

## Focusing on Down Syndrome Awareness Month



October is National Down Syndrome Awareness Month. This month, you might see adorable photos and videos of Lucas Warren, the first Gerber baby with Down syndrome, and other beautiful witnesses of life with Down syndrome. Some videos may have facts about life with Down syndrome. There may be stories about individuals with Down syndrome, and reasons why they are wonderful daughters, sons, siblings, students, employees, coworkers, and even husbands and wives.

There's a tragic reality these worthy celebrations often overlook: for every three faces you see with Down syndrome in these pictures or in person, there are seven faces who never had a chance to live outside the womb because their lives were taken from them via abortion.

In the U.S., there is an estimated average abortion rate of 67 percent for babies diagnosed with Down syndrome in the womb. Other countries like Iceland and Denmark boast of eliminating Down syndrome almost completely, with abortion rates of nearly 100 percent.

Even though an overwhelming majority of children's lives are ended because they were diagnosed with Down syndrome, the majority opinion in the U.S. is that Down syndrome abortions should not be legal. A Gallup poll in May showed that only 49 percent of Americans believe it should be legal to abort a baby with Down syndrome in the first trimester, and only 29 percent believe it should be legal in the third trimester.

Because of *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, it's legal to abort a child diagnosed with Down syndrome at any point in the pregnancy, even though a majority of Americans find that morally abhorrent.

It's not just the law, but our culture that can be blamed. While we highlight the value of every person who has Down syndrome on TV or social media, behind closed doors—especially in doctors' offices—we speak of these individuals as burdens on society, or as somehow less valuable because of the effects of their syndrome.

Would more children with Down syndrome be given a chance at life if doctors didn't push abortion on vulnerable parents immediately after diagnosis? What if instead we lead with encouragement and support? What if we embraced adoption fully? Perhaps our social media and our daily lives would see more of these faces if we embraced the idea that our value as human beings is greater than merely the sum of our abilities.

Chris Gast

## My Thank You note to Jesus...

By Marie VanNoordwyk

I've been looking over my life and I can now see how Jesus has been working in my life all along. I didn't see it then, because Jesus doesn't make us do what is right...that is up to us. He does things in our lives and we either listen or not,

When I was young, I didn't ask Jesus for anything. I knew it all! I married very young and we had four amazing kids. Our marriage didn't work out (I'll spare you the details), but I know now it was because Jesus was not first in our lives. After about 20 years, I married again. In this marriage, Jesus was part of our lives, but not a big part, unfortunately.

After about 15 years together our health began to deteriorate. My husband had to have 2/3 of his stomach taken out and also had a bad heart. As for me, I had chronic pain in my left leg and had part of the nerve taken out, but the pain was still so bad, all while trying to take care of my husband. The doctor told me about a morphine pump that could be placed in my abdomen to help the pain. Did I talk to Jesus first before making this decision? No!! The pump did help some. After a few years my husband passed away. Then about 3 or 4 months later I was told they would need to recharge the battery to my pump. Did I talk to Jesus again? No!! I was all ready to go in, but the doctor couldn't perform the procedure because I had a heart murmur. To me it was not a big deal, I had it when he put the pump in... I've always had it. The doctor asked if I'd like to talk to my family doctor. For some reason, I said, "Yes." I went home and that night in my room with the door closed, I prayed hard and cried. I wanted Jesus so bad, I wanted a pain-free life. The next morning I told the doctor I wanted to turn the pump down, then off! I then told all of my kids what I was going to do and they all prayed. That Wednesday night at Bible study, I told my church family. I belong to Sheridan Road Church of Christ, which is a small congregation, but there is so much love. With all of these people praying for me, the day came where my pump was being turned down. I eventually had it removed.

It felt like it was time to do something to say 'thank you' to Jesus. But in the meantime, He still had more good news for me! I was also hard of hearing and thought this was a deterrent. But I really wanted to do something. This is when I started writing notes about what was going on in the world and where it was referenced in the Bible. There really are some people who think the Bible is boring, and I wanted to show them it wasn't. I wrote about stories in the Old Testament that some people might not have heard about. I included scripture references and where you could find them in the Bible.

I really wanted to do more, but as I said

my hearing was pretty bad. Now let me tell you about my miracles...

A good friend called me and told me her husband received a coupon in the mail from Miracle Ear in Fruitport and wasn't going to use it. Knowing of my situation, she asked if I would like it. So I called and Susan, the owner, said I could use it. I made an appointment right away and was told my ears were very bad (as if I didn't already know this). Susan really helped me a lot, but the hearing aids were very expensive. Then, a lady who loves the Lord and does all she can for Him, offered to help purchase my hearing aids! She told me it was a gift from Jesus.

Now that I felt comfortable talking to people again, I started a phone Bible study. I also went to a nursing home and read to and visited with a great lady. About 8 years ago, my friend (who gave me the coupon), told me about B.S.F. (Bible Study Fellowship). It's a Bible study that reaches all over the world. I recommend it very highly. You listen, then study at home, and the next week discuss it. It's great!

What would my life be like if not for the miracles of Jesus?

I used to say, "I'd like to do something, but at my age..." and "I am not smart like a minister," so I did nothing. When you're on your knees and asking Jesus for help, be ready for His answer because it will come. Jesus doesn't care about how old you are or how smart you are, just that you want to help Him and share His love. Moses was 80 years old when he delivered the people out of Egypt. Daniel was about 82 when he was almost lunch for the lions.

I'm now 74 and have a wonderful, supportive family. What would my life be if I didn't get down on my knees? Jesus doesn't care how you pray or where you pray, just that you pray. Thank and Praise Him for all he has done for you, ask for His forgiveness when you stumble, seek Him in times of trial and suffering...

If you know of someone who needs the Word, talk to them, find a book in the Bible and read it, then discuss it together. I find the phone works great, if you can't meet in person. If you help one person, maybe they will in turn help someone else and so on. I always say, "The Bible is our G.P.S. to Heaven." I encourage you to get to know the Bible and pass it around.

If it's time to start thinking about your life and what you can do for Jesus, please don't hesitate. I cannot tell you how great you will feel. The more you do, the more you will want to do...

I thank Jesus for allowing me to see how He has been working in my life all along and how I now have the life I have always wanted as I continue to work for Him.

## Letter to the Editor: Imperiled America

America has reached a dangerous point in its history. The danger from within is as bad, or worse, as the danger from without.

We neglected to teach our children America's History and the History of our LORD, the creator of Heaven and our beloved Earth.

The result of that, is a very ungodly America. With very little to no knowledge of God, the Holy Bible, or of His moral rules of behavior.

Now we see masked mobs attacking their fellow Americans praying, or going to voting places. We see leaders suggesting harassment of Republicans and their families where ever they can be found. All this while the police are not allowed to arrest the unlawful evil doers.

Even Hillary, twice presidential candidate, believes their side is civilized. However, a nation that murders innocent unborn babies, is not a civilized nation. It is a murderous nation in God's eye.

Because of that, and other ungodly abominations, God will destroy America and the world.

Most man-of-God now believe that the end of time could occur any day, now that Israel exists as a nation as prophesied. But God decides when!

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## Snowflake

## Craft & Vendor Fair

Saturday, November 17th

9:00am - 2:00pm

Calvary Christian School

5873 Kendra Rd. Fruitport