



Do not be overcome by evil,
but overcome evil *with good.*

ROMANS 12:21



illinoisfamily.org



pro life. pro marriages. pro family.

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



Marriage & Family: God's Plan

Over the years, we have shared statistics about how beneficial marriage is for men and women, and especially for children. The institution of marriage is created (and defined) by God. It is His (Gen 1–30). He designed it for our good as a lifelong commitment between a man and a woman.

The purpose of marriage is vitally important but is missed by far too many Christians. The best explanation I've read comes from *Visionary Marriage*, a book written by Dr. Rob Rienow and his wife Amy, in which they point out that God "created marriage for two overarching purposes:

- 1.) **The spiritual transformation of one another, and**
- 2.) **Raising godly children."**

I heard a message from Dr. Voddie Baucham on this topic and raising godly children who would be missiles (ministers) to be launched into a lost, hurting, and dying world – all for the glory of God. Yet, in order to accomplish this, the Rienows point out that "the Great Commission starts at home."

Back in 2010, I wrote an article in response to a *Chicago Tribune* op-ed written by **Rex Huppke** that promoted marriage redefinition. In it, I pointed out

Marriage is not a relationship that society created in order to give some people benefits and deny them to others. Marriage is the institution that societies worldwide have recognized and encouraged because this unique relationship between a man and a woman provides particular benefits to society, chief among them, the procreation and nurturing of the next generation.

In other words, following God's design for marriage and family, we are raising healthy and productive future members of society – not more dependents on government welfare programs.

In Malachi 2:15, we're told that God seeks godly offspring. It's simple

but true: of the three institutions God created (family, government, and church), only the family has the capability of creating new little people. Of course, along with that power of creation comes the responsibility to teach and train.

I closed my response by stating the truth:

The social science is clear and irrefutable: children do best in stable, healthy homes with both a mom and dad. The government acts in the interest of children and society when it protects the institution of marriage through legal benefits.

For decades now, our culture has downplayed the importance of marriage. According to an article published by the Institute for Family Studies, only 60% of American adults think it's important for unmarried couples to legally marry if they have a child. It's becoming more and more acceptable to bring children into the world absent the natural context in which God intended them to be nurtured.

The average age for first marriages in the U.S. keeps going up. The latest data I've seen puts the current age at 30 for men and 28 for women. In 1990, it was 26 for men and 23 for women. Rewind a few more decades to 1960, and it was 22 for men and 20 for women.

Of course, the Bible doesn't recommend a certain age for marriage, but when you consider that marriage rates overall have declined significantly over the decades, we can infer that this is not a coincidence. The decline

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Upcoming Elections – We Need Your Help

Christians, please plan to vote in the **April 1st Consolidated Election**. We have an opportunity to cast our ballots for the best candidates running for:

- Mayor, Aldermen or Council Members
- City/Township Clerk, Treasurer and Other Offices
- School Board Members
- Library Board Members
- Park District Commissioners
- Fire Protection District Trustees
- Sanitary District Commissioners



**April 1st
Local
Elections**



These elections are crucial for local governance that affect your property tax rates, community services, educational policies, and infrastructure. For specific details on which offices are up for election in particular areas, voters should consult their local county clerk's website, as the exact offices can vary by municipality or district.

Consolidated Elections in Illinois have historically had very low turnout. For that reason, if Christian conservatives come out en masse, we can have a huge impact!

In 2022, four New York congressional races were decided by margins of less than 2%. In 2020, an Iowa congressional race was even closer; U.S. Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks defeated her opponent by only six votes. Every vote really does make a difference.

We Need Your Help

IFI needs help to deliver a questionnaire to candidates running for **school board**. Once completed, it's our intention to post these at illinoisschoolboardsurvey.com to help you and others in your town know which candidate(s) shares their values and who to cast their votes for.

Your **county clerk** should have a section on their website for **Elections**. There you should be able to find their names and addresses to mail them a questionnaire or even possibly their email addresses to email them a link. If you snail mail, include a return envelope addressed to IFI: PO Box 876, Tinley Park, IL 60477.

