



FAMILY
COUNCIL

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DECEMBER 2021
UPDATE LETTER

Dear Friends,

According to country music duo Brooks and Dunn, "Happiness on earth ain't just for high achievers." I've often thought about how true that line of the song "Red Dirt Road" really is. The song describes growing up off a rural country road—"out past where the blacktop ends." It may be even more apparent at Christmastime: Happiness, God's blessings, and the spirit of Christmas are for us all.

One cold winter's evening I was driving alone from Mena back to Little Rock when I noticed Christmas lights in the window of the Oden post office. There's something about Christmas lights that make us think of home. Every mile or so a dimly lit home would appear and then pass into the rear view mirror. I began to think about the people who lived in each house. How would Christmas be for them?

Several miles back, I had passed through Cherry Hill, and I thought of a pastor who forfeited any pursuit of fame and riches for the greater reward of working a fulltime job and serving God by pastoring a congregation of really good people—the kind of folks who would stop and help a stranger broken down on the road or leave a basket of groceries on the steps of a family in need.

Down the road in one of those small houses or maybe a trailer there was probably a single mother who would say a Christmas Eve prayer over her children as she tucked them into bed. Expectations of Christmas morning would make their hearts race, and on Christmas Day their squeals of joy would be just as heartfelt as those of the richest kids around.

Then over the next few hills I could see smoke trailing from a stove pipe. I imagined an elderly couple living in a house not updated or repaired in years—like a bird nest after all have flown away. With wrinkled hands joined in prayer they could touch the throne of heaven from an old sofa covered with a blanket beside a wood stove. For them Christmas would be filled with cherished memories that echo with laughter and tears of a good family raised and a godly heritage built.

I thought about how some people look down on others—how they judge based on a person's house, car, education, clothes, popularity, or where they live. Some might look down on certain people and wonder how "those people" could possibly be as happy as everyone else—all crammed into that little bitty, run down house with its meager string of Christmas lights. They don't remember that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. Who knows what mighty things God is doing in the hearts of some little boy or girl who lives down some red dirt road or along some two-lane highway?

I wonder if anyone walked past the manger in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago and wondered how "those people" could possibly be happy and blessed in a barn with a newborn, but they were. It was because God was at work.

So when I drive down a two-lane highway or pass by homes with less than others, it is good to look up and thank God that He is at work everywhere—especially at Christmastime when billions of people turn heavenward to the One who loves us all the same from the red dirt road to the mansion on the hill and beyond.

I hope you enjoy reading this letter reflecting on the work of Family Council this year. During this wonderful Christmas season, I pray no matter where life finds you that you will know His peace, joy, and love. Merry Christmas to you and all your friends and family!



Family Council
President Jerry Cox

MY THOUGHTS: REFLECTING ON ANOTHER YEAR COME AND GONE

Five o'clock on December 31 at the Family Council office is a special time for me. It's one of those times that no one else fully understands or appreciates the same way I do. I'm usually the last person to leave the office on the last day of the year, so everything is quiet. That's when I walk down the hall and think to myself, *We made it through another year.* Over and over I say to myself, *We made it through another year.*

Family Council is 32 years old. Most of those years, we've worked really hard, done a lot of good, and just barely made it financially. Some years as we approached the end of December I honestly wasn't sure if we would have the funds to make it, but we did—and no matter how tight things got for us, we always managed to pay our bills by the year's end. It's such a good feeling

to stand in the office at 5:00 PM on the last day of the year, reflecting on a job well done. It's also a time when I think of all our friends across the state. I think of the donations, prayers, and kind words. I thank God that you and others are still with us, and I pray that you will not leave us. As I close the door on that final day of the year and head to my car to drive home, my thoughts are with this work and with you and all our friends who stand with us. You are right in the middle of this amazing work. You are a friend, an encourager, a fan, a prayer partner, and a supporter all rolled into one. Thank you for standing with us this year! Please keep reading to find out about the good work that you helped us accomplish.

A Few of Our Favorite Christmas Recipes and Traditions



Wild Rice Dressing Recipe

By Lisa Crook, Home School
Director

This is a family favorite. Don't say to yourself, "My family will not eat this!" after you read the ingredients. Honestly, my family would not eat it either. Don't tell

them, but I puree the celery, mushrooms and walnuts. They have no clue those foods are in the dish. You need them for flavoring. Enjoy!!

- 2 six-ounce packages of Uncle Ben's Long Grain & Wild Rice mix.
- 1–2 chopped onions. Use however much you like; I use one onion.
- 10–12 chopped or pureed mushrooms; I puree.
- 6 stalks of chopped or pureed celery; I puree.
- Poultry seasoning to taste.
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt or to taste.
- 1 tablespoon of butter—or more.
- 6–8 ounces of chopped or pureed walnuts; I puree.

Cook rice. Sauté onions, celery, and mushrooms in butter while rice is cooking. Once rice is cooked, add onions, celery, and mushrooms. Mix together, and add walnuts. Mix well, and pour into a greased 9×13 baking pan. Cover with foil, and bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for an additional 15 minutes before serving.



