



# ILLINOIS Family Institute

Boldly Bringing a Biblical Perspective to Public Policy in the Land of Lincoln.

Newsletter | Winter 2022



For unto us **a Child is born,**  
... And His name will be called  
**Wonderful, Counselor,**  
**Mighty God,**  
*Everlasting Father,*  
*Prince of Peace.* — Isaiah 9:6

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!*



*pro life. pro marriage. pro family.*

from the **Executive Director** — **David E. Smith**

***And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*** Colossians 3:23-24

Over the past several months the Holy Spirit has been reminding me about a portion of Scripture that exhorts us to do everything as if we're doing it to the Lord.

What is covered under "whatever you do?"

Maybe a better question is "what isn't covered?"

If this requirement to serve the Lord Jesus in whatever we do was front and center in our minds throughout the day, how often would we fall back into our sinful ways?

Paul advises those of us who claim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to set our mind on things above, not on the empty things of this world. (verse 2)

He not only tells us to keep our eyes on the things above, but to put to death a list of sinful actions and attitudes. Paul himself admits that he had to do this *daily* in his letter to the Corinthians. If he had to die *daily* to these things, doesn't that mean we should also?

John the Baptist also made a similar confession:

***He must increase, but I must decrease.*** ~John 3:30

Our focus has got to shift from serving ourselves to serving Him in all that we think, do and say. And if our attitude and mentality is stayed upon the Lord, it is possible to accomplish this otherwise impossible task that God is calling us to.

*He must increase  
but I must decrease.*

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I know this from personal experience.

There have been times I've worked on something and felt overworked, unappreciated, overlooked, and unnoticed. It was not until the Holy Spirit reminded me that my labor is done as a service *unto the Lord* and not man that I recognized that my complaints are sinful and selfish.

It is very easy to live as one who wants to look good in other people's eyes. But what about God's eyes? Have we taken His will into consideration? Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul urges us to a much higher standard – the Christian life in which we serve God and not men.

If we are preoccupied with our own selfish pursuits and other people's opinions, we miss out on what God wants to do in us and through us to bring Him glory. He has placed us where we are for a reason. He has given us good works that He wants us to accomplish (Eph. 2:10). We need our eyes opened and focused on Him so that we can see those opportunities He is giving us to serve Him with our whole heart.

## **Serving Him**

There are hundreds, if not thousands of ways that we could serve God by serving our fellow man. Volunteering at our local church, serving as a precinct committeeman, or helping out at a food pantry. We can minister to others with our prayers, our money, our time, our talents.

As a public policy organization, we cannot help but see the extreme and growing need for Christian pro-life advocates in Illinois. While we praise God for the demise of *Roe v. Wade*, blue states like Illinois are fast becoming destination points for abortion.

*continued on page 3...*

## Psalm Encouragement

In the wake of a disappointing election cycle, we all could use some good news. What could possibly be better than knowing what Psalm 93 reminds us? “The Lord reigns! He is clothed with majesty!”

Moreover, Psalm 37 instructs us:

Do not fret because of evildoers,  
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.  
For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,  
And wither as the green herb.

Trust in the Lord, and do good;  
Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.  
Delight yourself also in the Lord,  
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord,  
Trust also in Him,  
And He shall bring it to pass.  
He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,  
And your justice as the noonday.  
Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;  
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,  
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.  
Cease from anger, and forsake wrath;  
Do not fret—it only causes harm.

For evildoers shall be cut off;  
But those who wait on the Lord,  
They shall inherit the earth.  
For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;  
(vs. 1-10) ❄️

## End of Year Matching Challenge

Please visit [illinoisfamily.org](http://illinoisfamily.org) for more information about an **amazing challenge** that will be on-going during the entire month of December.



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## Amendment 1

was one of the most consequential votes voters in Illinois had to consider during the 2022 Midterm election. If passed, this referendum would amend the state's constitution to give Illinois' government unions the strongest negotiating powers in the country. To pass, the amendment must be approved by 60 percent of those voting on the measure or by 50 percent plus 1 of those voting in the election. The latest vote counts show the amendment falling short of the 60 percent threshold and the Illinois State Board of Elections said it would not determine the total number of ballots cast in the election until it certifies official totals on Dec. 5. As of this writing, Gov. JB Pritzker is declaring victory, however we are uncertain of the outcome of this ballot measure. ❄️



## Did You Know?

Lame duck Congressional Republicans Adam Kinzinger and Rodney Davis voted with Democrats on July 19<sup>th</sup> to pass H.R. 8404, which would overturn the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Evidently, these two (soon to be former) federal lawmakers do not uphold the Republican Platform as they once wanted us to believe. Moreover, their vote demonstrates their ignorance about the essential role of the nuclear family in our culture. God defined and established the institution of marriage and family and we have no right to redefine them. Following God's design benefits us all as it provides the best environment to raise healthy, productive children who will become leaders, teachers, inventors and servant citizens in the future. ❄️



Join us for a  
Father-Daughter  
**HOEDOWN**



Photos begin at 5:00 PM • Dinner served at 6:00 PM

**Tuesday, January 17, 2023**

Tinley Park Convention Center  
18451 Convention Center Dr, Tinley Park, IL

*Saddle up and come in western attire*

[CHCOP.org/event](http://CHCOP.org/event)

## from the **Executive Director** — **David E. Smith**

*(continued from page 1)*

Nationally the number of abortions is going down. Various news outlets are reporting that since the June decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, abortions have decreased by 6 percent. That means that more than 5,000 babies a month are getting a chance of life.

Yet here in Illinois the number of abortions is going up, fast. State lawmakers and abortion advocates have worked to eliminate all abortion restrictions in order to facilitate their murderous business plan. New abortion mills are opening up, transportation to Illinois is being arranged and mobile units are touring big cities and state lines looking for potential victims.