The school board questionnaire can be found here: shorturl.at/wTcR5

By voting, we help to preserve our American heritage of freedom for our children, our grandchildren, and future generations. In his first inaugural address as governor of California, Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction."

Please don't miss your chance to vote on April 1st and please do whatever you can to get the questionnaire to candidates running for school board.

Thank you! ✨

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Eleventh Annual

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at the University of Virginia

&

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Illinois Homeschool Freedoms at Risk! *Written by David E. Smith*

Over the years, we have loved being able to tell people that Illinois was among the best states with homeschool freedoms. That is thanks, in part, to a 1950 case (*People v. Levisen*) in which the Illinois Supreme Court considered the case of parents who were convicted of violating a law requiring children between the ages of 7 and 16 to attend a public school. The parents in this case were Seventh Day Adventists who believed that home education was the better option.

The court determined that the term “private school” included instruction given to a child at home. The court stated that the law was not intended to punish parents who provide their children with instruction equal or superior to that available in public schools, but rather for parents who fail or refuse to properly educate their children.

The *Levisen* case established that homeschooling is a valid form of private education in Illinois. This decision has been influential in the development of homeschooling laws in Illinois and other states.



But now some Illinois State Representatives want to change that. In response, IFI's Senior Counsel, James Odom points out that for the government to infringe on a parent's fundamental right to train their children, the government must demonstrate

- a compelling and legitimate government interest for the law
- narrowly tailored
- to achieve that interest
- using the least restrictive means possible.

Odom also points out that aside from the

overt unconstitutionality, the problem with this bill is that it establishes a new supervisory police bureaucracy over home schools, which is:

- Burdensome (e.g., every year, every student, mandatory record keeping, presentation upon demand)
- Policed by the failed, competing Public Schools which Home Schools seek rightly to avoid (e.g., notification to Public School administrators, enforcement by Truant Officers.)
- Adding prior restraint (e.g., to prove to Public School administrators in advance the adequacy of Home School administrators' training) instead of current freedom to train according to better standards than Public Schools.

➡ **Take ACTION:** Contact your state representative to ask him/her to **oppose HB 2827**, pointing out that proficiency rates in government schools disqualify the state from exercising any oversight over private homeschools. ❀

We Can't Do This Without YOU!

Donations to IFI were down last year, by a significant amount. This at a time when we must be prepared to fight against those who want to legalize assisted-suicide, prostitution, psychedelic drugs and regulate home education.

In response to the Trump Administration and the Republican controlled Congress, radical woke activists

are desperate to plant the flag of resistance here in Illinois. They honestly believe that their Big Government views can serve as an example to the rest of the nation. The problem is, they refuse to acknowledge the consequences of the policies they enact and/or propose.

So, we are asking you and others who believe in faith, family and freedom to stand with us, put up your hands, and tell them, “NO!”

The antidote to stopping their agenda is the salt and light of Christians. It doesn't take much light to dispel darkness and salt to season the culture. With your help, we can thwart their plans. In fact, we can push them back.

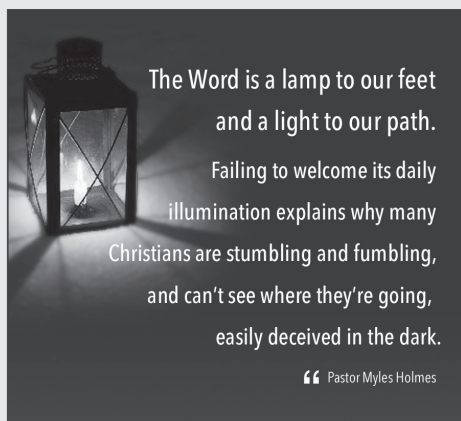
They will not rest in pushing their ideology at the Capitol, in classrooms, and in our local communities. It is up to us to stand up to them.