Apple Pumpkin Bundt Cake Recipe

By Erin Hogan, Family Council



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|---|--|
| 2 eggs | |
| ¾ cup white sugar | |
| ½ cup brown sugar | |
| ⅔ cup vegetable oil | |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla extract | |
| ¼ teaspoon salt | |
| 1 tablespoon cinnamon | |
| 4 cups apples, cored, peeled and diced. | |
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| 1 cup pumpkin puree | |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda | |
| 2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted | |
| 1 teaspoon baking powder | |
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- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - In a medium bowl, using electric mixer, beat eggs, white sugar and brown sugar until light in color and creamy, about 4–5 minutes.
 - Add oil and vanilla extract and beat for 1–2 minutes more to blend in the ingredients. Add pumpkin puree and continue beating for 1 more minute to combine.
 - In a separate medium bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon.
 - Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix just until combined. Do not over mix. Fold in the apples.
 - Spray the Bundt pan with baking spray. Carefully pour the batter into the Bundt pan.
 - Bake in the preheated oven at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for about 50 or 60 minutes or until a tooth pick inserted in the cake comes out clean. Let the cake cool on a wire rack for about 40 minutes. Invert the Bundt pan onto the serving platter and let the cake cool further.

Family Council's Greatest Hits 2021

#1: Totally Banning Abortion.

For more than 50 years pro-lifers in Arkansas have worked to prohibit abortion. This year we finally have done so. Act 309 by Sen. Jason Rapert (R – Conway) and Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) prohibits abortion in Arkansas except when the mother's life is at risk. The state legislature passed Act 309 in March, and Governor Hutchinson signed it into law. The law currently is blocked in federal court while the ACLU sues to have it struck down. This is a good law that will force our federal courts to take a serious look at *Roe v. Wade* and other pro-abortion rulings—and it could save thousands of unborn children.

#2: Passing Record Pro-Life Laws.

Arkansas passed more pro-life legislation than any other state. These new laws will protect women and reduce the number of abortions. They include measures prohibiting abortions in hospitals, better regulations on drug-induced abortions, requiring abortion providers to have transfer agreements with local hospitals, and requiring police reports for women seeking abortions for rape or incest.

#3: Allowing People to Visit Family Members in a Nursing Home or Hospital During a Pandemic.

All of us came out of the COVID-19 pandemic with stories about people left to die alone in nursing homes and hospitals. Nobody should have to sit in a hospital or nursing home without being able to see their loved ones. Last year I felt very strongly that Family Council needed to do something to stop this from happening in Arkansas. We were able to work closely with Rep. Julie Mayberry (R – Hensley) to pass Act 311, the No Patient Left Alone Act. This measure protects your loved ones and mine from being left alone without visitors or family members. Passing this bill was a lot of work. We spent countless hours meeting with experts who understand the nuances of our country's healthcare laws. In the end, though, it was a really good bill that is now a really good law. Since last spring we have helped people use the No Patient Left Alone Act to see their loved ones in hospitals and nursing homes.

#4: Stopping the Government from Closing Churches During a Pandemic.

All throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we heard about essential workers and essential businesses. But one group that many states didn't consider essential was churches. Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson didn't try to target churches during the COVID-19 shutdowns the way other governors did, but our news media and others still unfairly

blamed churches for the spread of the coronavirus. Act 94 of 2021 by Rep. Mary Bentley (R – Perryville) and Sen. Kim Hammer (R – Benton) recognizes that religion and religious organizations are essential in Arkansas. Act 94 protects churches and religious groups without hampering the government's ability to respond during a pandemic. Family Council was proud to support this good law. Governor Hutchinson chose to let it take effect without actually signing it into law, and he even went so far as to write a letter to the Arkansas House of Representatives complaining that the law suggests his office didn't properly handle the COVID-19 pandemic. However, to the governor's credit he did let Act 94 become law.

#5: Defeating Bad End-of-Life Legislation.

In March and April, Family Council worked with National Right to Life, Arkansas Right to Life, Euthanasia Prevention Coalition USA, Arkansas Advocates for Nursing Home Residents, the Catholic Diocese of Little Rock, national experts on life-sustaining medical treatment, Arkansas lawyers, a palliative care physician, a hospital ethicist, and others to defeat two really bad bills: H.B. 1685 and H.B. 1686 by Rep. Michelle Gray (R – Melbourne) and Sen. Breanne Davis (R – Russellville). These bills would have made it easier to deny food and water to people who are dying and weakened our laws surrounding life-sustaining treatment. These were complicated measures that were very difficult to stop. Several legislators became very angry with us for fighting these bad bills. A prominent nursing home owner personally called to tell us that the bills were certain to pass and that we ought to drop our opposition to them. We tried to arrange a meeting with him to discuss our concerns about the bills and hear what he had to say about them, but he canceled the meeting and never offered to reschedule. We had no choice but to fight these bills until they were defeated on the floor of the House of Representatives. We're very grateful to every legislator who opposed these bad bills.

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*Jerry Cox testifies against bad end-of-life legislation
in the House Public Health Committee on April 8.*



Family Council's Greatest Hits 2021 *(continued)*

#6: Prohibiting Sex-Change Procedures on Children.