The need to educate and activate Christians to this battle front could not be more urgent. Would-be mothers in a crisis and innocent babies need our help. Proverbs 24:11-12 instructs us

*Deliver those who are drawn toward death,  
And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter.  
If you say, "Surely we did not know this,"  
Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it?  
He who keeps your soul, does He not know it?  
And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?*

Will He find us faithful in the little things? We must start by discipling our own children and grandchildren about the sanctity of life and God's standards for abstinence until marriage and monogamy thereafter. What if every church in Illinois (and the U.S.) intentionally taught these things and encouraged parents to reinforce these teachings at home?

How about participating in [40DaysForLife.com](http://40DaysForLife.com) prayer vigils every spring and fall with your children? If we truly believe that the fervent prayer of the righteous "avails much" (James 5:16); and if we truly believe that God hates the shedding of innocent blood (Prov 6:17); and if we truly believe that we are called to "deliver those who stumble toward death" (Prov 24:11); and if we truly believe that the second great commandment in God's law is to love our neighbor — born or unborn (Mat 22:36-40); we should be offering up earnest prayers regularly throughout the day.

Local pregnancy care centers certainly could use our help and financial support. There are plenty of opportunities to help, volunteer, donate to, and fundraise for your local pregnancy care center and/or local pro-life group. You could even attend a Hike for Life fundraiser or banquet.

What if we got more involved to help pro-life candidates? In every election cycle we have opportunities to promote pro-life candidates running for local, state, or federal office. We can even go one step further and identify local pro-life elected officials and write them a letter of encouragement and thanks.

These are but a few suggestions about how we can serve God by serving our fellow human beings. Yet the question remains: Will He deem us worthy to be entrusted with greater responsibilities and opportunities to serve Him and bring Him

*He must  
increase  
but I must decrease.*

glory?

The goal for a disciple of Jesus is not a superficial, "nice looking" Christian life; but rather to be one who is "doing the will of God from the heart." (Philippians 4:4; Proverbs 4:23; 1 Timothy 6:11)

### **Remember our purpose.**

The Westminster Catechism reminds us that our chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Whatever we do as unto the Lord and not to men, we bring Him glory.

And for some reason, God wants to use us, His bondservants, His ambassadors, for good works that provide for the common good of His creation.

Ordinary people like you and me are the sovereignly designed means by which God is caring for the people of the earth. That doesn't mean God has isolated Himself from the world; it simply means that God is providentially using the talents, skills, intellect, opportunities, and regular old jobs and kindnesses of ordinary people — us — to provide and care for humanity.

Think of that. As we heartily serve the Lord, we are the means by which God cares for His beloved mankind. We become like the rain that falls on the just and unjust alike — the means of common grace through which human life and well-being is sustained and provided for. When we see it like that, a sense of great wonder and awe returns to our everyday working life, for we come to see that God is channeling His love through us as we serve Him.

We have to understand that our calling to live for Jesus isn't just counter cultural, it's counterintuitive. In other words, it isn't something we would normally do. It isn't something that most people we know would do. Our old nature wants to live life for our own pleasure.

The challenge to us all today: change the way we take on the day. Dedicate yourself to doing all things as unto the Lord. Set a reminder on your smart phone or put Col. 3:23 up on your refrigerator: "whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."

If you are like me, I need this reminder morning, noon and night to connect with the King, to check my trajectory, and refresh my attitude. ❄️



# Where Was the Illinois Red Wave?

by David Curtin, IFI Government Affairs Liaison

**L**ike other major states, Illinois saw suburban women and younger voters show up at the polls to put their marker down for “abortion rights” and “bodily autonomy” (a.k.a. killing innocent, unborn children who are “unwanted” except by loving couples who spend years, tears, and thousands of dollars trying to adopt because there’s a baby shortage – but I digress). Suburban women could have been GOP voters this time around, but it didn’t happen. Younger voters, who don’t typically show up much in midterm elections, did so this time, and they are decidedly liberal on the social issues, having been indoctrinated with ideology that comes straight out of our socialist public school system and universities.

Chicago has always been the poster child for vote fraud before vote fraud was a national thing. Those who’ve worked many decades in Illinois politics know this. It’s just a given. We’ve seen it up close, talked to people who’ve participated in it and laughed about it, and have analyzed the numbers that are statistically impossible in some places. There’s a reason why Illinois’ politicians frequently go to prison – honesty is not their policy to begin with. But voters in Illinois don’t demand honesty. After all, Chicago is the city that works, not the city of fair play. And so, like our leaders, counting votes honestly is not our forte.

In the last three days before the election, the national news media and pundits all talked about the red wave – it was now really, really going to happen and, look out Democrats, Republicans will take control of everything down to dogcatcher nationwide! This freaked out some on the left, and they panicked by going to the polls. It also placated some soft Republicans to not bother going to the polls since this thing was wrapped up.

Illinois was positioned to at the very least win the governorship and flip a few statehouse seats. Under Democrat leadership, Illinois’ biggest export has been jobs and residents to other states. Illinoisans have watched a number of

Fortune 500 companies leave. They’ve talked to their friends in other states who laugh at Illinois for being so corrupt and....backward. They see their kids graduate from college and never come back. And when their kids start families, they leave Illinois to be near them. They’re up to their eyeballs in Chicago shootings, carjackings, and looting almost every night and now bleeding into the suburbs. They’re scared. And their Democrat governor not only won’t do anything about it, but sympathizes with criminals evidenced by his SAFE-T Act.

