

## GUEST COLUMN: LOVED TWICE

She said, “Mrs. Hanneman, you are pregnant. Congratulations!”

I nodded numbly and went through the motions of making the next prenatal appointment. You see, I was not a “Mrs.” at all, but was a college senior, pregnant and not married, with no prospects of getting married to cover the “problem.” It was 1968, the era of “free love.” But I was soon to understand that that kind of love was not free at all.

For the next few weeks, pondering what to do, I was in a state of panic. I did not even know who the father was, because I did not have a steady boyfriend but had “enjoyed” encounters with several college men.

The pregnancy basically halted my life. I was training to become a teacher. In those days, one could not “be of immoral character” and still be hired. Therefore, there could be no visiting local bars or swearing or having a live-in boyfriend, let alone having a baby out of wedlock. All my college preparations and future plans were about to blow up, vaporize.

I hoped for a natural abortion due to stress and even took a wild motorcycle ride to help move things along. But the pregnancy continued. I thought about approaching a previous boyfriend and getting him to marry me, even if I had to trick him into thinking the baby was his. I thought about seeking an abortionist; but abortion was illegal and unsafe, and I did not have money for it, anyway.

I sought help from a trusted professor. He directed me to the local welfare department, where a social worker connected me with a church-run home for unwed mothers in a distant city.

Giving no explanation, I dropped out of college at the semester break. The social worker

drove me to the home. There, isolated from relatives and former friends, I spent several months. The isolation was necessary to protect my immediate family from embarrassment. It also gave me the opportunity to return to school, finish my degree, and earn teaching credentials should I choose to resume my career path.

The isolation was a blessing, as well. It allowed me the time to examine my own character, to discover what I really believed about life, and to make some changes.

A small United Methodist church in the area, St. Luke’s United Methodist Church of La Crosse, WI, asked the home if any of the residents would like a ride to church on Sundays. I took up the offer and was picked up each week by Hazel. Soon she

asked if I would like to sing in the choir, and I gratefully joined.

Through their loving acceptance of me and through the pastor’s Lenten sermons, I came to understand my sin and God’s

provision for salvation through Jesus Christ. I gave myself to the Lord and trusted Him with my future and my baby’s.

Through counseling sessions with a social worker, I analyzed my past, my character, and my potential. She emphasized that, in deciding what to do with my baby (raise the baby myself or put the baby up for adoption), I should consider the results of raising a child as a single woman. It was possible that in trying to be responsible, I could condemn us both to lives of poverty (for I would not be able to support us from teaching and would have no other professional training), isolation (for unwed mothers and their children were shunned in the society that I was used to at that time), and unfilled potential. I also might end up resenting the child, because of this. It was very important that both of us be loved. I came to see that an adopted baby was loved twice—not only by the family that received the child, but also by the mother who gave

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the child to them. I opted for adoption.

In those days, there were no open adoptions that allowed the birth mother to keep track of her child. But I did have one, last opportunity to hold my baby girl and say goodbye. I remember looking at her from head to toe and asking God to bless her and take care of her. Then she was gone, given to a young couple that could not conceive and that was anxious to love and guide her.

I felt empty, yet full. Gone was the baby who had been within me for nine months. Present was a new relationship with God that would sustain me into the future.

Some may wonder if I ever had guilt over giving up my baby. I can truly say, "Never!" I did the best I could for my child, gave her life (not death), and offered her to a family that welcomed and loved her.

(After my daughter turned 18, she undertook a search, with her adoptive parents' approval, to find me. I always had been willing to know her, should the opportunity arise. We were reunited successfully, I became part of her family, and she part of mine. She has blended with her three, younger half-sisters and now has eight children of her own.)

—Judy Hanneman  
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## **NANO TECHNOLOGY: WHAT IS IT? WHY SHOULD WE CARE?**

At the beginning of May, attending the United Methodist Women's Assembly in Anaheim, California, I had the privilege of representing Lifewatch. I went primarily as an observer.

When registering for the Assembly, each attendee was asked to select 5 of 40 focus groups of interest. Because of my association with Lifewatch, I had requested "Controversies and Challenges in Reproductive Health for Women" and "The Ethics of NANO Technology and Other Life Issues." The registrant then assigned each person to one focus group on Friday and to a different focus group on Saturday. I was not assigned to the first group of choice, but was directed to the second. Without a doubt, learning about NANO technology was the most interesting experience I had during the entire Assembly.