Act 626, the Save Adolescents From Experimentation (SAFE) Act, by Rep. Robin Lundstrum (R – Springdale) and Sen. Alan Clark (R – Lonsdale) prohibits sex-reassignment procedures on children in Arkansas. You would think that a bill protecting children from sex-change surgery and chemical castration would be a no-brainer. Instead LGBT activists descended on the Arkansas Capitol Building. They screamed at legislators, were disrespectful during committee testimony, made idle—but troubling—threats against people who supported the SAFE Act, and brought relentless pressure against elected officials. Gov. Hutchinson's decision to veto the SAFE Act added gasoline to the fire by putting lawmakers in the position of having to vote on the measure a second time. In the end, our lawmakers stood their ground and overrode his veto. The law currently is tied up in court, but we believe it ultimately will be upheld. Arkansans ought to be proud of their courageous legislators for passing such a good law in the face of such vicious opposition.

#7: Keeping Planned Parenthood Out of Our Schools.

In March Family Council sent Freedom of Information Act requests to several public school districts in central Arkansas requesting documents related to Planned Parenthood. The Pulaski County Special School District responded with 1,395 pages of redacted documents revealing that Planned



From Left: Rep. Lundstrum and Joseph Backholm of Family Research Council testify in favor of H.B. 1570, the SAFE Act, in the House Public Health Committee on March 9.

Parenthood has been very active in public schools in and around Little Rock and North Little Rock. That information helped fuel legislation like Act 820 by Rep. Mark Lowery (R – Maumelle) that keeps abortion groups out of Arkansas' public schools. Act 820 largely flew under the radar until it finally passed the Arkansas Legislature—but after it passed, several different news outlets noticed. Act 820 is unique in that it prohibits public schools from entering into any type of agreement or arrangement with an abortion provider. This will keep groups like Planned Parenthood from promoting their sex-education programs to our public school students.

#8: Enacting the Nation's Strongest Medical Rights of Conscience Law.

It has taken us several years, but we finally secured passage of legislation protecting healthcare workers' rights of conscience: Act 462 by Sen. Kim Hammer (R – Benton) and Rep. Brandt Smith (R – Jonesboro). In years past Governor Hutchinson's administration and the radical pro-LGBT lobby both opposed this bill—even though all it really says is that you can't force a healthcare professional to perform a medical procedure that violates his or her convictions. The legislation is crafted in such a way that it could not be used to deny somebody lifesaving treatment or to discriminate against a person or group of people. This year the governor was neutral on the bill, but it still drew opposition from Walmart and the State Chamber of Commerce. Walmart's CEO even wrote a letter to Governor Hutchinson expressing his opposition to the conscience protections. Despite Walmart's opposition, the bill passed, and the governor signed it into law. That means healthcare professionals in Arkansas now have some of the best conscience protections in the country.

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Left: The Family Council team pauses with supporters of legislation protecting fairness in women's sports in this photo from March 8.

Family Council's Greatest Hits 2021 *(continued)*

#9: Pushing Back Against Vaccine Mandates.

For more than 20 years Family Council has supported accommodations for individuals who have conscientious objections to vaccine mandates. In the late 1990s those vaccine mandates primarily occurred in public school and colleges. Today we're seeing vaccine mandates promoted by the federal government and rolled out via large swaths of the corporate world. Over the summer we worked with lawmakers and Arkansans to promote legislation that would provide accommodations for employees in Arkansas who decline the COVID-19 vaccine. Legislation passed at the General Assembly this year should help give Arkansans some relief if they choose not to utilize a coronavirus vaccine.

#10: Establishing Pro-Life Cities and Counties in Arkansas.

This year Arkansas enacted Act 392 of 2021 by Rep. Kendon Underwood (R – Cave Springs) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch). This excellent law affirms that cities, towns, and counties in Arkansas can designate themselves as Pro-Life. We've worked successfully to help communities across the state pass resolutions affirming they are Pro-Life. As of November, Arkansas' Pro-Life Communities include Washington, Benton, Crawford, Cleburne, Pope, Jackson, Saline, Faulkner, Perry, Sebastian, Lee, White, and Prairie counties, and the communities of Marianna, Russellville, Springdale, LaGrange, and Moro. National pro-life outlets like Life News and American Life League have recognized the effort to establish Pro-Life Communities across Arkansas this year.

#11: Hosting Monthly Prayer Meetings on Zoom.

A couple of years ago our team began gathering with a few friends and supporters for prayer every month at the Arkansas Capitol Building. When COVID hit, we moved those prayer meetings online. Since then they have grown. Dozens of people gather with us every month to hear from leaders like former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, Tim Barton of Wallbuilders, Matt Sharp of Alliance Defending Freedom, and many others. We typically have a special guest who shares a few thoughts with our group, and then two or three individuals lead us in a time of prayer. These meetings have been phenomenal. Email Erin on our team at erin@familycouncil.org if you would like to attend our next prayer meeting online.

Right: Since learning that Planned Parenthood had secretly acquired a new facility in Northwest Arkansas, pro-lifers have held a series of peaceful gatherings to pray against abortion at the location.



On April 7 Jerry Cox testified against "hate crimes" legislation in committee.

#12: Exposing Planned Parenthood in Rogers.

