

Promoting a Culture of Life in America

M. Anthony Seel

IT WAS POPE JOHN PAUL II WHO CONCEIVED the phrase culture of death,¹ and warned in his encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, because of the extraordinary increase and gravity of threats to the life of individuals and peoples, especially where life is weak and defenseless. In addition to the ancient scourges of poverty, hunger, endemic diseases, violence and war, new threats are emerging on an alarmingly vast scale.²

John Paul II goes on to say,

This situation, with its lights and shadows, ought to make us all fully aware that we are facing an enormous and dramatic clash between good and evil, death and life, the “**culture of death**” and the “**culture of life.**” We find ourselves not only “faced with” but necessarily “in the midst of” this conflict: we are all involved and we all share in it, with the inescapable responsibility of *choosing to be unconditionally pro-life.*³

John Paul II identifies “new threats to human life,” utilizing words taken from the Second Vatican Council:

Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia or willful self-destruction, whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as mutilation, torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere instruments of gain rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others like them are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonor to the Creator.⁴

While we may disagree with one or more of the particulars raised by the Second Vatican Council, we recognize that threats to human life are of concern to all followers of Christ.

On January 8, 2006, in the Sistine Chapel, Pope Benedict XVI was the celebrant at the first baptisms of his papacy. His words at that time were, “In our times we need to say ‘no’ to the largely dominant culture of death...”⁵ At the beginning of a new church year in Advent, 2008, Pope Benedict issued this prayer: “That, faced by the growing expansion of the culture of violence and death, the Church may courageously promote the culture of life through all her apostolic and missionary activities.”⁶

During his pontificate, Benedict consistently championed life and fiercely opposed the culture of death that marks our times. He spoke regularly and forcefully against the practices of abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and the poor treatment of the disabled.

From the third chapter of the Book of Genesis, we see the consequences of rebellion against God and His ways that have metastasized into our current culture of death. From the spiritual death of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, the story quickly advances to the physical death of Abel at the hands of his brother Cain in Genesis 4. In Genesis 6, we read,

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart (Genesis 6:5-6).⁷

God’s response to human evil in Noah’s time was the flood, which resulted in only Noah and his family being saved. Today, evil’s threats to human life are exponentially greater than they were during Noah’s era, as demonstrated by the above statement from the Second Vatican Council.

Since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the Supreme Court, supporters of the right to abortion in the United States have been working hard to limit the damage caused by the Court’s decision to the abortion industry. For instance, activists in so-called “blue states” aim to ensure that the abortion industry remains unrestrained,⁸ while activists in the so-called “red states” are working to expand abortion rights.⁹

Euthanasia is on the rise in America, with medical aid in dying legal in eleven states and Washington, D.C.¹⁰

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, “The number of persons prosecuted for human trafficking more than doubled from 2012 to 2022 (from 805 to 1,656 persons). The number of persons convicted of a human trafficking offense

increased from 578 in 2012 to 1,118 in 2022.”¹¹ According to the U.S. Department of State, there are “two primary types of human trafficking, forced labor and sex trafficking.”¹² Antony Blinken, the Secretary of State during the Biden Administration, wrote, “Human trafficking is a stain on the conscience of our society. It fuels crime, corruption, and violence. It distorts our economies and harms our workers. And it violates the fundamental right of all people to be free.”¹³

We could examine every aspect of Pope John Paul’s declaration on the culture of death, but instead, let’s focus on the best way to promote a culture of life. Many different approaches have been explored in this effort to change our culture. In this essay, I will mainly discuss the work of John Davidson Hunter and Timothy Keller.

For the church, one approach is the culture warrior strategy, which aims to influence the political sphere through pressure groups. Whether it is National Right to Life, Focus on the Family, the Moral Majority, the Christian Coalition, or many other organizations, this method has achieved limited success. The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* stands as the most historic victory for the Christian Right in recent times. However, for nearly every Christian Rights group, there is usually at least one opposing organization. For instance, the goals of National Right to Life are countered by the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights.