And don’t forget Pritzker locked down the state for two years except for cannabis dispensaries, abortion mills and strip clubs where COVID apparently wasn’t a threat. This put 20% of businesses under, not to mention warping children’s social and mental development by closing schools. So, yes, Illinois was poised and ready for something different, and that something different was a business-friendly, tough-on-crime GOP governor.

Enter Darren Bailey. A business-friendly, tough-on-crime legislator who was also a Downstate conservative Christian farmer with a southern drawl. But most political pundits thought he’d be easy to beat based on his conservative Christian profile. Gov. Pritzker certainly thought so. The billionaire had funneled millions into defeating Bailey’s primary opponents because he actually wanted to face Bailey.

Conventional wisdom said a conservative Christian farmer couldn’t win in Illinois. And Pritzker’s campaign consultants and money were nothing if not conventional. So they blasted Chicago TV with millions of dollars of ads on the anti-abortion extremist Bailey and peppered the mainstream media about Bailey’s “racist, homophobic, and misogynistic views.” None of this was true, of course. Bailey’s running mate was an African American woman. He believed marriage was between one man and one woman, and parents, not the government, should be in control of their children’s education.



Not exactly disqualifying credentials. But it was the far-left’s worst nightmare.

Even so, Bailey could have won. He had the Downstate vote locked up. He didn’t need to win Cook and the city of Chicago; he just needed to ride the national trend of Hispanics, and to some extent blacks, who are disillusioned to see the far-left’s hatred for family values, police and first responders, and parental rights. What he needed MOSTLY were reasonable suburbanites looking for someone to vote FOR. And they certainly were willing to vote for something different. So while ten years ago, Bailey would not have been an attractive candidate, this time he really could have been because he WAS different. He’s a hard-working successful farmer. Illinoisans still respect hard work. He wasn’t corrupt and certainly not an insider. Another bonus. He smiled and was good-natured. Again, likable. He had a southern drawl – amusing to some and quaint to others. The country bumpkin could have been the country Trumpkin for Illinois.

But Bailey had two big problems: no money for Chicago TV ads and no mail-in ballot program. If you could put the 4 million actual voters of this election into a stadium and give them the Bailey message, he’d win. But that’s not how it works. You have to be able to tell millions why they should vote for you with TV ads. If Bailey had had millions of dollars to run professionally-made ads to show his likability, his concern for Illinois, and his disdain for corruption, we would have had a candidate suburbanites could warm up to. And if Bailey had millions to spend on ads to showcase his plans to cut taxes,

reduce crime, and bring school choice to parents, he would have had a winning message.

But Bailey didn't have those millions. Most big donors in Chicagoland, where a candidate usually gets that money, held onto their wallets. They have no problem supporting a suburban fiscal conservative who is moderately liberal on the social issues, but they've never taken a chance on a conservative Christian farmer. Bailey didn't get to spell out his plans to cut taxes, reduce crime, and bring school choice to voters. There was no money to reach voters. No money, no message. No message, no real way to win.

What Bailey had was an inexperienced, hardworking campaign staff who did the best they could to keep the campaign rolling. He had experienced conservative groups working very hard to inform voters through social media. He had some excited volunteers who worked very hard to spread the message the best they could to friends and neighbors. And much of it was very effective. Perhaps even more effective was a political action committee that spent tens of millions of dollars on ads and efforts against Pritzker and the Democrats. Those did move some numbers. And because things were so bad in Illinois due to past Democrat malfeasance and a current hapless Democrat president, the state was still ripe to elect a GOP governor — Bailey was even within a couple of points of Pritzker at one point.

But in the end, all Pritzker had to do was keep spending millions on TV ads characterizing Bailey as an anti-abortion zealot, and then pepper mainstream media with quotes about the “racist, homophobic, and misogynistic” Bailey. And that was the caricature and message that Chicagoland voters got. As one suburban woman lamented, “My mom friends wished they had someone to vote for.” They did, they just didn't know it. There went the red wave. Bailey lost by 11 points.

The blue wave arrived primarily because Bailey and other Republicans had no mail-in ballot program in place, and Democrats did. This is now the bread-and-butter for Democrats. Imagine having a whole month to get ballots to your supporters

and get them back to the county clerk's office. It's hard work, but it's a lot of time to harvest actual votes. So Democrats banked a lot of votes before election day, and Republicans didn't. If you're thinking déjà vu all over again, as Yogi Berra used to say, you're not alone. Two years ago, Trump was beat by Biden through the mail-in ballot program mainly. Much of it fraudulent, of course. This time not so much.

Instead, Illinois Republicans put all their eggs in the voter integrity basket in 2022. A wise move, given 2020 fraud and Illinois' problems. They put massive time, money, and volunteers into monitoring polling places in the counties known for the most fraud. It helped. They just didn't executive their own mail-in ballot program. That will almost certainly change for the 2024 election, or the GOP will keep getting these results. ❄️

Ninth Annual

# WORLDVIEW CONFERENCE

Biblical Training for Today's Culture

MAKING THE CASE FOR

## the Sanctity of Life



**Saturday, March 18, 2023 - 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM**

**Village Church of Barrington**  
1600 E Main St., Barrington, IL

FEATURING SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS:



**Scott Klusendorf**  
President of Life Training Institute and the author of *The Case for Life: Equipping Christians to Engage the Culture*



**Dr. John Diggs**  
Physician for over 35 years, serving the Palmer/Monson/Wilbraham area since 2005



**Scott Phelps**  
Founder & Executive Director of the Abstinence & Marriage Education Partnership



Contact Us: 708-781-9328 / [illinoisfamily.org](http://illinoisfamily.org)

Boldly Bringing a Biblical Perspective to Public Policy in the Land of Lincoln.