In the summer of 2019 Planned Parenthood closed its Fayetteville abortion facility after its landlord reportedly chose not to renew the abortion giant's lease. For two years the nation's largest abortion provider didn't have a presence in Northwest Arkansas. But in August our team was able to confirm that Planned Parenthood had secretly acquired a facility in Rogers through a separate company. The facility was very close to opening, but we were able to work with our good friends in Northwest Arkansas to tell the public about it. Today, Planned Parenthood's facility in Rogers technically is open for business, but as of a few weeks ago, it still is not licensed to do abortions. Had it not been for pro-lifers in Arkansas and for new laws passed at the state legislature this year, Planned Parenthood probably would have been able to open a fully-operational abortion facility in Northwest Arkansas without anybody realizing what they were up to until it was too late. Family Council and the pro-lifers on the ground in Benton County received recognition from national pro-life organizations for the way we exposed Planned Parenthood's pro-abortion agenda in Northwest Arkansas.



Arkansas Named Most Pro-Life State in America Two Years In a Row

On November 15, Americans United for Life (AUL)—one of the nation's leading pro-life organizations—named Arkansas the most pro-life state in America for the second year in a row! The rankings are based on state laws protecting the unborn, the elderly, the disabled, and the terminally ill. Overall, Arkansas' laws upholding the sanctity of human life are the best in the country.

Making Arkansas such a pro-life state has been a team effort, and it has taken decades of tireless work. Pro-lifers in Arkansas today stand on the shoulders of giants who fought the good fight when it wasn't easy and it wasn't popular. Arkansas Right to Life, Family Council, Eagle Forum, the Faith and Ethics Council, Arkansas' crisis pregnancy centers, the General Assembly, the governor, the attorney general, doctors, ministers, churches, and everyday Arkansans—they all have played a crucial part in making Arkansas the most pro-life state in America.

AUL also published a report indicating that Arkansas passed more pro-life measures in 2021 than any other state. There is still work to do. Abortion still ends the lives of some three thousand babies in Arkansas every year. However, public

opinion polling shows Arkansans don't support abortion on demand. We're winning the fight to end abortion in our state. It's very encouraging to see groups like Americans United for Life recognize the pro-life gains that Arkansas has made.

LIFE LIST 2022

Where Does Your State Stand on the Human Right to Life?

1. Arkansas	11. Alabama	21. South Carolina	31. Virginia	41. Connecticut
2. Louisiana	12. Texas	22. Florida	32. Montana	42. California
3. Arizona	13. Kentucky	23. Pennsylvania	33. Alaska	43. Massachusetts
4. Oklahoma	14. Tennessee	24. Wisconsin	34. New Hampshire	44. New York
5. Indiana	15. North Dakota	25. Iowa	35. Colorado	45. Washington
6. Mississippi	16. Georgia	26. West Virginia	36. Nevada	46. Hawaii
7. Kansas	17. Utah	27. Wyoming	37. Illinois	47. New Mexico
8. Idaho	18. Michigan	28. North Carolina	38. Maine	48. Oregon
9. South Dakota	19. Ohio	29. Minnesota	39. Maryland	49. New Jersey
10. Missouri	20. Nebraska	30. Delaware	40. Rhode Island	50. Vermont

Visit [AUL.ORG/SPOTLIGHT](https://www.aul.org/spotlight) to discover what your state can do to become more pro-life.

Poll Shows Arkansans Think Abortion Ought to Be Illegal in Most or All Cases

In November the University of Arkansas released its annual Arkansas Poll examining Arkansans' attitudes on elected officials and social issues. The poll found that 26% of likely voters in Arkansas believe abortion ought to be completely illegal. Another 53% of likely voters said they believe abortion ought to be illegal except in certain circumstances. In other words, the vast majority of Arkansans believe abortion ought to be illegal or limited to certain situations—like saving the life of the mother.

Arkansans overwhelmingly reject abortion, and Arkansas' lawmakers have passed a lot of legislation protecting the lives of unborn children in recent years. That is one reason abortion in Arkansas has fallen to the lowest levels since the 1970s, and abortion among teenagers is at an all-time low. Public opinion is helping drive Arkansas' abortion numbers down. Slowly but surely we are ending abortion in Arkansas.

Number of Pro-Life Communities in Arkansas Climbs Higher and Higher

Arkansas has more than a dozen Pro-Life Cities and Counties—and we expect the number to grow in the coming year. Last spring the Arkansas Legislature passed Act 392 of 2021 by Rep. Kendon Underwood (R – Cave Springs) and Sen. Gary Stubblefield (R – Branch). This excellent law affirms that cities, towns, and counties in Arkansas can designate themselves as Pro-Life. As of November 15, Pro-Life Communities in Arkansas include:

- Washington County
- Benton County
- Crawford County
- Cleburne County
- Pope County
- Jackson County
- Saline County
- Faulkner County
- Perry County
- Sebastian County
- Lee County
- White County

- Prairie County
- The City of Mariana
- The Town of LaGrange
- The Town of Moro
- The City of Russellville
- The City of Springdale

We know from public opinion polling that the vast majority of Arkansans believe abortion ought to be either completely illegal or legal only under certain circumstances. With that in mind, it makes sense that cities and counties across Arkansas would vote to affirm that they are Pro-Life.

Take Action: We are looking for motivated volunteers who aren't afraid to take a Pro-Life Resolution to their city council or quorum court. If that's you, then please call our office at (501) 375-7000, and Erin on our staff will send you the resources you need to pass a Pro-Life Resolution in your community.