Some, like author Rod Dreher, have argued that Christians should build an alternative culture outside the mainstream. This would include churches, parochial schools, and Christian businesses. Dreher’s work echoes Alasdair McIntyre’s call for another St. Benedict.¹⁴ After the fall of the Roman Empire, monasteries, Benedictine and others, played a key role in preserving and cultivating a culture of life during a time of great upheaval.¹⁵ However, unlike Dreher’s vision, the monastics whom sociologist John Davison Hunter describes as “the cultural vanguard” during the fifth and sixth centuries were “mission-oriented,” extending themselves beyond the cloistered world of their monasteries.¹⁶

Benedictine communities continue today as they did in the fifth and sixth centuries, remaining separated from the world, in accordance with the Benedictine vow of stability. Stability, in the Benedictine tradition, means staying in one monastic community for the rest of a monk’s life.¹⁷ Unlike the Franciscan and Dominican orders, Benedictine monks generally do not travel outside the monastery for purposes of evangelism, preaching, or teaching. Because of this, the Benedict Option has little influence on the wider culture. Perhaps a Franciscan or Dominican approach would be more impactful, but even these methods are unlikely to make much difference in a diverse society like America. How can Christians bring life amid a culture of death?

The aforementioned John Davison Hunter has wrestled with the issues surrounding influencing culture in his work titled *To Change the World*. He notes that in the

sixth and seventh centuries, monasteries served as “centers for learning,” making significant contributions to Western culture.¹⁸ Another aspect of influencing society was the evangelization carried out by the monasteries. The strategy of the evangelizing monastics was to target the highest levels of society, believing that reaching the elites would lead to a broader diffusion of the Christian faith.¹⁹

Referring to the period from the fifth to the eleventh centuries, popularly called the Dark Ages, Hunter traces the expanding influence of Christianity as “pagan war-kings” were replaced by a “sacral dynasty of Christian war-kings.”²⁰ From Pippin the Short to Charlemagne, Christian influence grew along with the Holy Roman Empire. By the late Middle Ages, changes were underway that threatened the Western social order, including the growth of the Ottoman Empire. Then came the Reformation, bringing internal struggles that threatened the stability and influence of the Roman Catholic Church. According to Hunter, the result was

an alternative elite that was not bound tightly within the Catholic network, overlapping with other networks of leaders, drawing from the wealth of resources they brought with them—intellectual, institutional, administrative, financial, and political—all in common cause. All of these were nothing short of decisive.²¹

Successive movements in the U.S. include the Great Awakening and the efforts of the abolitionists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In assessing the contemporary scene, Hunter observes that “very few resources within the Christian community, in all its diversity, go to supporting leadership in developing cultural capital in the centers of cultural production.”²² This is where Christianity in America significantly lags behind our predecessors in the Middle Ages and the Reformation. The “culture-producing institutions of society” were once Christian in outlook, but this is no longer the case. Colleges, universities, elite private schools, and Hunter additionally mentions, “even the public schools” that once had “a self-conscious and distinct Protestant identity” now do not. Furthermore, the decline of mainstream Protestant denominations is well documented. Regarding cultural influence, Hunter asserts,

Since the 1960s, none of the movements in contemporary Christianity have been prominent in creating, contributing to, or supporting structures in the arts, humane letters, the academy, and the like; structures that either explicitly express their faith tradition or that are implicitly compatible with or reflect the assumptions of their tradition.²³

Hunter’s strongest indictment is that Christians are less influential in America today “*because they have been absent from the arenas in which the greatest influence in the culture is exerted.*”²⁴ His verdict is that “the idea that American Christianity

could influence the larger culture in ways that are healthy and humane is, for the time being, doubtful.”²⁵ Yet, as Hunter sees it, Christians are still called to what he terms “faithful presence.”²⁶ He interprets the Great Commission broadly in a way that might bother some evangelicals and fundamentalists:

The church is to go into all realms of social life: in volunteer and paid labor, skilled and unskilled labor, the crafts, engineering, commerce, art, law, architecture, teaching, health care, and service.²⁷

This understanding of engaging with the whole world isn’t exclusively for evangelism and discipleship. While emphasizing the importance of proclaiming the Gospel, this broader perspective of Christians being faithfully present in the world serves the well-being of “a new city commons,” where the church lives “within a dialectic of affirmation and antithesis.”²⁸ The author elaborates on his vision by first referencing the prophet Jeremiah, who writes from Jerusalem during the Babylonian exile.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their produce.

Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage; multiply these and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.²⁹

Hunter believes that “this is a word for our times.” He explains that “A theology of faithful presence calls Christians to enact the shalom of God in the circumstances in which God has placed them and to actively seek it on behalf of others.”³⁰ Hunter has already told us that he believes the church is not in the places where “the greatest influence in the culture is exerted.”³¹ Yet, in our current context, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives is a professing Christian.³² Six of the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court are professing Roman Catholics, five of whom were nominated by Republican presidents and are part of the more conservative voting bloc on the court.³³ Many years ago, President Jimmy Carter proudly proclaimed that he was a born-again Christian.³⁴ If professing Christians can rise to these seats of power, what prevents them from holding prominent positions of influence in other parts of our culture?

One of the issues Hunter repeatedly addresses is power. Of the three essays in his book, one focuses on the use and misuse of power. In this essay, he analyzes the statements, practices, and goals of the Christian Right, the Christian Left, and Neo-Anabaptists. He recognizes that “the forces of secularity in contemporary America, within such institutions as higher education, public education, the news

media, advertising, and popular entertainment, are very powerful and their agenda (deliberately or not) is fundamentally at odds with traditional Christian morality and spirituality.”³⁵

However, he is justly cautious about the accumulation and exercise of power. Despite our best intentions, Christians are just as prone to misuse power as anyone else, as history has shown. The goal to which Hunter directs the church toward is “the renewal of all of life.”³⁶ The church, in its local expressions and wider communions, should be animated by a vision of shalom. In this, Hunter shares the concerns of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

It is a vision of order and harmony, fruitfulness and abundance, wholeness, beauty, joy, and well-being. For the Christian, this was God’s intention in creation and it is his promise for the new heaven and the new earth.³⁷

In this light, the church is to affirm what is good in this world, and “work toward the constructive subversion of all frameworks of social life that are incompatible with the shalom for which we were made and to which we are called.”³⁸ Hunter believes that

...there are intellectual, economic, and managerial resources available within the church and among Christians to make a profound difference in every sphere of life – the social welfare of the needy, the environment, education, the arts, academia, business, community formation and urban life, and so on; and at every order of magnitude – the local, the regional, the national, and the international.³⁹

But if he truly believes this, why is he so pessimistic in other parts of his work? Why does he say, “the idea that American Christianity could influence the larger culture in ways that are healthy and humane is, for the time being, doubtful?”⁴⁰ He does end his work on a muted but hopeful note.

Certainly, Christians at their best, will neither create a perfect world nor one that is altogether new; but by enacting shalom and seeking on behalf of all others through the practice of faithful presence, it is possible, just possible, that they will help to make the world a little bit better.⁴¹

What happens between his pessimism and his muted, yet hopeful note? The church happens in three movements: the Christian Right, the Christian Left, and the Neo-Anabaptists, all responding to the challenges of secularity, pluralism, and radical skepticism.⁴² There are also new communication technologies that have “transformed the nature of consciousness and culture as well.” The author acknowledges that “We find ourselves in territory that is less and less familiar.”⁴³ The three paradigms—the Christian Right, the Christian Left, and the Neo-Anabaptists—are insufficient answers to address the new challenges this less familiar territory pres-

ents to the church. Hunter calls for an alternative to these paradigms, once again, advocating for the way of faithful presence outlined above. His pessimism stems from his belief that the church will resist moving away from the three paradigms of cultural engagement that are now evident.