# Election Recap *by David E. Smith*

**The hope in a “Red Wave” election didn’t come to fruition in November. The work to flip the U.S. House and U.S. Senate to Republican control produced mixed results.**

The GOP barely gained control of the U.S. House, which means Nancy Pelosi will no longer be the Speaker of the U.S. House, and third in line to the presidency.

Of Illinois’ 17 Congressional seats, three downstate districts have Republican representation, as we lost one to redistricting and one to a Democrat candidate in the newly redrawn 13th district in central Illinois.

In the U.S. Senate, Democrats maintained control in either a 50-50 split or a 51-49 divide depending on a December 6th run off in the state of Georgia.

Ironically, Republicans won the popular vote nationally. Conservative news source *Briertbart* reported that Republicans won more than 52 percent of the vote, winning six million more votes nationwide in races for the U.S. House, “but have flipped relatively few seats” to gain control. Part of that success can be attributed to the fact that Republicans increased their share of the Latino vote.

As for the race for Governor of Illinois, abortion cheerleader JB Pritzker won the race by an eleven-point margin, 54 to 43 percent, over State Senator Darren Bailey. The Libertarian candidate received less than 3 percent of the total vote.

Adding up the preliminary numbers, 3,971,149 citizens cast their votes for one of the three candidates for Governor. This is significant drop from the 2018 gubernatorial election in which 4,547,657 citizens participated.

In this cycle, JB Pritzker received 332,669 less votes than he did when he initially ran, and Darren Bailey received 52,155 less votes than did incumbent Bruce Rauner in 2018.

Much has been written and said about the results of this important effort to flip this seat of Governor. Many grass-roots conservatives thought Bailey had a decent chance to win the seat, as the contrast

between their political ideologies couldn’t have been clearer. So, what went wrong?

The top reason in my mind is that the Bailey campaign failed to respond to the constant barrage of ads labeling him (and people like him) as “extreme.”

Any political consultant worth their weight in salt will tell you that you have to respond to these ridiculous ad hominem. Pritzker’s mudslinging continued unabated through the campaign and without response. Without a strong and definitive retort, many voters just assumed that they must be true.

So why didn’t Bailey’s campaign respond? Because the Republican “managers” and “consultants” have failed to recognize the lie that tells their candidate to stay away from certain topics and that it can only be detrimental to the campaign’s efforts.

The fact that a campaign staffer called me directly to ask me not to talk about abortion at a political rally in which media were to be present highlights this foolishness. Now I am fairly sure that if Darren and Cindy Bailey were aware of this request, they would have told this staffer to back off.

Political consultants have a dreadful fear of the liberal media. Instead of working to grow the grassroots base, they walk on eggshells in order not to provoke the media or give them a “controversy” to talk about. This is the problem with virtually all GOP political consultants and campaign managers.

If we believe the many polls which tell us that voters in Illinois (and across the nation) favor restrictions on late term abortion, they missed a phenomenal opportunity to turn the “extremist” label back on Pritzker who favors legalized abortion up to the very day of birth.

Instead of avoiding the issue, they could have highlighted how Pritzker helped to usurp parental rights by repealing the Parental Notice of Abortion Act, allowing 13-yr-olds to get abortions without their parents’ knowledge. Close to 75 percent



of voters supported this law. It should have been a frequent talking point and campaign ad highlighting the “extremism” of Pritzker and Democratic abortion policy in general.

There were other reasons that played into the unhappy results. The so-called Worker’s Right referendum (Amendment 1) served as a strong incentive to get government employees out to vote. They were rightly told that this would strengthen the collective bargaining hand for public sector unions.

This “patronage army” of the Democratic Party naturally supports socialism and big government programs because they believe the lie that the rich only will pay. They are the same voters who often have negative opinions of capitalism. Won’t they be surprised when their property taxes start climbing and they realize that someone had to pay for what the public sector union bosses demand?

Then we have the fact that establishment Republican leaders failed to support Darren Bailey because he wasn’t one of the good ole boys. Some even complained out loud that he talked with a southern twang. Yet that was just the cover for their disdain of this southern Illinois Christian conservative who doesn’t just talk the talk, but walks the walk.

Where was Jim Edgar? How about Bruce Rauner, Leslie Munger, Bob Dold, Kirk Dillard, Bill Brady and Mark Kirk? Even Peter Roskam was AWOL. With “friends” like these in your camp, victory will always be elusive.

Soon-to-be-former Illinois House minority leader Jim Durkin certainly didn’t lift a hand to help Darren Bailey either. Instead, he gave a post-election interview to the state’s most liberal newspaper grumbling about the Illinois Republican Party. *(continued ...)*

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Can you believe that he told the *Chicago Sun-Times* that being called a RINO (Republican in Name Only) is a “badge of honor?”

Yet the Illinois House is poised to lose six more Republican seats in the next General Assembly (2023-2024), and will only have 39 Republicans to 79 Democrats. Durkin has presided over a Republican caucus that has only shrunk under his leadership.

Durkin's leadership has been a dismal failure. The super minority status of the Republican Caucus in the Illinois House is now at the lowest in state history.

In his 1975 speech to CPAC Ronald Reagan said:

Our people look for a cause to believe in. Is it a third party we need, or is it a new and revitalized second party, raising a banner of no pale pastels, but bold colors which make it unmistakably clear where we stand on all of the issues troubling the people?

Maybe it is time to embrace the opportunities we have to contrast our conservative worldview — our Biblical worldview — with that of those who cannot even define what a woman is and insist that a male can be a “birthing person.”

Want to talk about a banner of bold colors? We cannot be afraid of the truth. We cannot avoid talking about the “hard” social issues. We need to be confident of this very thing: **Truth Wins.** ❄️

## Marijuana Ballot Measures

Voters in five states were asked about legalizing recreational marijuana; two passed, three failed.

