



TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of the Evangelical Child and Family Agency

Roe v. Wade...overturned. What's next?

God's word calls His Church to care for orphans and widows and to be the hands and feet of Jesus. In light of the recent Roe v. Wade US Supreme Court decision which returned authority regarding abortion access to the individual states, what is the proper response from Illinois Christians? We may be tempted to breathe a huge sigh of relief and move onto the next moral battle. However, the fight for the lives of the unborn still wages on in the hearts and minds of many Illinois men and women. Now with limited access to abortion in neighboring states, Illinois abortion numbers are expected to increase tens of thousands per year.

Reviewing the primary reasons why women chose abortion, we are better able to provide alternatives. Illinois Right-To-Life reports research from the Guttmacher Institute which states that 74% of women who chose abortion did so because having a child would dramatically change and complicate

their lives. Many women indicated that having a child would interfere with their education, with their careers, or effect their other children's lives. 73% of women do not feel financially prepared to have a



child. Also of interest is that 25% of women chose abortion because of the fear of others learning that they have been sexually active, and another 20% say that they feel immense pressure to abort from their husband or parents. This number would likely be much higher if the research elicited information about pressure from significant others/boyfriends.

Given these factors and statistics, how can we be like Jesus to women who are considering abortion? Education and emotional support, practical/financial help, and non-judgmental care would help lower the risk of abortion. So, we must be unwavering in our passion for life – both of the mother and of the child. We must provide practical support to the mother while she is pregnant, but more importantly after the child has been born. We must also celebrate each pregnant woman's courage and not judge what brought her to this point.

As a Christian, pro-life program, Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) has provided free professional and compassionate counsel and guidance for over 70 years. The vast majority of clients in the program today choose to parent their children. In the last year alone, we assisted 49 individuals and their families facing challenges during pregnancy or shortly after birth. In addition to the counsel regarding pregnancy, delivery, parenting,

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SAVE THE DATE - ANNUAL AUCTION - NOVEMBER 11
ABBINGTON DISTINCTIVE BANQUETS, GLEN ELLYN



**SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 17, 2022
9:30 AM**

**@HERRICK LAKE IN WHEATON
ENTER OFF OF HERRICK ROAD
SOUTH OF BUTTERFIELD ROAD**

**REGISTRATION: ADULTS \$25 / CHILD (14 & UNDER): \$10
SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER TODAY!**



Join us as we bring summer to an end at our annual Stride for Life event. Starting at 9:30 am on Saturday, September 17th at Herrick Lake in Wheaton you can walk, run, or bike to help raise awareness and funding for our programming. This event has always been a family favorite, and this year is no exception. We'll have activities for all ages beyond just running, biking, and walking. We'll have yard games, a balloon artist, and a face painter. After the morning activities, we'll even have lunch waiting for you!

For the event this year, ECFA has been granted **matching funds of \$5,500**. Participants are encouraged to get pledges and raise funds for miles walked, run, or biked. Even if you're not attending, you can still donate and that donation will be matched up to **\$5,500!** You can donate online using the QR code, sponsor a participant, or by writing us a check.

Questions? Call Dan at 630-653-6400 x 7210 or email events@evancfa.org.

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and adoption, PSS has provided practical help when needed. PSS has helped with rental assistance to several clients, covered the cost to have electricity restored to a family's home, helped furnish a family's apartment, purchased shoes for a family of 6 who recently arrived from Afghanistan, provided several gift cards to area grocery stores, and provided Uber gift cards. Thanks to a partnership with a diaper bank in Waukegan (Keeping Families Covered) we can provide up to 200 diapers, 2 packs of wipes, and 1 can of infant formula each month to every client.

Want to make a difference for life? Would you like to help support women and families? Become a volunteer with PSS as a mentor for clients, drive to pick up the diapers, help organize our donations on a monthly basis, or financially support the work of the PSS program. Call us and we can talk about your unique skill set! There are also lots of things you could do to be the hands and feet in your neighborhood or at your church. Volunteer to watch a single mom's children so she can work part-time and not give her entire paycheck to cover daycare. Or, as a small group,

decide to give a pregnant woman at your church a baby shower, offer to bring over coffee to a new mom and help her fold her laundry, and watch her baby so she can take a nap, repair her car so she can get to and from work, or teach a young mom how to drive so that she can pursue greater independence for herself and her child. We all can find ways to bless a new family; often we have to think outside the box.

*~ Faith Allman, Supervisor
Pregnancy Support Services*

A Change in Leadership

After 46 years at ECFA, I'm preparing to retire from my position as Executive Director of ECFA. My interest in human services began when I was in high school. I learned of an organization on the north side of Chicago called Misericordia. The facility was operated by an order of Catholic nuns who cared for children with developmental disabilities and other special needs. I was allowed to volunteer there once a week to spend time and play with the kids who were eager for attention.

In college, I took courses in social sciences and acquired a bachelor degree in psychology. As a young adult I found a position as child care worker at Chapin Hall for Children. It was there that I got firsthand experience as a house parent for seven teenage boys. Four years later, I was hired as the recreation director at Sunny Ridge Home when it served trouble youth referred by DCFS and the court system.