The presenter on NANO technology was

Reverend Eileen Lindner, a Presbyterian pastor and Deputy General Secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC). After telling us how she had become involved in the issue (that is, as a result of a layman's question several years ago, the NCC authorized a study), she explained what NANO technology is, and why it is, and should be, of concern to the churches.

Briefly, NANO technology is any technology which exploits phenomena and structures that can occur only at the nanometer scale, which is the scale of single atoms and small molecules. As discussed in this focus group, NANO technology is bio-technology; and it includes, among other techniques, genetic selection.

According to Rev. Lindner, "there is a wide range of biotechnologies coming into use, and the possibilities and perils for the enhancement of human life are significant." Genetically modified foods are already available. We also hear about cloning, stem-cell research, and gene manipulation. Whether we understand them or not, all of these issues have strong implications for the Church, for our society, and for each of us.

*"...[c]loning, stem-cell research, and gene manipulation. Whether we understand them or not, all of these issues have strong implications for the Church, for our society, and for each of us. Where does the Church draw the line?"*

Where does the Church draw the line? Science and business concern themselves primarily with the ability to do these things. They do not worry so much about the ethical problems raised along the way.

Near the end of her presentation, Rev. Lindner offered a two-part question for discussion: (1) If the technology were available, should public funds pay for parents to take their 100-IQ child for therapy to become a 140-IQ child, so that their child could attend Harvard University? (2) If the technology were available, should public funds allow parents to take their 60-IQ child for therapy to become a 100-IQ child, so that their child could learn to tie shoes and read? Another question for discussion was, "As NANO technology extends the lives of people to 100, 120, or even 200 years, should some people be required to die?"

The Church must be involved. As Rev. Lindner reminded us, "The Christian Church needs to be the 'sanctuary' for people who are being phased-out through biotechnology."

Just because we can create something does not mean that we should.

(The complete NCC report, entitled "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made," is available at [www.NCCUSA.org](http://www.NCCUSA.org).) —Cindy Evans♥

## PUBLIC OPINION ON ABORTION

A couple of public opinion surveys have recently revealed that American society as a whole is much more pro-life than is commonly believed. The two surveys, by Zogby International and Harris Interactive, were conducted primarily for political information.

The Zogby survey, which was based on responses from more than 30,000 Americans on March 10-14 and had a margin of error of only 0.6%, found that:

\*“59% say abortion ends a human life, while 29% disagree;”

\*“50% believe life begins at conception, while 19% say it begins at birth;”

\*“71% disagree that nominees to the United States Supreme Court need to be pro-choice to be confirmed, while 18% agree;”

\*“59% say high court nominees should not be filibustered in the Senate because of their view of abortion, while 28% say they should be;”

\*“86% agree with a federal ban on sex-selection abortion, while 10% disagree;”

\*“56% support federal or state requirements for a 24-hour waiting period before a woman has an abortion, while 37% oppose them;”

\*“69% favor state laws requiring parental notification for girls under 16 to undergo abortions, and 55% support such laws for girls under 18;”

\*“...46% to 45%...say a woman’s right to an abortion is protected by the U.S.

Constitution.” ([www.zogby.com/Soundbites/ReadClips.dbm?ID=12949](http://www.zogby.com/Soundbites/ReadClips.dbm?ID=12949))

The Harris poll telephoned 1,016 adults in the United States on April 4-10 and had a margin of error of 3.0%. Using a question that understates the pro-choice nature of the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decisions on abortion, this poll found that “Support for Roe v. Wade Hits New Low...” (The Wall Street Journal Online, May 4, 2006) It “indicates Roe v. Wade is supported by a slim 49% to 47% plurality, compared with 52% who favored the decision in 2005...and 57% in 1998.” Earlier Harris polls had discovered that 52% favored Roe v. Wade in 1973, 59% in 1976, 60% in 1979, and 65% in 1991.