Marijuana referendum failed in Arkansas, North Dakota and South Dakota. While polling shows a majority of voters support legalization nationwide, well informed voters have legitimate concerns on how a permissive stance to drug use will increase addictions, harm children and foster more driving and workplace accidents.

In Maryland and Missouri, voters supported legalizing and regulating recreational marijuana sales. Those states will also expunge criminal records for non-violent pot-related charges.

In Colorado, voters voted to decriminalize use and possession of psychedelic mushrooms for people 21 and older and to create state-regulated “healing centers” for the use of some hallucinogens. ❄️

## Christian Faith & Biblical Knowledge



We've written about the growing category of “NONEs” in our culture. These are the people who choose the ‘no religion’ or ‘none of the above’ categories on a census or other survey. According to Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) data, in 1994, five percent of Americans identified as ‘NONEs’; in 2019, that figure was 34 percent. Among Generation Z (those born in the late 1990s or early 2000s), 47 percent identify as NONE.

There is no doubt that we are in the midst of a troubling crisis of faith in America. How did we get here? Well, earlier this year, The American Bible Society released the results of its State of the Bible 2022 survey. It revealed an unprecedented drop in Bible reading among Americans over the last year, decreasing from 50 to 39 percent of self-described Bible users.

Only ten percent of U.S. adults use the Bible daily and five percent read the Bible once a week. This means the vast majority are not relying on the Word of God on a daily basis. These results are sobering since the Bible is God's Word to mankind, giving us the Gospel, wisdom, discernment and more. The Bible must influence our everyday decisions and change the way we live our lives. Without God's Word as our guide, we will rely on our own flawed thinking and be more vulnerable to worldly ways of thinking and acting.

One positive take-away of the American Bible Society's survey is that when children are exposed to the Bible, they are likely to grow up to be Bible users. Thus, the remedy for America's spiritual illness is to raise the next generation reading and knowing God's Word. Parents and grandparents should regularly read the Bible with their children.

In the book of Joshua, God instructed that 12 stones (one for each tribe) be gathered and placed as a memorial to God's miracle-working protection as the children of Israel crossed the Jordan and began claiming their Promised Land. We learn that the purpose of this memorial was to be a visible testimony and to prompt questions from future generations.

God explains He wants His people, fathers in particular, to answer those questions so that the next generations may know Who He is and the great things He has done for them. It is also a great opportunity for fathers (and other family members) to reiterate God's blessings, give thanks for His miracles, and to acknowledge our dependence on His mercies in our lives and on our behalf.

Just as such memorializing was done in the Old Testament, today this should be happening in the family. Fathers in particular, along with moms—and even extended family—need to be consciously keeping track of answered prayer, of God's obvious blessings of provision, healing, and more. Having regular family devotions where you read and study the Bible together, share prayer requests, and pray together is a vital way to honor God and expose your children and grandchildren to the Word of God.

Parents and grandparents must be countercultural as we raise the next generation. We should want to instill in them a love for God and His Word. Doing this will equip your family with a stronger worldview. Simply living as everyone else does will lead to worldliness, selfishness and moral decay.

Ephesians 6:4 instructs fathers to raise our children “in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Regular family Bible reading is possibly the best way to obey this imperative. ❄️



# The Harbaugh Pledge by David E. Smith

I believe in having the courage to let the unborn be born. I love life.

I believe in having a loving care and respect for life and death.

My faith and my science are what drive these beliefs in me.

—Jim Harbaugh

In an interview with ESPN in September, Michigan Wolverines Coach Jim Harbaugh (and former Chicago Bear quarterback) openly shared that he tells his family, team, and staff that if any of them is faced with a crisis pregnancy, he and his wife Sarah will adopt that child.

*I've told [them] the same thing I tell my kids, boys, the girls, same thing I tell our players, our staff members, I encourage them if they have a pregnancy that wasn't planned, to go through with it, go through with it. Let that unborn child be born, and if at that time, you don't feel like you can care for it, you don't have the means or the wherewithal, then Sarah and I will take that baby.*

*Any player on our team, any female staff member or any staff member or anybody in our family or our extended family... that doesn't feel like after they have a baby they can take care of it, we got a big house. We'll raise that baby.*

As a public figure and a natural born leader, Harbaugh is not merely a tremendous witness for his faith and the sanctity of life, but he is showing us how it's done; how to walk-in-faith, winsomely bold and with integrity.

Pastors and church leaders should take note of Coach Harbaugh's witness. His genuine loving, proactive offer to help his players and/or staff should they face an unexpected pregnancy and willingness to adopt the baby is an example that should be replicated in churches nationwide.

Pro-life Church leaders should have a conversation with their church family and prepare a list of volunteer families who would be willing to step up to be that adoptive family for women facing an unplanned pregnancy. Once this is done in advance it could be announced to the church family:

"We love you and your unborn baby. We want to minister to you during this

critical time of your life. A family here at our church is willing to adopt and raise this precious child in the faith so that he/she has a chance to live and serve Almighty God."

This need not conflict with the message of abstinence and marriage as God's standard for Christian life. In fact, this cornerstone of biblical marriage and family should be a frequent matter of discussion in our homes and in our churches. Far too many victims of abortion and perverse sexual ideologies have to deal with the consequences of their actions precisely because these things haven't been discussed in their homes or by their church leaders. "I didn't know" is a heart-breaking chorus and excuse.

Yet young women or couples who fall short of abstinence and find themselves with an unplanned pregnancy should know that fellow believers want to extend mercy and forgiveness to them.