It was July 1, 1976 that I joined the staff at Evangelical Child and Family Agency when ECFA was located in downtown Chicago. I carried a mixed caseload of adoptive families and foster care cases. Because of my experience working with teens, my supervisor gave me families with older children who had special needs. I attended graduate school on a part-time basis and earned a Master of Social Worker degree. Later I became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Certified Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor.

For a period of five years I supervised both the Adoption and Foster Care Programs at the Agency. For another five years, I worked as a therapist in the Counseling Program. After Doris Wheeler retired in June 1991, I was asked by ECFA's Board of Directors to assume the position of Executive Director. Through the years, the Agency staff has provided pregnancy counseling services to many thousands of women, placed well over 3000 children with Christian adoptive families, served



thousands more children in foster care and Intact Family Services, and served hundreds of individuals and families in the Counseling Program.

The time has come for me to step down from my position at the Agency. However, fortunately for ECFA, Wendy Payne has been named as the new Executive Director effective October 1, 2022. Wendy is a seasoned professional in the field of human services and a committed Christian who is actively involved at Village Church

of Bartlett. She had worked for several years at another agency serving disadvantaged children and families in the Cabrini Green neighborhood in Chicago.

Wendy first joined ECFA in January of 2002 as a foster care supervisor. In 2004, she initiated the Intact Family Services Program at the Agency. When Dave Lundberg retired in 2015, Wendy assumed the position of Director of Professional Services. She oversees the Pregnancy Support Services and Adoption Programs in both ECFA's Illinois and Wisconsin District offices, along with the Intact Family Services Program in DuPage County. She has also served as an adjunct professor at both Wheaton College in their Sociology Department and at Aurora University in their Social Work Department.

I am grateful for the years that I have been privileged to serve as a caseworker, program supervisor, individual and family counselor, and Executive Director at ECFA. I am also confident that I will be leaving the Agency in very capable hands of the new CEO, a talented and committed professional staff, and a dedicated Board of Directors. I encourage all of ECFA's friends, donors, and volunteers to continue to wholeheartedly pray for and support the vital work and ministry of the Agency.

~ Ken Withrow, LCSW, CADC

40 Years at ECFA!

Bev Ozinga first learned of ECFA as a young girl through the church her family attended. There was another family there who had adopted three children through the Agency. Bev pursued a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Trinity Christian College and earned a Masters in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania. Along the way, she took a summer internship at ECFA. Former Executive Director, Doris Wheeler, offered her a position as an adoption family counselor and she began working at the Agency on June 1, 1982.

Over the years, Bev has served a great many individuals and adoptive families as a direct service worker, an Adoption Program Supervisor, and now as our Post Legal Adoption Services case manager. She also has adopted two girls through the Agency and has four grandchildren. The ECFA staff celebrated Bev's 40th Year Anniversary with a catered breakfast to honor her for her decades long service to the Agency.

*Congratulations
Bev!*



*Left: Bev Ozinga
Right: Barb Hellmer*



HARBAUGH FAMILY FUND

The Pregnancy Support Services program has always provided services free of charge to our clients. For this reason, we rely on the generosity of our community to fund the program. Imagine our delight when we learned we had been chosen to receive a donation from the Harbaugh Family Fund of the DuPage Foundation! This grant

will help support our in-home services to pregnant and parenting families in DuPage County. One of our goals is to equip parents of young children to provide safety and security at home which allows the children to thrive. Thanks to the DuPage Foundation and the Harbaugh Family Fund for helping us reach this goal.

Community Partnerships!



Illustration Only

Love in Action 2022

ECFA celebrated its 72nd Anniversary with the Annual Love in Action Dinner that was held at Abbington Distinctive Banquets in Glen Ellyn on April 22nd. Emcee Roy Patterson from Moody Bible Institute Radio welcomed 350 guests to the event.

After dinner was served, ECFA Board Chairman, Dave Brown, introduced long-time Executive Director, Ken Withrow, and Director of Professional Services, Wendy Payne, who will be taking the helm of ECFA as Executive Director upon Ken's retirement on October 1st.

Pregnancy Support Services Supervisor, Faith Allman, introduced a recently produced video about one of ECFA pregnancy clients. Adoptive parents, Jacob and Marcy, shared their amazing adoption story.

Gospel artist, worship leader, and America's Got Talent Semi-Finalist, Sharon Irving, inspired our guests with her incredible vocals. Our featured speaker, Abby Johnson, had been a former Planned Parenthood Director turned pro-life activist. She authored the best-selling book, *Unplanned*, that chronicled her experience working at Planned Parenthood and her dramatic exit.

The full feature movie, *Unplanned*, is based on Abby's book. She is the founder of "And Then There Were None," a ministry that assists abortion clinic workers out of the business. Abby challenged those in attendance to take a firm and uncompromising stance in supporting Christian pro-life agencies and the unborn in our society.

We are very thankful for everyone who attended and supported ECFA at this year's Love in Action celebration. Over \$61,000 in net

income was raised from this event. Please mark you calendar for May 5, 2023 for ECFA's 73rd Anniversary Dinner. We hope to see you then!



