973 to 1993, those numbers consistently went up from year to year. Today the number of abortions performed in Arkansas has been cut by more than half—and it's still dropping.

I don't know exactly what God has planned for the coming years. If He told us, we'd probably be a lot like Habakkuk: We wouldn't believe it. But I trust that it's a good plan, and I want to be part of it.

Family Council is still hard at work in Arkansas, and we have some big plans for the coming months. And now let me tell you a little more about what we've been doing—and about what you can do as well.

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exactly what God  
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but I trust that  
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Family Council  
President Jerry Cooney

## MY THOUGHTS: BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION

On Tuesday, June 2, Luke McCoy and I boarded up the windows on our office building in downtown Little Rock following several nights of unrest. As I wrote in last month's update letter, the property damage and violence that erupted following the death of George Floyd was worse around our office than the media reported. Most of the buildings around ours had broken windows, and the residue from tear gas was still heavy enough in the air to burn my sinuses when I came down to the office the next day.

To be clear, the demonstrations that took place in Little Rock in late May and early June were about much more than the death of an unarmed black man in Minneapolis. If you watch news stations out of central Arkansas, you know what a violent city Little Rock can be. How Little Rock authorities handle that violence and police our neighborhoods is a contentious issue. I have

tremendous respect for our law enforcement, but many people feel like our police force lacks appropriate oversight and accountability. Unfortunately, much of that message was drowned out by rioting that occurred in areas like the neighborhood around our office.

On Friday, June 5, I received a phone call from an attorney I know in Little Rock. She asked if Family Council would like to be part of a rally on the steps of the Capitol Building the following day. The purpose of the rally was to talk about where we go from here. By that point, a lot of the unrest in Little Rock had subsided, and people were wondering what we ought to do next. I told her we would gladly be part of the event.

The rally was not a Black Lives Matter protest or an effort to abolish the police—although a few folks tried to turn it into that. Rather, the purpose was to figure out where we go from here—are there reforms we need to make to ensure all Americans are treated fairly and with respect? Charisse Dean from our staff spoke to the crowd and shared what was on her heart, and I thought she did a very good job.

I believe there are meaningful reforms that conservatives can make that will help protect good police officers, prevent corruption in government, and make sure Arkansans enjoy equal protection under the law. Family Council is committed to working with groups on both sides of the aisle to see that happen. Like I told my attorney friend in June, "We want to be part of the solution." Look for more information about those solutions in the future.

## Women Came to Arkansas for Abortions During COVID Shutdowns, Documents Show

According to documents Family Council recently received from the Arkansas Department of Health, it's possible that one-third or more of the women who had surgical abortions in Arkansas during the spring COVID-19 shutdowns were from out of state. On April 7 inspectors from the Arkansas Department of Health visited the surgical abortion facility in Little Rock. According to the inspection results, fifteen abortions were performed at the facility on April 7, and 14 more were scheduled for April 8. The inspection documents show that out of these 29 abortions, ten were on women from out of state.

Our team monitored Arkansas' abortion facilities over the course of several days, and we consistently observed vehicles with out of state tags at the facilities. These inspection documents would seem to indicate that it's possible as many as one-third or more of the surgical abortions performed in Arkansas during the COVID-19 shutdowns earlier this spring were on women from out of state. For perspec-

tive, only 15% of all abortions performed in Arkansas have been on women from out of state since the year 2000, and the past couple of years women from out of state have accounted for only 10%–12% of all abortions performed in Arkansas. In light of that, it's safe to say these documents from the Arkansas Department of Health lay to rest any doubt that women traveled to Arkansas for abortion after the COVID-19 outbreak started.



*A vehicle with out-of-state tags at Little Rock Family Planning Services in April.*



Charisse Dean, Governmental Affairs Assistant & Project Coordinator

## Driver Saves Woman and Child From Abortion

By Charisse Dean

It was a beautiful, sunny day, and Luke and I were setting up our camera and microphones to record a video in front of the surgical abortion facility in Little Rock. There were many cars going in and out of the parking lot, and there was one sidewalk counselor close enough to speak to young women as they waited to enter the facility. At

one point several cars pulled up at once.