It is commonly said that those who oppose Roe v. Wade, which established abortion on demand in American society, are “extremists.” That is simply not true. Opposition to Roe v. Wade is very much

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## PLAN NOW TO ATTEND

### THE ANNUAL LIFEWATCH SERVICE OF WORSHIP (9:30 a.m.)

Preaching: Dr. William J. Abraham,  
Albert Cook Outler Professor of Wesley Studies  
Perkins School of Theology/SMU

and the

### THE ANNUAL LIFEWATCH BOARD MEETING (3:00 p.m.)

**both on January 22, 2007 (Monday)**

at The United Methodist Building  
100 Maryland Avenue, NE, Washington, DC

**Fill a van or bus with brothers and sisters from your church and community, and join us for these events, which will serve the Gospel of Life.**

a mainstream position. And that position correlates with many other, related pro-life positions held by majorities. It appears that, over the last thirty years and more, the public witness to the Gospel of Life is gaining some ground in American society.

Thanks be to God. (PTS)♥

## LEADERSHIP CONSIDERED

For several years now, leadership has been a very hot topic in many institutional quarters of American society. Leadership studies have been established and developed in many colleges and universities. Leadership in corporate life—as taught through books, magazines, and seminars—has hit the big time. Leadership publishing has become much larger than a cottage industry. And as might be expected by those who follow such trends, leadership is currently being pushed and pursued in The United Methodist Church.

Even though the case of leadership might well be one more example of United Methodism taking its cues from contemporary cultural currents, leadership is indeed an important matter for the Church to consider. However, it is more important that United Methodism develop an understanding of leadership that comes from the heart of the faith of the Church catholic. Again, the Church can and should “plunder the Egyptians”—that is, search the general society for understandings and practices of leadership that could be put to work in the Church. But more importantly, the Church can and should review the Bible and the Church’s Tradition for Christian teaching on leadership.

Leadership is especially crucial to the witness of the Lifewatch community in The United Methodist Church. After all, good leadership will advance the Gospel of Life in the Church and society. On the other hand, questionable leadership will retard the advance of the same Gospel. The

fact that official United Methodist teaching on abortion and the life issues is ambiguous makes the call to good leadership even more urgent for the Lifewatch community.

In what follows, leadership will be described with the assistance of three theological couplets: Word and Sacraments, salt and light, and truth and love.

### WORD AND SACRAMENTS

First, the Church is gathered and led by Jesus Christ through Word and Sacraments. This is suggested by the definition of the Church that is found in the Articles of Religion (XIII): “The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”

Admittedly, the Church is many things, and the Church does many things. But most basically and essentially, the Church is composed of women and men, girls and boys, who are gathered by Jesus Christ crucified and

risen, who is present in the Word preached and the Sacraments celebrated. As the Barmen Declaration, which was written by Karl Barth in 1934 and adopted to protest against German Protestantism’s compromises with Hitler’s National Socialism, put it: “The Christian Church is the congregation of the brethren in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in Word and Sacrament through the Holy Spirit.”

Again, Jesus Christ “acts presently [in the Church] as the Lord”—that is, Jesus Christ leads the Church. So wooden traditions and popular fashions do not lead the Church. Nor do the democratic votes of church assemblies or the entertaining styles of charismatic leaders lead the Church. The leadership of the Church is vested in Jesus Christ and made present by Word and Sacraments.

### SALT AND LIGHT

Second, the Church, as salt and light, leads the world. Because of the revelation of Jesus Christ, the Church knows what the world does not know. The Church knows “the story of the world,” as Professor Robert Jenson has said. Therefore, the Church leads the world—even though the world does not know it is being led.

Early in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus

proclaimed: “You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16, RSV) Here the Lord Jesus Christ charges His Church to be salt and light—that is, out in front of the world, different from the world, standing out from the world, for the sake of the world.

### TRUTH AND LOVE

Third, leadership in the Church concerns truth and love. St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians that “we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried

about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body,

joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.” (4:14-16, RSV) Gathered and guided by Jesus Christ, leading the world, the Church is committed to “speaking the truth in love.” The Church’s truth is not merciless, nor is it mercilessly presented and lived; the Church’s truth is loving. Nor is the Church’s love sentimental and formless; the Church’s love is truthful.

Truth and love are essential challenges to those charged to lead the Church. Bishops and district superintendents, pastors and professors, lay speakers and lay teachers are called to speak the truth in love in their ministries of leadership. Even when the truth is difficult to proclaim—as the Gospel of Life is difficult to preach and teach in a pro-choice denomination such as The United Methodist Church—truth is to be proclaimed in love. Truth without love and love without truth are pointless and fruitless. But because of the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking truth in love advances truth and increases love.