Abby Johnson



Sharon Irving



For 32 years, the Naperville Exchange Club has raised much needed funds for non-profit organizations in DuPage County through its food and musical festival, Ribfest. After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Ribfest was held on June 17-20 at its new location at the DuPage County Event Center and Fairgrounds in Wheaton.

It's All About the Kids!!

The Naperville Exchange Club is composed entirely of community volunteers who work many long hours to put on this annual event. Its mission is to eliminate child abuse and domestic violence in DuPage County. ECFA is grateful for all those who volunteered at Ribfest this past June and for the financial support received from the Exchange Club over the years.



ECFA Staff having fun while volunteering at Ribfest!!



Meet the Staff!!



Bethany Oudin – Administrative Assistant

Bethany Oudin joined the ECFA staff as an administrative assistant on August 1st. She has an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education and 20 years of experience as a preschool teacher. She has also worked in a clerical position

at the YMCA for two years. Bethany attends New City Church in Naperville where she is involved in the children's program.



Dan Vallaro – Director of Development

Daniel Vallaro began in his position as Director of Development on June 13, 2022. He has a B.S. in Marketing from Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois, and 18 years of experience in both the business world and non-profit sector. For two

years, Dan held the position of Director of Development at Mountainside Properties Limited, a developing Christian retreat center in Colorado. Dan and his family attend One Line Church in Wheaton.



Lawrence Connor – Intact Family Services

Lawrence Connor, joined staff as an Intact Family Services case manager on September 27, 2021. He has a B.A. in Communication from Minot State University in North Dakota where he played college basketball. He also earned a diploma in Arts and Ministry

from Valor Christian College in Winchester, Ohio. Lawrence has over seven years of experience working as a licensed chemical dependency counselor, a case manager, and a juvenile probation officer.

Golf Scramble 2022

ECFA held its 35th Annual Golf Scramble and Presidents' Cup Challenge at the Elgin Country Club on Monday, June 6th. Fifty-four golfers braved rainy conditions for the first two holes of a shotgun start. But then, the sun came out and a gentle breeze favored an excellent afternoon of spirited competition.

Individuals from Judson University, Moody Bible Institute, and Wheaton College competed for the College President's traveling trophy captured by North

Central College last year and Wheaton College at the previous event. This year's champion college team was Judson University!

After registration, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by the club's staff. It was drizzling right at the start of the event, but that did not deter our golfers. After all the teams completed their rounds, delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts were served as the ECFA Staff shared about the work of the Agency. The silent auction displayed many sought-after items,

including a week-long vacation stay in Florida.

Emcee Dennis Demoss presented the awards to winners of the outing's special events. A huge thanks goes out to all those who participated: golfers, donors, sponsors, supporters, and volunteers. Approximately \$23,000 was raised in net income to support ECFA's pro-life and family focused services. Please look for the save the date notice for next year's event!



Congratulations to Judson University

*Left to Right:
Dr. Michael Love, Dr. Curtis Sartar,
President Gene Crume, & Dennis Demoss*



Open Scramble Winners!



*Left to Right:
Craig Rodriguez
Matt Willis
Madison Rodriquez
Steve Krismalian*

ECFA Foundation

This year, the ECFA Foundation will provide funding for counseling services to economically challenged individuals and families, graduate school scholarships for staff, ECFA parking lot repaving, agency marketing expenses, matching funds at ECFA special events, and assistance with other agency needs.

Please consider investing in the ECFA Foundation. Your gift will support our work and ministry to children and families in need, as we move into the future.

For information about how to direct a gift to the ECFA Foundation, please contact Tim Carrick at 630/653-6400.

Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Evelyn Boonstra

From: Chuck and Debbie Slager

Joanne Cody

From: Mary McPherson

Paul Gibson

From: Kristie Boyd
Bernard Bruinius
Diane Paarlberg
Richard and Janet Terpstra
Wallace Urban Family
Walt's Food Centers

George Dearing

From: Bob and Bev Stotz

Eric Herner

From: Edith Martin

Joyce Kennedy

From: Rodney and Gwen Hippenhammer
David and Carol Robb

Dr. Alma Labunski

From: Dave and April Edwards

Anthony Lutkauskas

From: Richard and Annette Valtman

Richard Martin

From: Edith Martin

Geri M. Sorensen

From: David Sorensen

Kristin Jane Todd

From: Jessie Todd

Gertrude Van Wienan

From: Wes and Cindy DeGraff

In Honor of

Mr. and Mrs. Brian Barnes

In celebration of their wedding anniversary
From John and Tamara McParland

Don and Lynn Gurney

In celebration of their wedding
From: John and Sharon Bozovsky
Gary and Judy Buehre
Douglas and Judith Cummings
Sandra Laabs
Walter and Nair Peterson
Marianne Ridenour

Dr. Alma Labunski

From: Mr. and Mrs. Art Brown

Mrs. Gerry Teshner

"Best Ever Neighbor"
From: George and Gloria Dearing

Ken Withrow

From: Dave and April Edwards
"For all his years of service at ECFA,
Ministering to countless people. Ken,
we are going to miss you at ECFA."