Here are the Constitutional Amendments You Will See on the Ballot in November 2022

We're less than a year away from the 2022 elections. Any more the campaign season seems to start earlier and earlier. In fact, it almost doesn't seem to end. Here's a brief look at some of the ballot measures you are likely to hear about in the coming months.

H.J.R. 1005 is a proposed State Constitutional Amendment that raises the percentage of the vote required for voter approval of State Constitutional Amendments and initiated acts from the current threshold of a simple majority to at least 60% of the vote.

S.J.R. 10 is a proposed State Constitutional Amendment that will appear on the November 2022 General Election ballot. This proposed State Constitutional Amendment will allow the Arkansas General Assembly to call itself into special session during a state of emergency.

S.J.R. 14 is a proposed constitutional amendment that prevents the government from burdening a person's free exercise of religion. The measure is similar to Arkansas' state Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

There may be measures placed on the ballot via the petition process. Right now there are petition drives underway to legalize recreational marijuana and expand other vices. It is very difficult to place a measure on the ballot via the petition process without deep pockets or a large group of volunteers. We are monitoring these efforts to see if any of them have a reasonable possibility of making the ballot in November. If they do, we plan to address them.

Recreational Marijuana Proposals Are Vying for the 2022 Ballot

Pro-marijuana petitions are circulating in Arkansas right now. If successful, these petition efforts would place measures on the November 2022 ballot to legalize recreational marijuana in our state. The proposals are not all the same. Some would let people grow their own marijuana. Some arguably would give corporations a monopoly on marijuana in Arkansas. But one thing every one of these proposals has in common is that recreational marijuana would be bad for Arkansans.

Today it's impossible to deny that marijuana is harmful. A report published last March in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that states that allowed commercial marijuana sales saw "self-harm rates rise by 46% among men ages 21 to 39." Self-harm includes suicide attempts and behaviors like cutting. In July NBC News published an article regarding the link between high-potency marijuana and psychotic episodes and vomiting. A study published in the September issue of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* found that adults under age 45 who frequently use marijuana are roughly twice as likely to suffer from a heart attack as adults who do not use marijuana. A recent study out of California found a link between heavy marijuana use during pregnancy and negative health outcomes among children. A growing body of research suggests marijuana can have damaging effects on adolescent brains. The list goes on, but all of this underscores what we have said for years: Marijuana may be many things, but "harmless" is not one of them.

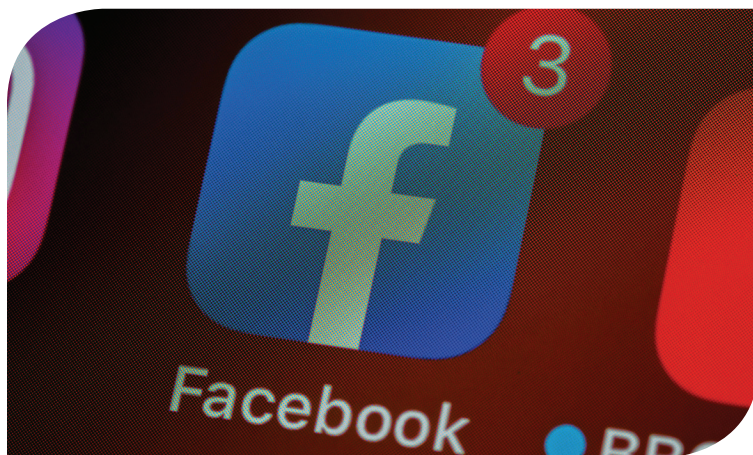
Facebook Suspended Our Ad Account—But We Got It Back

On November 2 Family Council received an email from Facebook informing us that it had disabled our ad account. Family Council is authorized to run political ads on Facebook. From time to time we use our Facebook ad account to boost the stories and videos that we share on social media to make sure that people see them.

Facebook's email indicated that we had violated its Unacceptable Business Practices Policy, but did not say exactly how. We could not find anything on our Facebook page that runs afoul of this policy.

Coincidentally, Facebook's email came after we submitted a request to boost one of our videos about the lawsuit against the Jonesboro Public Library. Nothing in that video violates Facebook's policy, but it's the only post we have tried to advertise recently. We pushed back against the decision, and a few days later we received an equally terse message saying that our account had been reinstated. We've asked for an explanation from Facebook, but so far they haven't given us one—and we doubt they ever will.

All of this underscores two things: First, that tech companies seem to have virtually no accountability when it comes to suppressing or throttling free speech. They unilaterally pick the winners and losers on their platforms. And second, that conservatives should not count on social media for news and information.



Lawsuit Showcases Graphic Sexual Material in Jonesboro Children's Library

Parents generally expect public libraries to be safe places where children can read books without having to worry about what they might come across. Sure, there may be mature material in the adult sections of the library, but as a rule the books in the children's area are innocent, right? Unfortunately, that does not seem to be the case anymore.

On October 6 the Jonesboro Public Library Board's Sensitive Content Subcommittee met to discuss books in the children's area of the library that contained nudity and sexually-explicit images—including illustrations of sexual acts. Some of the images were so explicit that frankly it's shocking they could be distributed in a public library at

all—much less printed in books for teenagers and children. The Jonesboro Public Library Board failed to advertise the meeting ahead of time to the general public—meaning that parents and members of the community did not have an opportunity to find out about the explicit material at the library or comment on how the library board ought to address the material. In the end, the subcommittee was not able to reach a decision on how to address the graphic sexual material in its children's library. Some of the board

members opposed the material while others did not seem to think it was a big deal.