The late Tim Keller, who founded Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, and the Redeemer City to City church planting organization has wrestled with Hunter's work, as well as the work of Richard Niebuhr (*Christ and Culture*), Leslie Newbigin (*The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*), and many others who are deeply concerned with how the church can make progress in cultures that have largely abandoned their Christian heritage, primarily American culture. Keller's work can be constructive for us as we seek to bring a culture of life to the culture of death that surrounds us in America.

Keller sees our cities as a necessary focal point for our missional efforts. As we observe the greying of our American congregations, Keller observes how

Urban centers have higher percentages of single people, and it is far easier for a single Christian to get a single non-Christian friend to come to a church gathering than it is for a Christian family to get an entire non-Christian family to come. Singles make unilateral decisions (without having to consult others), tend to spend more time out of their homes, and are more open to more experiences.⁴⁴

Keller convincingly argues that the church needs to focus its planting efforts on cities. If we accept the logic of Keller's observation, where does that leave us? Those of us who do not live in cities can still grow as singles become married couples and some, if not many, migrate away from cities to the suburban and rural areas where many of our churches are located. How do we reach those couples and families? Keller advocates a wide range of strategies, and he provides a framework for any missional activity.

Keller describes what Redeemer Presbyterian Church does using an analogy of hardware, middleware, and software. Hardware represents the doctrinal foundation, which for Redeemer is the Westminster Confession of Faith. Software refers to ministry programs. In between these is middleware, defined as "a well-conceived vision for how to bring the gospel to bear on the particular cultural setting and historical moment."⁴⁵ This middleware serves as a theological vision that explains how our doctrinal foundation "might relate to the modern world."⁴⁶ Keller learned this concept from Richard Lints of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Keller summarizes his understanding of Lints by saying, "a theological vision is a faithful restatement of the gospel with rich implications for life, ministry, and mission in a type of culture at a moment in history."⁴⁷

How is this framework helpful for promoting a culture of life in the midst of a culture of death? As confessional Lutherans, our doctrinal foundation is the Bible as interpreted by the *Book of Concord*. This essay, as a reflection on bringing life to a culture of death, started with how Pope John Paul II defined for us many of the practices that contribute to a culture of death. John Davidson Hunter and Timothy Keller offer us faithful Christian responses to the present culture of death. Hunter and Keller agree that the gospel must be at the center of any Christian enterprise. Hunter interprets our culture and our culture's need (the shalom of God rooted in Jesus Christ). The shalom of God is the flourishing of life in all its God-given and sustained richness. Keller offers a framework for understanding what will shape ministry and mission in specific contexts. Between the two, we have a well-reasoned way forward to a faithful Christian response to the current culture of death that leads toward the shalom of God, which is a culture of life.

M. Anthony Seel is Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Chenango Bridge (Binghamton), New York.

Notes

1. Matthew R. Petrussek, "Why St. John Paul II's Warnings about the 'Culture of Death' Matter in a Pandemic," *Angelus*, May 14, 2020. <https://angelusnews.com/faith/what-todays-pandemic-reveals-about-st-pope-john-paul-iis-culture-of-death/>. Accessed October 28, 2025.
2. John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life: Evangelium Vitae* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1995), 14. See also: *Evangelium Vitae*, March 25, 1995. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html. Accessed October 28, 2025.
3. *Ibid.*, 50 [italics in original; boldface added].
4. *Ibid.*, 14. Here John Paul II is quoting from *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1966), 27.
5. NBC News, "Pope Attacks 'Culture of Death' at First Baptisms," January 8, 2006. <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna10760901>. Accessed October 30, 2025.
6. Catholic News Agency, "Pope Benedict Prays That the Church Fights the Culture of Death," December 1, 2008, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/14483/pope-benedict-prays-that-the-church-courageously-fights-the-culture-of-death>. Accessed October 15, 2025.
7. *The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2001).
8. Christine Vestal, "Blue States Enact New Laws to Create Abortion Havens," *Stateline*, April 1, 2022. <https://stateline.org/2022/04/01/blue-states-enact-new-laws-to-create-abortion-havens/>. Accessed October 22, 2025.