In conclusion, the Church’s understanding of leadership involves: Jesus Christ, through Word and Sacraments, leading the Church; the Church, as salt and light, leading the world into the future; and

*“Truth and love are essential challenges to those charged to lead the Church. Bishops and district superintendents, pastors and professors, lay speakers and lay teachers are called to speak the truth in love in their ministries of leadership.”*

Christians speaking the truth in love in their common life and in their witness to the world.

Word and

Sacraments. Salt and light. Truth and love. These are the realities that make for distinctive, Christian leadership. These realities are consistent with the Gospel of Life. They provide the structure and strength for God's people to declare the God-given dignity of each and every person, to protect the unborn child and mother, to defend the chronically ill man, and to speak of the goodness, the purposes, and the boundaries of human sexuality. In today's world these words and deeds require leadership. Christian leadership. (PTS)♥

## **LEADERSHIP DEMONSTRATED: BISHOP WHITAKER ON HOMOSEXUALITY**

As you probably know by now, Bishop Timothy W. Whitaker of the Florida Area is not shy about teaching the Church's faith—especially when the faith is undergoing some kind of challenge. For example, when Bishop Sprague was reinterpreting and “updating” some of the most basic tenets of the apostolic faith, Bp. Whitaker offered a compelling defense of the faith. Later, when the Council of Bishops continued its decades-long silence about abortion, Bp. Whitaker proclaimed the Gospel truth about life and abortion. More recently, when recent Judicial Council rulings once again placed homosexuality in the middle of the denominational table, Bp. Whitaker wrote “The Church and Homosexuality.” Found at [www.flumc2.org](http://www.flumc2.org), the good bishop's article is an engaging, powerful statement of Church teaching on homosexuality. What follows are some of the most significant sections from Bp. Whitaker's article, which it is hoped will convince you to read the entire article.

In his introductory section, he notes: “While there is division in the church over homosexuality, it should be stated that the church has a position. I am in agreement with the basic position of the church, which is consistent with the historic Christian view and larger ecumenical consensus in the world today. The [United Methodist C]hurch is not divided in the sense that it is searching for a position, but only in the sense that a large number of delegates to the General Conferences in recent decades have voted for some changes in the church's position. I think the church is searching for some settlement of the controversy. However,

*“Bp. Whitaker contends that ‘[t]he church's debate is, or should be, different from [the] political debate...’”*

it may be realistic to expect tension over this issue for many years to come.”

Bp. Whitaker then displays special

care with language issues: “The main reason I prefer to refer to someone as a person who experiences same-sex attraction, rather than as a ‘homosexual’ or ‘gay’ or ‘lesbian,’ is because this way of speaking is more fitting for the church, which views all people as persons created in the image of God. That is, the church views our identity in terms of our relationship to God, not in terms of our sexual identity. Once the church succumbs to the idea that our basic identity is sexual rather than theological in nature, then the church has already lost its way in the discussion. This is not to say that our sexual being is unimportant, but it is to say that it is more appropriate for the church to first view people as persons who are created in the image of God before it says anything about their sexual identity...”

“The traditional Christian view is that turning same-sex attraction into an erotic desire and practicing sexual acts with a person of the same sex are contrary to God's purposes for human beings. However, this orthodox view can be used as a religious sanction for loathing and fear of those who experience same-sex attraction. Christians should not use the orthodox position as a cover for hatred and fear. Nor should those who disagree with the orthodox view consider those who accept it as bigots or persons who oppose having friendships with homosexuals or the human rights of homosexuals. Christians should always remember that persons who experience same-sex attraction are created in God's image and possess dignity and human rights.”

Bp. Whitaker contends that “[t]he church's debate is, or should be, different from [the] political debate [about same-sex unions and ‘marriages’].” For example, the church's debate must be informed, even determined, by the Bible. Considering prohibitions in the Bible of same-sex acts, he states that “[t]he Christian tradition is that the church understands these prohibitions to be against all expressions of homosexual practice. Moreover, advocates of the traditional view emphasize how these prohibitions should be seen in the context of the larger biblical perspective on sexuality, which is that human beings are directed either to a covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or to a single life of celibacy. This larger biblical perspective is the deep structure of biblical teaching about God's purpose for humans as sexual beings.”