I noticed a very young couple that looked like teenagers, hugging several times and hesitantly walking to the front door. I thought, They look like they may be teetering on the edge of indecision. Now's the chance for a sidewalk counselor to speak with them. We'd already heard the good news of a young lady who had earlier decided to go into the crisis pregnancy center instead of the abortion facility and had come back to thank the sidewalk counselor for directing her there. So I was hopeful that someone would be able to convince this couple to do the same. I noticed the counselor was speaking to a driver who was waiting on someone to come out of the facility, so I walked over to get her attention. She thanked me for getting her attention, asked me to hear this man's story, and then she went to speak with the couple. I introduced myself, and asked what had happened.

He was a private driver picking up people the night before, and for whatever reason, he felt that he should go back to the airport and circle one more time. When he did, he saw one lady standing out there by herself. He pulled in, picked her up, and asked, "Where are you headed?" She told him the address to the hotel and headed there.

During the drive, they had a friendly chat, and he asked where she was headed in the morning, assuming she was in town for business. She said, #4 Office Park. He immediately knew what address that was and that she didn't need to go there.

#4 Office Park is the address for Little Rock Family Planning Services, Arkansas' last remaining surgical abortion facility. At that moment, he realized why he had such a strong push to go back to the airport. God strategically placed him there to intervene on her and her unborn child's behalf. He took the opportunity and asked if he could take her to her appointment in the morning. Thankfully, she agreed.

He brought her to the hotel and then determined that he would stay up all night to be sure he was there to pick her up in the morning even though he worked all evening and should have been headed home. He went there that morning and was waiting for her. As they headed toward the abortion facility, he spoke to her all the way there and asked her about her situation.

She began to open up to him and shared that she had three daughters. Her ten year old daughter had died, and the other two were diabetic. She didn't think she could have another, because she was still grieving. He spoke very frankly but softheartedly, like a father would to a daughter, and said, "I understand that they have health problems, but diabetes is something that can be treated. So there's help for them." He then said, "What would you do if you knew something bad was about to happen to your two daughters?"

She emphatically answered, "I would do whatever I needed to do to help them."

**"It was no coincidence that it was me who picked you up and God called me to talk to you."**

He then replied, "Well the child in your womb is no different than your other two children that you would step in and defend. It's not any different." She then became emotional and began to cry. He went on to explain, "Just because they're in your womb, doesn't mean they're not your child and that they don't need your protection. It was no coincidence that it was me who picked you up and God called me to talk to you." She then broke down and told him, "I'm not sure of what I need to do. This is my first consultation." As she got out, a sidewalk counselor spoke to her about the free services next door. She went up to the abortion facility's door with her purse and cell phone like most usually do, but then she turned around and came back to the driver, spoke with him, and handed him her belongings. She went back into the building and the sidewalk counselor was wondering what he was going to do with the items. He turned his vehicle around, and when he came back he pulled up, parked and waved for a sidewalk counselor to come to him. The counselor walked over, and he introduced himself and named his church and pastor, and then went into the story of what happened.

The counselor explained Arkansas' 72-hour waiting period law regarding abortion. He said he was aware of the law and that she told him she planned to head back to her home state and fly back a few days later. He waited there the whole time until she came back out of her consultation with the abortion facility. Then took her to lunch.

I was not able to contact the driver again, but I received word that the young woman never returned to the abortion facility for the abortion. We all believe that her life will never be the same and lives were saved that day by a driver who cared enough to be led and used by the Lord to speak up for her voiceless, unborn child.



Assistant Director David Cox

## POLICY POINTS: U.S. SUPREME COURT REDEFINES WORDS IN FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

By David Cox

On Monday, June 15, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 6-3 that the federal law prohibiting employment discrimination based on sex in Title VII of the federal 1964 Civil Rights Act also prohibits discrimination on the basis of “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” Many news outlets and organizations have oversimplified this ruling by claiming it just says a person cannot be fired for being gay. In reality, this ruling is much bigger than that.

Title VII of the federal 1964 Civil Rights Act protects employees from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Sexual orientation and gender identity do not appear in Title VII, but that did not stop the court. Writing the opinion for the court, Justice Neil

Gorsuch said “discrimination based on homosexuality or transgender status necessarily entails discrimination based on sex.” In other words, biological sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity are all more or less the same thing, as far as Justices Gorsuch, Sotomayor, Breyer, Ginsburg, Kagan, and Chief Justice Roberts are concerned.