9. Sophia Resnick, “Voters in at Least Seven States Restore Reproductive Rights,” *Maine Morning Star*, November 6, 2024. <https://mainemorningstar.com/2024/11/06/voters-in-at-least-five-states-restore-reproductive-rights/>. Accessed October 22, 2025.
10. “States Where Medical Aid in Dying is Authorized,” *Compassion and Choices*. <https://compassionandchoices.org/states-where-medical-aid-in-dying-is-authorized/>. Accessed October 16, 2025.
11. Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Human Trafficking Data Collection Activities, 2024,” October 2024. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/human-trafficking-data-collection-activities-2024>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
12. U.S. Department of State, “Understanding Human Trafficking Fact Sheet,” January 20, 2025. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Understanding-Human-Trafficking_LOW.pdf. Accessed October 20, 2025.
13. U.S. Department of State, *2024 Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 2024. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/TIP-Report-2024_Introduction_V10_508-accessible_2.13.2025.pdf. Accessed October 21, 2025.
14. Alasdair McIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 263.
15. See Richard Fletcher, *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997).
16. John Davison Hunter, *To Change the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 58.
17. Rule of St. Benedict 58:17-18a. See Dom Paul Delatte, *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Commentary* (London, UK: Burns, Oats & Washbourne, 1921), Chapter LVIII.
18. Hunter, *To Change the World*, 58.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, 61.
21. *Ibid.*, 74.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Hunter, *To Change the World*, 88.
24. *Ibid.*, 89 [italics in original].
25. *Ibid.*, 92.
26. *Ibid.*, 243.
27. *Ibid.*, 257.
28. *Ibid.*, 281.
29. Jeremiah 29:4-7.
30. Hunter, *To Change the World*, 278.
31. *Ibid.*, 89.
32. Sarah Beth Hensley, “What Role Speaker Mike Johnson’s Religious Views Play in his Politics,” ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/role-speaker-mike-johnsons-religious-views-play-politics/story?id=104366347>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
33. Frank Newport, “The Religion of the Supreme Court Justices.” Gallup News. <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/391649/religion-supreme-court-justices.aspx>. Accessed October 27, 2025.

34. Douglas Brinkley, "Jimmy Carter's Born-Again Christian Legacy," *America Magazine*, October 1, 2024. <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2024/10/01/jimmy-carter-born-again-legacy-247953/>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
35. Hunter, *To Change the World*, 167.
36. *Ibid.*, 227.
37. *Ibid.*, 228.
38. *Ibid.*, 235.
39. *Ibid.*, 271.
40. *Ibid.*, 92.
41. *Ibid.*, 286.
42. *Ibid.*, 208.
43. *Ibid.*, 211.
44. Timothy Keller, *Center Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 177.
45. *Ibid.*, 17.
46. *Ibid.*, 18. Keller quotes Richard Lints of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.
47. *Ibid.*, 19.

Bibliography

- Brinkley, Douglas. "Jimmy Carter's Born-Again Christian Legacy." *America Magazine*, October 1, 2024. <https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2024/10/01/jimmy-carter-born-again-legacy-247953/>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. "Human Trafficking Data Collection Activities, 2024." October 2024. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/human-trafficking-data-collection-activities-2024>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
- Catholic News Agency. "Pope Benedict Prays That the Church Fights the Culture of Death." December 1, 2008. <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/14483/pope-benedict-prays-that-the-church-courageously-fights-the-culture-of-death>. Accessed October 15, 2025.
- Delatte, Dom Paul. *The Rule of St. Benedict: A Commentary*. London, UK: Burns, Oats & Washbourne, 1921.
- Fletcher, Richard. *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997.
- Hensley, Sarah Beth. "What Role Speaker Mike Johnson's Religious Views Play in his Politics," ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/role-speaker-mike-johnsons-religious-views-play-politics/story?id=104366347>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
- Hunter, John Davison. *To Change the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- John Paul II. *The Gospel of Life: Evangelium Vitae*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1995. https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html. Accessed October 28, 2025.
- Keller, Timothy. *Center Church*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