On October 27 an attorney from Fort Smith and a former member of the library board filed a lawsuit against the board. The lawsuit alleges that the library board failed to comply with Arkansas' open meetings law, and it also showcased some of the explicit material that the subcommittee met to discuss without notifying the public.

Ordinarily in a situation like this, Family Council would provide copies of the inappropriate material alongside this story. That's what we did last summer when the Jonesboro Public Library celebrated gay pride in its children's area—we reprinted examples of the pro-LGBT books and material the library put in its children's area so people could see for themselves what was going on. However, this situation is different. In this case, the material is so explicit and so offensive that our team doesn't feel comfortable sharing it. If a TV station showed the images in these books on the evening news, the FCC probably would penalize the network. Let that sink in.

Here are some of the books mentioned in the Jonesboro lawsuit. If you want to see for yourself what is in them, you can look them up online or check to see if they are in the children's section at your local library.

- *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe (Our team found this book listed in the card catalog for the Main Library in downtown Little Rock)
- *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie Harris – (Available at the Central Arkansas Library System's Children's Library, Main Library, Maumelle Library, Rooker Library, Sanders Library, and Terry Library)
- *L8r, g8r* by Lauren Myracle – (Available in the Young Adult Fiction section of the Maumelle Library)



The Jonesboro Public Library made headlines last summer when it placed inappropriate books like *The GayBCs* in its children's section.

What Should I Do If My Library Has Inappropriate Material in Its Children's Section?

If you find inappropriate material—such as one of the books listed above—in your library, here are three steps you can take to have it removed:

First, ask the librarian for a copy of the library's material reconsideration form. The material reconsideration form is a form that libraries often use for fielding complaints about certain books. Be prepared to complete the form and turn it back in to the library.

Second, talk to the library board members. This could be a letter, an email, or a phone call. Find out who the library board members are, and then let them know that there is harmful material in the library.

Third, talk to your elected officials. Public libraries rely on their communities for support, and talking to your state legislators and your city and county leaders is one way you may be able to get inappropriate material removed from the library.

Be sure to encourage your friends to take these steps as well. The more people make their voices heard against inappropriate material in the library, the more likely it is that the material will be removed.

Goals Met and Promises Kept

Last year we outlined a long list of projects and goals for 2021. Looking back, I can honestly say that we accomplished or partially accomplished nearly all of them. Some are still in progress, and we've had a few setbacks along the way. Altogether, though, 2021 arguably has been the most successful year in Family Council's history. Here's a quick look back at goals met and promises kept this year.

Achieved: Establish the Rapid Response Network. We recruited over 500 people, at least three in each of Arkansas' State House Districts, who agreed to contact their lawmaker every time we asked. They did so, and we saw lawmakers vote our way in larger numbers than ever. When they heard from home, it made a difference in how they voted.

Achieved: Require Hospitals and Nursing Homes to Let People Be With their Dying Loved Ones During a Pandemic. Working with Rep. Julie Mayberry and our friends in the legislature, we helped write and pass Act 311 that requires nursing homes and hospitals to let patients have visitors.

Achieved: Stopping Sex-Changes on Children. Working with Rep. Robin Lundstrum, we helped draft and pass Act 626 that prevents sex change procedures on minors. The ACLU and others have sued to block the state from enforcing the law, and trial in that lawsuit is scheduled for July. We believe courts ultimately will uphold Act 626 as constitutional.

In Progress: Establishing Hundreds of Pro-life Cities and Counties. Working with Rep. Kendon Underwood, we drafted and secured passage of a law affirming that cities can declare themselves to be pro-life and that they can promote their pro-life status. Now we are using this good law to help communities in Arkansas affirm that they are pro-life. We are organizing a major effort for 2022 to establish many more Pro-Life Cities and Counties.

Achieved: Keeping Boys Out of Girls Sports. Working with Sen. Missy Irvin, we helped draft and pass Act 461, a law that prevents biological males who identify as female from competing against girls in female sports at school. This law was *not* challenged in court, and it is currently in full effect in Arkansas.

Partially Achieved: Stopping Hate Crimes Laws. While we were able to stop the bad "hate-crimes" law proposed by Governor Hutchinson and Sen. Hendren, we were unable to stop Act 681, a watered-down hate-crimes law.



In October Jerry Cox and part of the team at Family Council were honored to visit American Family Radio in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Achieved: Passing Good Laws and Defeating Bad Laws.

Altogether we worked for the passage of over 30 good laws, and we helped defeat nearly a dozen bad laws. Working with Sen. Jason Rapert, we secured passage of S.J.R. 14, a proposed state constitutional amendment that will appear on the 2022 Arkansas General Election ballot. If passed by voters, no state will have stronger religious freedom protection than Arkansas. We worked with Rep. Mark Lowery to pass Act 623 to make it easier for a student to transfer from a public school to a home school. We also worked on home school legislation that resulted in the Department of Education creating policies that enable home schoolers to gain better access to standardized testing like the PSAT and ACT. Our work with Rep. Mary Bentley on Act 94 resulted in a good law that prevents the government from closing churches during a pandemic while other essential services remain open.