Moreover, they should know that the church family is willing to rally around both mom and her pre-born baby. This offer of loving help should also be extended to birth moms who plan to raise their baby themselves.

## Make Sure They Know

Imagine if churches across the nation made a Harbaugh type offer to families in their congregations and/or even to families in their immediate communities? The option of "terminating" a crisis pregnancy could be virtually eliminated. The mother and her family would understand that they have a real, life-giving choice to give that child a future.

Imagine the lives that would be saved both physically and spiritually!

Imagine what a powerful witness this would be to our abortion-centered



culture as Christians "walk the walk" to lift up Jesus, shining Jesus' light in our dark culture. The selfless offer to love our neighbors would likely shock many in the culture.

Imagine if "The Harbaugh Pledge" was taken up by churches coast-to-coast. Imagine the how it would become a beacon of Christ to our culture by offering to love them both by facilitating private adoptions, which are much less expensive than going through an agency.

The fact that there is an IRS adoption tax credit of \$14k should more than cover any expense incurred. On top of that, Illinois offers tax "refunds of up to \$5,000 for a child adopted in Illinois, and up to \$2,000 for a child adopted outside the state," according to a Chicago Tribune article. I assume states across the nation offer similar tax incentives.

For those who may not want an adoptive family from the local church, churches could network within their own denomination or with like-minded independent churches outside of the state.

My prayer is that thousands of churches across the nation take this pledge publicly before their congregations. They could even extend the offer of adoption and discipleship to an area in their community that routinely struggles with out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Jesus promised that if He be lifted-up, all men would be drawn to Him. "The Harbaugh Pledge" could become a powerful way to lift-up Christ in our culture and may even lead to our long-awaited spiritual revival as we repent from our sins of apathy and abortion. ❄️



## Now What? by Rev. Thorin Anderson

I have three primary thoughts following this election: “What happened to the red wave?” “How can so many people be so fooled by the party of death?” and “What is God doing?”

In spite of the rumblings across the political spectrum and media that there would be a red wave of epic proportions, the talking heads on the Leftist media appeared unperturbed and simply repeated the mantra that the election would be very secure, and that “election deniers” were dangerous to democracy. (In spite of the fact that Stacy Abrams and Hillary Clinton remain big-time election deniers).

Did voters hear too much about a red wave and decide at the last minute to stay home or that they didn’t want a two-house majority for Republicans?

Did Republicans and conservatives err in their messaging by assuming that everyone connected Democrat policies to the disasters they caused?

Are there still so many people who do not grasp that killing is a really bad response to an unwanted pregnancy? While “Choice” is a pleasant-sounding word, we’re not choosing whether to put cheddar or mozzarella cheese on a sandwich.

Are the political “machines” so powerful that they are, from a human perspective, unbeatable?

Have so many wise and weary people left states like Illinois, California, and New York that there are no longer enough right-thinking people to defeat the Leftists?

One or more of these things may have affected the election results, but there is a more important perspective which we must consider.

What is God doing? Are these results His intention? Where is He in all of this?

We see in Scripture a time when God will give mankind precisely what they have been striving after for 6000 years or so:

***God’s withdrawal from active participation in man’s affairs.***

Remember that this nation, and particularly, the Democrat Party, kicked God out of America’s political and cultural

affairs decades ago, and such actions have had dire consequences.

Not surprisingly, America is now going the way people want it to go. So many choose to live however they wish without God and without truth. Pleasure has become the nation’s god, but so few understand the eternal human cost. One would think that the tragic death toll from drugs alone over the last several years would discourage such idolatry; but few seem to notice or care. We have gone from Mayberry to a war zone over the last sixty years, and it is not by accident!

For any young person reading this, I hope that it is now crystal clear that Utopia is not arriving any time soon, so I encourage you to ask what God is doing and what He seeks from you? He is the very embodiment of all that is good, and His delight is to share His own goodness with you. If you reject Him, the result is eternal separation from Him, of your own doing.

**His method is first grace, then warning, then discipline, and finally judgment.** His desire is that we love and enjoy Him, but He will not force Himself upon us, for love cannot be coercive. In the end, if we do not come to Him, He will allow us our own way. I believe we are in the discipline/judgment stages.

What if we would see as God wants us to see, think as God wants us to think and trust Him in the process?

Trusting Him is not merely putting up with trials or patience in the face of opposition; it is gratitude for His working even when things seem to be dismal or contrary. Romans 8:28 reminds us that for those who love God, He is active on our behalf making everything in our lives work together for our eternal benefit. Lessons learned in suffering bring eternal rewards.

This world, as we know it, is quite brief. God intends that we be thinking eternally, looking beyond the events and troubles here. Paul wrote in II Corinthians 4:17 that “our light afflictions” here are



“but for a moment.”

God desires that we turn to Him, repent and stop sinning; and accept by faith His gift of forgiveness. America is in this condition of chaos, conflict, and confusion because we, as a nation, have turned against God.

This act of turning from sin to trust in Christ is called the “new birth,” and brings with it eternal life with God Himself. This is the fulfillment of God’s plan for mankind and goes far beyond all that we imagine or experience here. The terrible things we endure while on earth will be forgotten, and the best things we enjoy will be eclipsed by the wonder of all God will provide for us.

Therefore, by God’s grace let us trust the infinitely good God, do what we can to oppose the wickedness of our world, help raise the downcast eyes of the discouraged to see Jesus Christ more fully, and live in a way that the light of Christ shining through us exposes the evils of sin, yet lights up the pathway to the Savior!

And who knows what good He may still have in store for America if we turn in faith to Him?