- McIntyre, Alisdair. *After Virtue*. 2nd Edition. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.
- NBC News. "Pope Attacks 'Culture of Death' at First Baptisms." January 8, 2006. <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna10760901>. Accessed October 30, 2025.
- Newport, Frank. "The Religion of the Supreme Court Justices." Gallup News. <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/391649/religion-supreme-court-justices.aspx>. Accessed October 27, 2025.
- Paul VI. *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1966.
- Petrusek, Matthew R. "Why St. John Paul II's Warnings about the 'Culture of Death' Matter in a Pandemic." *Angelus*. May 14, 2020. <https://angelusnews.com/faith/what-todays-pandemic-reveals-about-st-pope-john-paul-iis-culture-of-death/>. Accessed October 28, 2025.
- Resnick, Sophia. "Voters in at Least Seven States Restore Reproductive Rights." *Maine Morning Star*. November 6, 2024. <https://mainemorningstar.com/2024/11/06/voters-in-at-least-five-states-restore-reproductive-rights/>. Accessed October 22, 2025.
- "States Where Medical Aid in Dying is Authorized," *Compassion and Choices*. <https://compassionandchoices.org/states-where-medical-aid-in-dying-is-authorized/>. Accessed October 16, 2025.
- The Holy Bible*, English Standard Version. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2001.
- U.S. Department of State. "Understanding Human Trafficking Fact Sheet." January 20, 2025. <https://www.state.gov/what-is-trafficking-in-persons>. Accessed October 20, 2025.
- U.S. Department of State. *2024 Trafficking in Persons Report*. June 2024. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/TIP-Report-2024_Introduction_V10_508-accessible_2.13.2025.pdf. Accessed October 21, 2025.
- Vestal, Christine. "Blue States Enact New Laws to Create Abortion Havens." *Stateline*, April 1, 2022. <https://stateline.org/2022/04/01/blue-states-enact-new-laws-to-create-abortion-havens/>. Accessed October 22, 2025.



A Call for Papers

***Verba Vitae* is seeking essay submissions
for the following upcoming issues:**

Volume 3, No. 1 (Spring 2026):

“Christian Vocation as an Antidote to Radical Contemporary Critical Theory”

Volume 3, No. 2 (Summer 2026):

“Christian Medical Ethics in a Secular Medical Environment”

Volume 3, No. 3 (Autumn 2026):

“Christianity and Transhumanism: Ethical Considerations”

Volume 3, No. 4 (Winter 2026):

“Artificial Intelligence: A Rigorous Examination”

Volume 4, No. 1 (Spring 2027):

“The Issue of Gender: Old and New Perspectives in Conflict”

Volume 4, No. 2 (Summer 2027):

“The Dawn of Life: Pre and Neonatal Life in Modern Society”

Volume 4, No. 3 (Autumn 2027):

“The Power of Language: Navigating Ethical Communication
in the Era of Newspeak”

Volume 4, No. 4 (Winter 2027):

“Facing the Final Frontier: Divine Perspectives and Social Narratives
on Mortality”

All essay submissions (on any life-related topic) should be made at:

<https://verba-vitae.org>

Submitting authors need to register with a *Verba Vitae* account

Please see the Submissions Guidelines for important information!

Any questions should be directed to:

Douglas V. Morton, Associate Editor

dmorton@ilt.edu



**A Serious Christian Journal of Life
and its Significance**

Annual Print Subscriptions!

***Verba Vitae* will make physical hard copy issues
available beginning with the Spring 2026 issue.**

**Annual subscriptions include the entire volume year,
to be sent to the subscriber regardless of when
the subscription is placed during that volume year.**

- \$50 for 1-year subscription
- \$95 for 2-year subscription
- \$45/year continuous subscription
(3-year minimum: \$135)
- \$100/year institutional/library

Annual subscriptions do not auto-renew

Subscribe at
library.ilt.edu/verba-vitae/

Volumes 1 & 2 free online at
<https://verba-vitae.org>

Any questions or communication should be directed to
verba-vitae@ilt.edu