Bp. Whitaker believes “there is a way that Christian tradition can change. There is such a thing, not of ‘new revelation,’ but of a new illumination of the original revelation by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s mission is to guide us in all the truth (John 16:12-15). Indeed, ‘the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life’ (II Corinthians 3:6). On this basis, it is possible that the Spirit could guide the church to a new discipline regarding homosexual practice...If there is a new illumination of the mind of the church, then this new illumination is a new way of seeing the original revelation to Israel and in Jesus Christ. As a practical matter, in any new illumination the church can find in its own Scriptures, as the witness to the original revelation, the seeds of the new illumination.” Bp. Whitaker contends that, to date, such a new illumination on homosexuality, though claimed by some, has not been confirmed by the church.

Venturing into an area that is not much discussed by church leaders, Bp. Whitaker holds that “the church knows the power of human sexuality can also be a destructive force of self-indulgence or exploitation. That is why the church traditionally has balanced affirmation with asceticism or self-discipline. Asceticism involves transfiguring eros (sexual love or desire) into agape (divine love), thus providing a means of grace for one to enter more closely into communion with God. The contemporary culture has been so sexualized that many cannot envision a way of life that does not involve the fulfillment of sexual desire. Yet, the church does envision a way of life that involves spiritual fulfillment and intimacy with other human beings without sexual intercourse. In its long spiritual tradition, the historic Christian community has discovered that eros can offer a false fulfillment—an ecstasy of union that is a substitute for the self-transcendence that comes from union with God. From the church’s perspective, asceticism is not an injustice, but a gift of spiritual experience...Of course, this applies to all people, not just to the small minority who experience same-sex attraction...”

Discussing ministry, Bp. Whitaker continues: “As a pastor of people, the church understands there are those who will interpret their same-sex attraction according to the framework of interpretation supplied by the society and

surrounding culture. Personal acceptance instead of argument with their adoption of societal identities is the responsibility of a church that proclaims and embodies the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Every one of us begins the Christian life with identities formed by family, class and nation that undergo a transformation over time by the grace of God...

“What is necessary is not to bar certain persons from membership, but to maintain the public teaching and pastoral guidance of the church so that persons are lovingly directed away from practices the church believes are not consistent with the divine purpose for the sake of their growth in grace.” [The

Lifewatch scribe agrees with this claim—in most cases. However, might there be cases in which an activist or an ideologue for any sin, who plans to push his agenda throughout the congregation once he joins, thereby excludes himself from church membership?]

Bp. Whitaker offers a sober warning in the concluding section of his article:

“If The United

Methodist Church changes its basic position on homosexuality, then it will be making a move toward modern Western culture, but against a historic and global ecumenical consensus. Some would justify this move as the prophetic action of a church in the vanguard of enlightenment. However, the fact is that such a move would change the way The United Methodist Church would be viewed by the rest of the ecumenical Christian community, which, by a vast majority, adheres to the traditional teaching of Christianity. It is not far-fetched to envision the rest of the Christian community viewing The United Methodist Church as a ‘culture church’ that would have some historic connection to the Christian faith and community, but that had wandered away from the substance of the Christian tradition in order to offer a Christian interpretation of the ideas and values of its culture. One could even imagine a future ecumenical council to which United Methodists might be allowed to send official observers, but in which we would not be allowed to participate with vote because of our status as ‘culture Christians.’”

In “The Church and Homosexuality,” Bp. Whitaker is offering the strong, Christian leadership that is proposed in the prior article. This is the kind of leadership that fosters church unity in the truth and love of the Gospel. (PTS)♥

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*What is necessary is not to bar certain persons from membership, but to maintain the public teaching and pastoral guidance of the church so that persons are lovingly directed away from practices the church believes are not consistent with the divine purpose for the sake of their growth in grace.”*

## YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT

●Your church's Missions Committee and Administrative Council will soon be discussing their 2007 budgets. At their next meetings, you might suggest that Lifewatch be added to the list of ministries that your congregation supports. If you will do this and if your church agrees with your suggestion, your congregation will mightily support Lifewatch's witness to the Gospel of Life within The United Methodist Church and beyond. At the same time, know that your individual contributions are essential to the continuing ministry of Lifewatch. We are deeply grateful for all that you do to support our humble witness to the Gospel of Life.