There is much work to do, but we need the resources to do it. We must fight on and NEVER give an inch (or ignore) the lies they demand we accept.

Please consider making a generous donation to the work and ministry of Illinois Family Institute. We are counting on you to make sure that we can continue to be your voice for Christian values in the public square.

We have a biblical duty to expose evil (Eph 5:11) and uphold the truth (John 18:37) – especially for our children and grandchildren. Please, help IFI with a sacrificial gift today! ❀



The Word is a lamp to our feet
and a light to our path.

Failing to welcome its daily
illumination explains why many
Christians are stumbling and fumbling,
and can't see where they're going,
easily deceived in the dark.

“ Pastor Myles Holmes



Assisted Suicide In Illinois: A Christian Response

Written by Gabriel Syme

There has been a recent push to legalize assisted suicide in the Illinois state legislature. Thankfully, at the time of this writing, it has not yet succeeded, but given the advocacy on the part of the political leadership of Illinois, it seems that assisted suicide will soon (very sadly) become a reality here. What should the Christian response be to this? Should we support or vehemently oppose such legislation? I believe that we must do the latter.

Many in today's society advocate for the so-called "right to die" under the guise of compassion. Proponents argue that individuals suffering from terminal illnesses or "unbearable pain" should have the autonomy to end their lives with medical assistance. However, from a biblical and historical Christian perspective, suicide – whether self-inflicted or assisted – is wholly against God's will. The Bible affirms the sanctity of human life and teaches that our suffering has a divine purpose. In addition, Scripture condemns murder, including oneself.

The doctrine of the sanctity of life is central to the Christian's rejection of assisted suicide. Scripture consistently affirms that all human life is sacred because we are created in the image of God. Let's look at several passages that state this:

1. Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

This verse establishes that every human being possesses intrinsic value because we all bear the imago Dei (image of God). To take one's own life, or to assist another in doing so, is to reject this divine image. It is to say, in essence, "I am the captain of my fate, not God. And I determine my outcome, not God."

2. Exodus 20:13, "You shall not murder."

This is the 6th Commandment that God wrote with His own finger on Mount Sinai. Suicide is self-murder, and to assist in it is to be complicit in breaking this commandment. The deliberate ending of one's own life is an affront to the God who gives and sustains life. Since we are made in God's image, and since He commands us not to murder, we do not have the right to deliberately take our own lives.

3. Job 1:21, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Consider Job. He went through excruciating pain. He lost his home, his possessions, his dear children, and later even his health. If anyone would consider suicide, we might suspect it would be him. But Job, despite his immense suffering, acknowledged that life and death are in the hands of God alone. He knew that suicide was not an option, and he left his life in God's hands.

4. Psalm 139:13-16, "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb... in your book



were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."

The psalmist affirms God's sovereignty over life and death, as well as the fact that from before the foundation of the world, God had written down all the days of his life, from his conception to the moment of his death. Therefore, since God has ordained the number of our days, cutting life short through suicide or assisted suicide is a direct rebellion against His will.

Other texts in the Bible describe instances of suicide, and in each case, the act is portrayed as evil. There are no examples of God blessing or condoning suicide. But here are three that show us the tragedy of the act.

First, there is the first king of Israel, Saul (1 Samuel 31:4-5): King Saul, after being wounded in battle, took his own life by falling on his sword, rather than face capture. His armor-bearer followed suit. Saul's suicide is presented in the context of his tragic downfall, marked by disobedience and separation from God.

2. Ahithophel (2 Samuel 17:23): After Absalom rejected his counsel, Ahithophel went home and hanged himself. His suicide is portrayed as a despairing act of one who was devoid of hope and alienated from God's will.

3. Of course, the most ignominious example of suicide in the Bible is that of Judas Iscariot (Matthew 27:5): After betraying Christ, Judas was overwhelmed with guilt and hanged himself. His suicide was certainly related to regret but not to repentance. We may contrast Judas with Peter, who also sinned by denying Christ, but sought forgiveness instead of self-destruction.