This opinion really floored a lot of people—especially coming from Justice Gorsuch. It reminds me of the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, in which the court ruled that abortion is legal thanks to an unwritten right to privacy in the U.S. Constitution. The court had to take a lot of liberties to reach the conclusion that it did.

Justices Alito, Thomas, and Kavanaugh penned blistering dissents calling the ruling exactly what it is: Legislating from the bench. Our courts have the power to decide whether a law is constitutional or unconstitutional, but they don’t have the power to change the meanings of the words in the law. Now that the court has redefined “sex” in Title VII, it will be hard to argue that “sex” should not be redefined in every other state and federal law. That has the potential to affect everything from male and female dormitories on college campuses to shelters for women who have been the victims of domestic violence. This ruling probably will have some serious, unintended consequences that we will have to work hard to avoid in the coming years.



John Stonestreet, Radio Host and President of the Colson Center for Christian Worldview

## The Supreme Court Slams the Door on Restricting Abortion

By John Stonestreet

[On Monday, June 29], the Supreme Court overturned a Louisiana law that would require abortionists to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital. Similar to a Texas law overturned in 2016, the Court ruled such a requirement would place an undue burden on women seeking an abortion.

in practical terms to a substantial obstacle to a woman seeking an abortion.”

**So, in Roberts’s mind, abortion is an exalted right that, unlike freedom of speech or religion, should not be restricted in any practical terms.**

The facts in the Louisiana case were different enough to hope the Court would see things differently, but Chief Justice Roberts, once again, joined with liberal justices. Worse yet, he seemed to indicate there is no way his court will ever overturn Roe v. Wade.

Citing precedent, Roberts wrote the only thing that a court should concern itself with is whether a regulation “[amounts]

So, in Roberts’s mind, abortion is an exalted right that, unlike freedom of speech or religion, should not be restricted in any practical terms.

So the slaughter of the innocents will continue. With the blessing of the Chief Justice.

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## Arkansas Still Millions of Dollars in the Hole on Marijuana

The State of Arkansas wrapped up its fiscal year on June 30. According to news reports, from the spring of 2019 until June 30, 2020, Arkansans bought about \$100 million worth of so-called “medical” marijuana. Given that the state taxes marijuana sales at 10.5%, the state ought to walk away with somewhere around \$10–\$11 million in revenue from “medical” marijuana.

That’s a lot of money, but it isn’t enough to cover all of the state’s costs that come with overseeing “medical” marijuana in Arkansas. Last year the state budgeted \$11.6 million to fund the Medical Marijuana Commission and the regulations that medical marijuana requires. That means that the tax revenue from “medical” marijuana sales are upwards of a million short of meeting the state budget.

Overall, Arkansas is actually millions of dollars in the hole on marijuana. The state spent a total of \$10 million between 2018 and 2019 establishing the Medical Marijuana Commission and equipping state agencies to run the program. At this point it seems unlikely the state ever will recoup that cost by taxing marijuana.

This underscores what Family Council and other groups have said about marijuana for years: States can’t break even by taxing it. Even if Arkansas could tax marijuana enough to pay for the state’s oversight programs, there are still the social costs that come from legalization. Just last year a branch of the National Institutes of Health came out with yet another study linking marijuana to higher rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide—especially among adolescents. A 2019 study presented at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions found that marijuana addiction among young people is tied to increased risk of heart problems. A second study found regular marijuana use increases a young person’s risk of suffering a stroke. Even if marijuana taxes did turn out to be a huge windfall for the State, there’s simply no way that money can justify the harm marijuana causes.

## Family Council Will Oppose Bad Hate Crime Bill in Arkansas

In June State Senator Jim Hendren (R – Gravette) and State Representative Nicole Clowney (D – Fayetteville) renewed calls for Arkansas to pass hate crimes legislation. The truth is no law has ever stopped hate, and no law ever will. It’s a matter of the heart. Over the past few years we’ve seen despicable crimes committed in states that have hate crimes laws. States like California, Washington, and New York lead the nation in hate crimes even though they have hate crimes laws. It’s clear these laws simply do not work. Sen. Hendren and Rep. Clowney’s proposal does nothing to address issues like police brutality, no-knock warrants, racial profiling, and unequal justice. It does nothing to address the real issues that people are deeply concerned about. We all agree something needs to be done to address racism in our state, but passing a hate crimes law isn’t the answer.