Achieved: Opposing Public Drinking Districts, Casinos, Marijuana, and the Expansion of Other Vices.

Working with our friends at the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, we held at bay several efforts to expand the sale and availability of alcohol. We were unable to stop the passage of Act 874 that allows public drinking in dry counties where a private club has a permit to sell alcohol. We secured passage of Act 342 that prohibits the use of medical symbols in marijuana advertising. H.B. 1869 that would have allowed people to play the lottery online was stopped in the House Rules Committee.

Achieved: Opposing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide.

H.B. 1685 and H.B. 1686 sponsored by Rep. Michelle Gray would have made it easier for healthcare facilities to discontinue life support and deny food and water to terminally ill patients. These bills would have made it easier for nursing homes to hide instances of abuse or neglect, and they would have redefined what it means to be terminally ill. We worked with a coalition of groups to defeat these bad bills.

Achieved: Prohibiting Abortion in Arkansas. We worked with Sen. Jason Rapert to pass Act 309, a law that makes abortion illegal in Arkansas except to save the life of the mother. The ACLU has asked the federal courts to strike the law down as unconstitutional. Pro-lifers are turning that lawsuit to our advantage by using it as an opportunity to ask the federal courts to overturn decades of bad rulings on abortion.



Left: Mayor Richard Harris (left) and Family Council staff member Ken Yang (right) celebrated passage of a pro-life resolution at the Russellville City Council in October.

Here's A Little of What We Have Planned for 2022!

It's hard to believe, but 2021 is almost over. You've helped us accomplish so much this year! We have big plans for 2022. Here's a quick look at some of what we want to achieve next year:

1. Distribute Thousands of Copies of Our Arkansas Voter's Guide. We survey the candidates for public office. We ask them where they stand on issues like abortion, economic policy, the Second Amendment, and other topics that Arkansans care about. We publish their responses in print and online, and we share them free of charge. Nobody else does that. We plan to distribute thousands of copies of our Arkansas Voter's Guide all across the state ahead of the 2022 elections in the spring and fall.

2. Assist Home Schoolers All Over Arkansas. Whether your family is just getting started home schooling or trying to navigate graduation and college applications, our Education Alliance office has been here to help since 1998. We plan to continue assisting home schoolers across the state in 2022.

3. Expand, Equip, and Mobilize Our Rapid Response Network. There's no doubt our Rapid Response Network made a difference this year. Volunteers across Arkansas were able to make their voices heard at the Arkansas Legislature and helped their friends stand up for what is right, too. We have a three-prong plan for our Rapid Response Network in 2022: We want to expand it to be larger and stronger. We want to equip it with more information and resources. And we want to mobilize the Rapid Response Network to take a powerful stand in Arkansas next year.

4. Work to End Abortion in Arkansas. This year we helped secure passage of legislation prohibiting abortion in Arkansas. That good law currently is tied up in court, but we are working on other measures that could successfully end abortion in Arkansas. We are also working on efforts that could help eliminate the demand for abortion in Arkansas.

5. Host Monthly Prayer Meetings Online. We plan to continue hosting monthly meetings online where Arkansans can gather to pray and to hear from some of our state's top leaders.

6. Establish Pro-Life Cities and Counties All Over Arkansas. One way we can build a culture of life in Arkansas is to establish Pro-Life Communities across the state. We plan to continue establishing Pro-Life Cities and Pro-Life Counties in Arkansas next year. We also intend to help these communities continue to stand up for the sanctity of human life. Passing a pro-life resolution is a good first step, but there's more that can be done. We look forward to working with these communities in 2022.

7. Oppose Critical Theory and Pro-LGBT Efforts in Arkansas. There's no doubt that critical theories—like critical race theory and theories about intersectionality—and pro-LGBT ideologies are infiltrating our state. That's become apparent from discussions about everything from public education to public assistance to charitable grants awarded by organizations like the Walmart Foundation. We intend to oppose critical theory and pro-LGBT efforts in the next year.

8. Fight Marijuana in Arkansas. Many of the same people who supported so-called "medical" marijuana a few years ago are championing recreational marijuana today. Whether it's medical or recreational marijuana, we remain committed to opposing the expansion of marijuana in Arkansas.

9. Oppose Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide. We are winning the fight to end abortion, but we are not winning the fight over euthanasia and assisted suicide. Many Arkansans don't understand how serious a threat these two issues are. We are talking with some of our state's top leaders in medical ethics and palliative care about ways to improve our state laws that protect the sick and dying. Our goal is to ensure that there is no place for assisted suicide or euthanasia in our state. That is going to be an ongoing project over the next several months.

10. Keep Arkansas the Most Pro-Life State in the Nation. For two years in a row Americans United for Life named Arkansas the most pro-life state in America. That was a tremendous honor. We plan to work to keep Arkansas as the nation's most pro-life state for years to come.

11. Oppose Unconditional Vaccine Mandates. No one should be forced to utilize a vaccine against their conscience or against the advice of their doctor. People with religious, philosophical, or medical objections to vaccinations should be accommodated somehow. We've done that for years for school-aged children, college students, and nursing home employees who object to vaccines. We need to make sure we continue doing that as the Biden Administration pushes vaccine mandates in 2022.