Each of these cases in the Bible underscores that suicide is linked to despair, separation from God, and a tragic lack of faith. The Scripture presents no example where suicide is honored, justified, or encouraged.

A primary argument many use for assisted suicide is the alleviation of suffering. However, the Bible teaches that our suffering has a purpose in God's plan. It is through our "losses and crosses" that the Lord does His greatest sanctifying work in

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us. Romans 5:3-5 tells us, "Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame." Suffering in this fallen world is not meaningless; it refines our faith and produces spiritual growth.

Paul also writes in 2 Corinthians 12, after asking God to remove a "thorn" in his side, that God replies, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Despite suffering greatly, the Apostle Paul understood then that God's grace sustains us as believers through our trials and that He works in all of them for our good. Suffering, therefore, should not be a justification for ending life. Instead, even though it is hard (and I am certainly not minimizing the pain that many go through), it should be seen as an opportunity to grow in faith and reliance on God.

Therefore, while rejecting assisted suicide, Christians must also respond with compassion to those who suffer. Believers should remind those struggling with despair of God's love and purpose (Jeremiah 29:11). The church must also be a source of comfort and care, offering spiritual support to those facing terminal illness. Instead of embracing euthanasia and assisted suicide, Christians must rescue the perishing and care for the dying, trusting that Jesus is merciful and that He has a real purpose for all our trials.

Assisted suicide is incompatible with biblical teaching. Human life is sacred, and suffering has a divine purpose. While believers must be compassionate toward those who suffer, we must also stand firm against assisted suicide as an affront to God's sovereignty. Instead of endorsing death, the Christian response should be to offer hope, care, and the truth that life belongs to God alone.

"...Choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days..." (Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

➔ **TAKE ACTION:** Call your state senator and representative. Urge them to reject these assisted suicide bills, **Senate Bill 1328** and **House Bill 1328!** *

from the Executive Director, David E. Smith

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is happening at the same time that our culture is becoming increasingly secularized. Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and related surveys like the American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS), it is shocking to see the drop in marriage rates in terms of percentages:

1960: 72%
1970: 68%
1990: 60%
2000: 57%
2010: 52%
2022: 49.3%



In Genesis 2:18, God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone." In Proverbs 18:22, we are told that "He who finds a wife finds what is good..."

Do we believe this?

Ultimately, marriage is a spiritual picture of Christ and the Church.

When a husband and wife are living in harmony and unity as God intends, their relationship is a living illustration of the love, self-sacrifice, and submission that exists between Christ and His bride. My wife is married to an imperfect man, yet together, we seek to honor God through our marriage.

As a fifty-something Gen Xer who has been happily married for thirty years, I can testify to the fact that my wife has been an incredible blessing to me, and I can't imagine my life without her. In an age when marriage is being delayed, avoided, and dishonored, I'd like to stand up and be counted among those who say that marriage is unequivocally wonderful. And to all of you twenty-somethings out there who are wondering if it's really worth it, I say simply yes, it is. Absolutely yes.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 teaches us,

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

The foundation of a great marriage begins with each spouse loving God and desiring to please Him with their lives. Jesus is that Third Cord that gives strength to marriages to survive the storms of life. A happy and harmonious marriage is possible if both the husband and the wife desire to live to glorify God.

Christians who aspire to the high calling of marriage and family are not guaranteed trouble-free lives. But they will find themselves growing together in faith, mutual respect, and appreciation for one another.

Historically, springtime has a strong emphasis on love and marriage. As Bible believers, we can show a lost world what true love looks like now by demonstrating it in our marriages.

May God bless churches and communities with marriages that exemplify the kind of love Jesus has for us. May God enable the lost to see the beauty of God's plan for marriage. *

The Illinois FAMILY Institute's mission includes promoting God's good plan for marriage. It's why this topic comes up frequently



in our resources. We believe that the family is the foundational unit of society. When we get marriage and family right, we glorify God; we experience human flourishing. There are great blessings when we follow God's plan for marriage and family, but a great many ills develop when we ignore God's plan or seek to redefine it. God has shown us what is right and good. We turn our backs on it to our detriment. It's a powerful testimony to one's own family and a lost world when a husband and wife walk through all the joys and sorrows of life and, through it all, work out their faith in God with fear and trembling.