●When a United Methodist bishop speaks boldly and truthfully, that bishop deserves to be quoted and commended. Delivering the North Carolina Annual Conference State of the Church Address, on June 14, Bishop Alfred W. Gwinn of the Raleigh Area noted: "...Human life continues to decrease in value: Children are victims of violence that is inconceivable to most. Every day in America alone 2,482 children are confirmed as abused or neglected. Babies continue to be aborted with the same lack of conscience with which they were conceived. The elderly are put away as easy as an afterthought. Hundreds of innocent people are dying every day because of ethnic cleansing and political ideologies. Objective truth is so seriously questioned today that for many there

remains no true North in terms of the compass of morality..." (emphases added)

In the midst of all the bad news about humanity's battering of humanity, thanks be to God for the Gospel, which is the Gospel of Life about the Lord of Life! And thanks be to God for United Methodist bishops who are willing to point to that Gospel!

●In a July 4 letter to the Lifewatch editor, Reverend Forrest J. Robinson, the Kansas clergyman who speaks so powerfully on the Holocaust, wrote this (and more): "We received the June issue of Lifewatch and, to say the least, we were both much impressed. Also, I count it an honor to be included with all those intellectual heavyweights quoted elsewhere in the paper... After reading the paper, I was reminded of a statement of Mahatma Gandhi, who once said, "Whenever I despair, I remember all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been many murderers and tyrants[,] and for a time they seem invincible; but in the end they all fall! Think of it...always." Again, Rev. Robinson can be contacted, to arrange for him to make his excellent presentation on the Holocaust, at 1910 Dee Avenue/Winfield, KS 67156.

●Dr. Adveda King is a Pastoral Associate for Priests for Life. Recently, she reflected: "For many years, I have been an outspoken advocate for the unborn child, because in a culture of abortion, the

**BOOK ORDER FORM: ① THE RIGHT CHOICE: Pro-Life Sermons; ② THE CHURCH AND ABORTION: In Search of New Ground for Response; ③ THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT ABORTION; ④ HOLY ABORTION? A Theological Critique of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice; and ⑤ THE JERICHO PLAN: Breaking Down the Walls Which Prevent Post-Abortion Healing.**

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**Lifewatch**  
Taskforce of  
United Methodists on  
Abortion and Sexuality

P.O. Box 306, Cottleville MO 63338

09/01/06:

- \* Bishop Whitaker on homosexuality
- \* NANO technology's possibilities and perils

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child is like a slave. The new civil rights movement of our time is the pro-life movement, and as I seek to preserve the dream of my uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and of my father, Rev. A. D. King (Martin's brother), I ask the question, 'How can the dream survive if we murder the children?' I grew up seeing these two great men fight for the equal rights of people." (Priests for Life, July-August 2006)

●Pope Benedict XVI instructs the Roman Catholic Church and the Church catholic with teaching such as this: "Today, having a clear faith based on the Creed of the Church is often labeled as fundamentalism, whereas relativism, that is, letting oneself be 'tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine' [Ephesians 4:14, RSV], seems the only attitude that can cope with modern times. We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires.

"We, however, have a different goal: the Son of God, the true man. He is the measure of true humanism. And 'adult' faith is not a faith that follows the trends of fashion and the latest novelty; a mature adult faith is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ. It is this friendship that opens us up to all that is good and gives us a criterion by which to distinguish the true from the false, and deceit from truth."

"Truth and love coincide in Christ. To the extent that we draw close to Christ, in our own lives too, truth and love are blended. Love without truth would be blind; truth without love would be like a 'clanging cymbal' (I Corinthians 13:1)." (Truth & Freedom, February 2006)

**Our Mission:**

*Out of obedience to Jesus Christ, the Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality (TUMAS) "will work to create in church and society esteem for human life at its most vulnerable, specifically for the unborn child and for the woman who contemplates abortion." Therefore, TUMAS's first goal is "to win the hearts and minds of United Methodists, to engage in abortion-prevention through theological, pastoral, and social emphases that support human life."*