Laws like this treat crimes and their victims unequally. Targeting anyone and committing a crime is wrong and currently illegal. When hate crimes laws levy harsher penalties for targeting some people but not others, the punishments

**Passing a hate crimes law isn’t the answer.**

can differ even if the crimes are the same. The penalty for assault or murder should be the same no matter the victim’s race, religion, or sexual-orientation. Family Council has opposed hate crimes laws at the Arkansas Legislature since the 1990s. This legislation was a bad idea 25 years ago, and it’s still a bad idea today.

## PRE-ORDER ARKANSAS VOTER’S GUIDES FOR YOUR CHURCH OR FRIENDS

The 2020 Arkansas Voter’s Guide is coming. We survey the candidates on a variety of issues, and we publish their responses in print and online at [ArkansasVotersGuide.com](http://ArkansasVotersGuide.com). You’ll receive a free copy of the guide between now and Election Day in November. You can order free copies of the guide right now for your church, Sunday school class, family members, or friends. Because our guide doesn’t favor one candidate over another, churches are free to distribute it, and anyone can use it to make an informed decision about who they will vote for in the upcoming election. You can use the enclosed form to request free copies of the Arkansas Voter’s Guide right now. We will mail them to you as soon as they are available. If you have any questions about the guide, give us a call at (501) 375-7000.

## Planned Parenthood Reports Little Campaign Activity in Arkansas During COVID

In July Planned Parenthood's political action committee in Arkansas filed its quarterly report with the State. The report shows Planned Parenthood did virtually no campaigning in Arkansas last spring. Planned Parenthood's super PAC has pledged to spend at least \$45 million on the 2020 elections, nationwide, to help pro-abortion candidates get elected. In April Planned Parenthood reported that its political action committee in Arkansas had raised \$4,558.29. And earlier this year the group endorsed several candidates running for office in Arkansas.

However, the latest reports show the political action committee did not donate to any candidates and had virtually no activity in the state from April to June of this year. We also know that Planned Parenthood was forced to cancel fundraising events in Arkansas due to COVID-19, and the Planned Parenthood affiliate that oversees Arkansas, Okla-

homa, Missouri, and Kansas laid off three dozen employees a few weeks ago. We expect Planned Parenthood to ramp up its campaign between now and November, but it appears COVID has put a damper on some of the group's political activities in Arkansas.



## WE NEED YOUR HELP

We're gearing up to distribute thousands of voter's guides all over Arkansas between now and Election Day. We're working on a project to help support pregnancy resource centers that provide women in Arkansas real options besides abortion. Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) recently said he wants to pass legislation in Arkansas that will make abortion illegal, and I have assured him we will help his pro-life efforts any way we can. We're keeping a steady eye on the courts, Congress, and the Arkansas Legislature. We're also helping home schoolers on a daily basis and drafting legislation ahead of 2021. There's more than one way to end abortion in Arkansas, and we aren't going to let a bad ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court stop us from defending unborn children. We're also equipping Arkansans to address social and moral issues from a biblical perspective, and we are doing our best every day to stand up for what is right.

**None of this would be possible without you.** That's why I hope you will support our work by sending a generous, tax-deductible gift today, if you are able.

A lot of people have asked us over the years, "What does my gift to Family Council actually do?" Your gift is like putting fuel in the tank. We take the financial resources you entrust to us, and we use them for good. Your gift empowers us to expose the evils of abortion like never before. It enables us to ramp up our work helping home schoolers. It expands our ability to provide valuable information and talking points about legislation and court rulings. You can use the response card and envelope enclosed with this letter to make a generous, tax-deductible donation today.

Thank you so much for standing with us. **I always tell people that we have the very best friends and financial supporters in the country—and I mean that. Please remember us in your prayers, and ask God to give us wisdom as we continue the work that He has called us to.** And feel free to call me if there is ever anything my staff or I can do for you.

Sincerely,

Jerry Cox, President

*Thank you!!*

**P.S. We're going to send you a free copy of the 2020 Arkansas Voter's Guide in a few weeks,** but let us know if you need additional copies for your friends or church. Your friendship and support are helping us win the fight against abortion in Arkansas. The U.S. Supreme Court has handed down a couple of really bad rulings recently, but we are not going to let them slow us down. I believe big victories lie before us. Thank you for standing with us and supporting our work.