The best is yet to come (His Kingdom), and it will last forever! ❄️




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# Post-Election Thoughts by Laurie Higgins

The day after the mid-term elections, I read this comment from a conservative:

*I'm done. Prayers didn't help. We are doomed. Why even vote?*

Alone in my office, I responded, “Come on, conservatives, *SNAP OUT OF IT!*” That was followed by several additional thoughts.

First, God does *not* promise to grant us everything we pray for.

Second, “Why vote?” We vote because we enjoy the gift of self-government, and, therefore, we have a civic and moral obligation to exercise that right and exercise it responsibly.

People come to America from all around the world for many reasons, not the least of which is the hope and promise of self-government. How thankless and short-sighted Americans are who would toss away such a gift because of an electoral disappointment—or even many.

Third, just because conservatives did not get all the wins they had hoped for and expected (talk about an understatement) doesn't mean nothing good came out of the election. If you haven't yet, please watch **Ron DeSantis'** election victory speech. *That* was worth the price of admission to the battle.

Fourth, we are battling leftist forces long and deeply entrenched in every major cultural institution (including the church), and they—leftists—have been propagandizing for over half a century. Change will take years of hard work, tenacity, courage, and a willingness to suffer the slings and arrows of both the cool kids and even our own purportedly moderate GOP colleagues.

Fifth, do we really want to model defeatism to our kids and grandkids?

Sixth, remember **William Wilberforce**. How long did he fight to end the slave trade? Twenty years, which included sacrificing his health for a just cause.

As Rev. **Martin Luther King Jr.** urged, remember in an earlier time, “the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were ‘a colony of heaven,’ called to obey God rather than man. Small in number, they were big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be ‘astronomically intimidated.’ By their effort and example, they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contests.”

Finally, remember the moms and dads who struggle to feed their families and keep roofs over their heads. Remember the children whose hearts and minds are being led astray by public school teachers, and whose bodies are being mutilated by “medical professionals.” And remember the thousands of humans being legally exterminated in their mothers' wombs daily. They deserve far more and greater than our defeatism.



It's fine to take a moment to absorb the shock and disappointment. ... Okay, that moment has passed. Now, it's time to take stock, point fingers, give some GOP leaders the heave-ho, and then *get to work*.

The first order of business will be to get our voting process fixed so that Americans can trust that elections are fair. Heritage Foundation's **Hans A. von Spakovsky** warns:

*Fraud occurs in our elections in a wide variety of ways. That includes the fraudulent use of absentee ballots; voting by ineligible individuals such as aliens and felons; impersonation of registered voters; buying votes; duplicate voting by individuals registered twice, sometimes in the same state*

*and other times in multiple states; false registrations ... ; and illegal “assistance” of voters where political activists and guns-for-hire are coercing and intimidating voters to cast ballots for particular candidates, not actually assisting them. And even old-fashioned ballot-box stuffing.*

During these fiscally disastrous past two years with a wildly unpopular, cognitively unfit president, whose incompetent administration has lied, cheated, and stolen its way to failure at home and abroad, it is incomprehensible that the expected red wave petered out. But comprehend the petering out we must, and this will require a heaping helping of humility.

As we start the process of sorting out factors that led to the GOP failures—e.g., weak candidates who drag down or fail to pull up other down-ballot candidates, weak congressional leadership, lies and insults hurled within the GOP at GOP *candidates*, and lack of financial support for candidates—let's also take a moment to recognize the eye-popping success of the Republican Party in Florida.

Governor Ron DeSantis is now arguably the putative head of the GOP. Through his courage, tenacity, political acumen, wisdom, intellect, steely spine, work ethic, integrity, and accomplishments during the last four difficult years, culminating in a GOP sweep throughout Florida—including in communities that many believed were impossible for a Republican candidate to win—DeSantis has earned his place at the head of the GOP table.

If he wants a run at the presidency in 2024, Republicans would be wise to encourage him. He has earned it. He has been tried and proved that he can accomplish great things in the most challenging circumstances, which include a hostile press trying to take him out at every turn. If the GOP would solidify early around a candidate like DeSantis, they would win the presidency in 2024. ❄️



## Will You Stand With Us? *by David E. Smith*

**T**he results of the 2020 and 2022 election cycles were disappointing, to say the least. Some are tempted to opt out of politics altogether. We understand that sentiment, because we too were discouraged. But after prayer and reflection we want you to know that IFI is not going anywhere.

God has given us a job — a tough job — and we are going to do our best to be faithful. We understand how important it is that we shine the light of Truth in this dark culture and reach as many people as possible. We have a lot of work to do, and it may seem overwhelming to look at the totality of what needs to be done, but our focus must be on what can be done today with the resources that we have been given.

Over the past 18 months, we've expanded the IFI Team in ways that I could not have imagined. I praise God that He is bringing the right people on board at the right time. It's humbling to be part of what God is doing to join the veteran culture warriors who make IFI a formidable force to deal with. There is a reason why JB Pritzker's campaign sent out a press release in late October identifying us as a radical group who "has a long history of opposing reproductive rights, marriage equality, and peddling

dangerous anti-trans conspiracy theories." Of course, we'd say it differently:

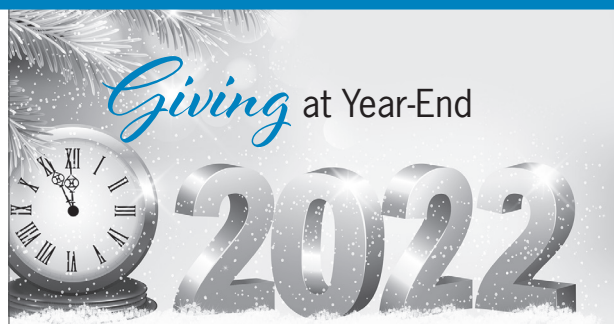
"Illinois Family Institute has a long history of upholding the sanctity of life, Biblical marriage and exposing sexual perversion and chaos."