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Here's A Little of What We Have Planned for 2022! *(continued)*

12. Oppose The Expansion of Gambling in Arkansas.

Arkansas has been under relentless pressure to expand gambling in recent years. We plan to continue opposing any effort to bring more gambling to our state.

13. Continue Building On the "No Patient Left Alone"

Act. This year the Arkansas Legislature passed the No Patient Left Alone Act that protects hospital patients and nursing home residents from being left alone and denied visitors. Many medical facilities don't seem to understand how this law works, and many Arkansans don't know their rights and privileges under this law. In 2022 we hope to educate people about this good law and help them take full advantage of it.

14. Support Religious Liberty In Our State. If 2022 is anything like 2021 or 2020, you can expect attacks against the free exercise of religion in our state. The Biden Administration likely intends to squelch religious expression nationwide through different federal agencies—just like the Obama Administration tried to do back a few years ago. In November of next year Arkansans will decide whether or not to add a religious freedom amendment to the state constitution. We intend to support and defend religious freedom in Arkansas.

15. Secure Funding for Pregnancy Resource Centers. We are working with the ARFuture Foundation to secure funding for pregnancy resource centers in Arkansas. These centers are on the front lines in the fight to end abortion. They assist women with unplanned pregnancies, and they do it free of charge.

16. Host Pastors Day at the Capitol. We plan to bring ministers and church leaders to Little Rock for our annual Pas-

tors Day at the Capitol. This event provides an opportunity to minister to our state's elected leaders. Pastors Day at the Capitol is one of the best things we do all year.

17. Host Home School Day at the Capitol. Home School Day at the Capitol provides home schoolers with an opportunity to visit the Arkansas Capitol Building, meet with legislators, and see the General Assembly in action. It's educational for students, and it helps make a good impression on state legislators. We look forward to hosting this event in February.

18. Honor Arkansas' Longest-Married Couples. One of the best decisions we ever made was a few years ago when we decided to honor the husband and wife in Arkansas who had been married the longest. We've met several couples who have been married for more than 70 years, and we've been able to recognize them. Honoring Arkansas' longest-married couples shows younger generations that love and commitment truly can last a lifetime. We hope to honor the ten couples in Arkansas who have been married the longest in the coming year.

19. Prevent the State From Taxing Nonprofits. This year proposals were offered to make it easier for the government to find ways to tax churches, charities, and other nonprofits. We joined with others in opposing those proposals—and so far we have been successful. Next year we intend to continue opposing any effort to tax nonprofit organizations in Arkansas.

20. Host a Worldview Summit. In 2022 we intend to host a worldview summit to help equip leaders in Arkansas to think and operate biblically. If it is successful, we may look for opportunities to expand and host similar events in Arkansas in the future.



We look forward to hosting Pastors Day at the Capitol in February.

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL OF US AT FAMILY COUNCIL!

As you and your family gather this year around hearth and home, I pray that God will bless you with all of His peace, joy, and love. I am so glad that during this most special time of the year our friends across the state remember us and the work we do. I am both humbled and blessed—humbled that you and so many others are standing with us—blessed that so many have shared their finances so faithfully for so long—many for over 32 years!

The grace of God working through the generosity of all our friends made the year 2020 our best financial year ever! Our friends gave so generously last year that we didn't have to think about finances as we fought and won all those legislative battles earlier this year. This helped make 2021 our best legislative year ever!

A few months ago I was concerned that donations might slow down, but they have not. You and our friends have seen our success, and, thankfully, you have kept on blessing us with your gifts. In fact, 2021 might end up being just as strong financially as our record year in 2020. Thanks to you and our other friends, we have more financial "breathing room" now than ever before.

I do wonder sometimes if we're about to hit hard times and we're going to need those extra funds, or if some big expense is just over the horizon and God is preparing us so we can cover it. Or maybe He wants us to tackle other issues with a larger staff and budget. I hope you will join me in praying for God to continue revealing His will regarding our finances, our agenda, and how we can best use the money that you and others entrust to us. Already, we have plenty of battles like abortion, COVID mandates, and critical race theory. These funds will help us be strong in these fights.

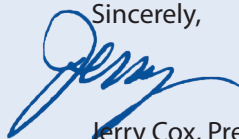
I'm writing this letter on November 12. At this time, we're about \$180,000 short of last year's total donations. By the time you read this letter, other gifts will have arrived, but we will almost certainly be a little short of the previous year's amount. There is still time to give a tax-deductible gift before December 31.

I know that by now many of our friends will have completed their giving to us for the year. I am so grateful for all the help! Some of our friends may still be wrapping up their donations, and I pray you will give as you are led. We still need your support.

A few people who are receiving this letter may never have given a gift to help us. Now would be a great time to get on board, because every month we need new supporters to step up and fill gaps created when some of our friends can no longer give.

It's time for me to sign off for 2021. Lord willing, you will hear from me again in the January 2022 Family Council update letter. Until then, may you and your family have a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year! God bless you!!

Sincerely,



Jerry Cox, President

Thank you!!



Merry Christmas!

From Left: Lisa Crook, Jerry Cox, Luke McCoy, Doris Cox, Erin Hogan, Charisse Dean, Ken Yang, David Cox, and Leslie Byrd.