Yes, language matters. Of course, the deceitful media willingly cooperates with wokesters, repeating these things in hopes of intimidating us into silence. We are not going to do it. Surrender isn't in our language.

**Will you join our efforts to save lives, promote a biblical worldview and change public opinion in Illinois?** Yes, the intensity of the attacks on our values seem to intensify every year. Yet that is why it is vital that we double down on teaching a biblical worldview to as many people as possible. This is possibly the best way to push back against the radical forces that seek to corrupt our children and culture and diminish our freedoms.

We need your generous support to continue working with church leaders, grassroots activists, key lawmakers, and even the media. Your support makes a huge difference in what we are able to do in 2023!

Protecting freedoms and strengthening families is non-stop work. The next several



years are crucial to this nation's future.

Our children and children's children will be greatly affected by the laws and policies that will be enacted in Springfield and in Washington D.C. in the coming legislative sessions.

The Illinois Family Institute is committed to our mission to **"Boldly Bring Biblical Perspectives to Public Policy."** We humbly ask you to stand with us by making a year-end donation in support of our work right now.

The only way we lose is if we quit. Speaking on behalf of the entire IFI staff, I can say with certainty that **"quitting isn't an option."** **We are in this for the long-haul.** In fact, we recently signed a five-year lease for our office in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. Our team will be fighting for your values in Springfield and throughout Governor Pritzker's entire next term as governor — and beyond!

We have a long road ahead of us. We have work to do. We will make a difference in the hearts and minds of Illinois families.



## Abortion Ballot Measures

**W**e are sad to report that ballot propositions in California, Michigan and Vermont have been adopted by voters to proclaim a so-called "right" in their state constitutions to abort innocent pre-born human beings.

Kentucky voters rejected Amendment 2 that would have banned a right to abortion and state funding in the Kentucky Constitution.

In California, voters approved a ballot measure that explicitly protects abortion and contraceptive "rights" in the state constitution, enshrining abortion rights in the state and opening the door for them to possibly be expanded further.

Seventy-seven percent of voters in Vermont supported the ballot measure guaranteeing 'an individual's right to personal reproductive autonomy.' Abortion rights will now be enshrined in the Vermont Constitution.

In Michigan, voters approved amending the state constitution to explicitly protect reproductive "rights," including abortion, ensuring the state's pre-Roe abortion ban cannot go back into effect.

Outrageously, Montana voters rejected a referendum to require "all medically appropriate and reasonable actions" to preserve the life of an infant born alive,"



reports Amy Beth Hanson for Associated Press, "including after an attempted abortion." Supporters," she writes, "said the proposed law was meant to prevent the killing of infants outside the womb after failed abortions, which already is illegal. ... Opponents argued the proposal could rob parents of precious time with infants born with incurable medical issues if doctors are forced to attempt treatment." ❄️

# Prayer Requests . . .

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, and especially in the wake of a discouraging election cycle, our focus should not be on the gathering storms, but on our "Mighty God" who loves us so much that He sent His Son to die a cruel death so that we can have eternal life and fellowship with Him.

El Gibbor is the Hebrew word meaning "strong, mighty." It's a word depicting bravery, courage, and action. All these are qualities of gibbor in the compound name El Gibbor, "the Mighty God."

While our culture is in full out rebellion to the things of God, we would do well to remember that our "Mighty God" reigns on high. A day is coming when all of God's enemies, physical and spiritual, will bow at the feet of Jesus (Phil 2:10). This should be a source of great comfort and confidence as we engage in the battles that God has called us to fight, for our families, for our churches, for our communities and for our state and nation.

Over the next several weeks and months, please join the IFI Team, praying fervently, knowing that God is listening.

## Please Pray . . .

### ...for the End of Abortion

- Pray for the babies who have no voice. Let our petitions flood heaven.
- Pray that God would open the eyes of those who lack understanding of the sanctity of life. Give us opportunities to share this truth with others.
- Pray for mothers and fathers who face unplanned pregnancies and who are likely very scared. Ask God for His mercy and comfort for the moms who feel lonely and isolated.
- Pray that employees of the abortion industry would come to understand what they are doing to innocent pre-born babies and that their consciences would force them to leave.
- Pray that Planned Parenthood's plans to profit from the destruction of preborn babies would collapse here in Illinois and across the nation.

### ...for Elected Officials

- Pray that God would bless President Biden and his staff with wisdom and surround them with God-fearing counselors.
- Pray that members of the U.S. Congress and the Illinois General Assembly would seek God's direction to make the tough decisions necessary to put our state and nation on the right moral track.

For unto us **a Child is born,**  
Unto us a **Son is given;**  
And the government will be upon His shoulder. And

His name will be called **Wonderful,**  
*Counselor, Mighty God,*  
*Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

— Isaiah 9:6



### ...for Families

- Pray that parents and grandparents would seriously take to heart their God-given responsibility to train children in the way of the Lord.
- Pray that fathers return to their families as strong leaders in the faith.

### ...for the Church

- Pray that Christians would take seriously God's template of healing found in 2 Chron 7:14.
- Pray that Christians would seek Biblical wisdom and truth and become inflamed with a passion for God's righteousness.
- Pray that Christians would awaken from their apathy and become more engaged in pushing back the lies of the culture.
- Pray that pastors would preach/teach about the moral issues of the day and encourage their members to take a stand for what matters to God.

### ...for Illinois Family Institute

- Pray that we would remain strong and not grow weary in doing good.
- Pray that God would provide every resource we need to engage the enemy in the public square.
- Pray that our efforts be multiplied and amplified throughout the state.

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