Legislative Report from Springfield

Written by David Curtin, IFI Lobbyist

HERE IN OPPOSITE LAND.....

As we've noted before, our state laws can be hazardous to the health of children and the traditional family. Killing children in the womb through the 9th month; "same-sex marriage" and its accompanying adoption laws that intentionally deprive a child of a mother or father; indoctrinating kids in public schools so they can mutilate themselves before puberty; legalization of high-potency marijuana to ruin kids now or get them hooked on drugs forever; proliferation of gambling enterprises so practically every block has a slot casino to lose any savings people have; and now a bill to allow physicians to give patients pills to kill themselves..... if that isn't enough to destroy children, the nuclear family, and a healthy society, along comes the bill to legalize prostitution in Illinois – one in the House (HB 3518 Guzzardi) and one in the Senate (SB 2391 Villanueva). Introducing the same language is by design. It allows proponents to work both bills simultaneously in each chamber to see if they have the hard votes to pass it. I don't think they have the votes to pass it yet. Regardless, it hasn't been assigned to a committee yet, but that could change anytime. The General Assembly goes back into session on Feb. 18.

The strategy they've adopted to sell this to the public

Legalizing prostitution is all about defending the rights of people, particularly women and people of color, they say. It's all about establishing a livable wage and health benefits and compensation packages, like other businesses. They claim it's about keeping people safe in our society. In fact, that's why it's named the Keeping Sex Workers Safe Act.

The gaslighting continues: When we criminalize sex work (like drugs), we make a dangerous environment, especially for people of color (42% black; 19% Hispanic) to engage in this work. They can be beaten or physically abused because they have no police to help them, so we need to have some legal standards to protect them, they allege. We need regulations so they



are allowed to work without danger or fear or stigma. They currently go to jail for this crime, which hurts them, so we need to stop that and expunge all past prostitution crime records. And perhaps most important to proponents, this will prevent further erosion of "women's bodily autonomy" as been happening with the recent Dobbs decision taking away a federal right for abortion.

So, this is the nothing more than a sales pitch to legalize what every major religion condemns. There's no mention of God or morality, of course. There's no mention of the state's legalization, which will cause prostitution to proliferate, just like drugs. Or break up more homes and families because of its proliferation. Or teach immoral values to girls and women, boys and men. None of that. The bill does mention that law enforcement will save money not prosecuting these things as crimes, just as they have "saved" money on not prosecuting crimes in relation to the "failed war on drugs" (while police and first-responders, teachers, employers, doctors, and nurses and literally every one of us can see the higher financial and social tragedies daily.)

Anyway, it's a long bill — over 190 pages. Which is what happens when you draft a bill to legalize a sin that's been around since the beginning of time. There are a lot of statutes on the books that have to be stricken and others put in place. That's usually a sign you're doing something seismic toward society.

A lot of bills still to study

The General Assembly has now filed 6,375 bills for the start of this session.

That's a record. Usually, it's 5,000 for one session. Friday, the 7th, was the deadline to introduce bills and so most of these came at the last minute.

President Trump is definitely roiling Democrats in Springfield

It has been a commotional start to this new session in the Illinois House. Democrats have been taking to the House floor to bash President Trump regularly; conservative Republicans have been getting up on the House floor to defend and celebrate his policies. Tit for tat. Nothing has been getting done. But it was significant. For example, Democratic lawmakers attacked Trump for scuttling "information kids need to know" by holding up funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Another said it was akin to Nazi Germany in Trump's attempt to teach kids to love their leaders and their country. Conservative lawmakers were more specific. Rep. Adam Niemerg blasted the indoctrination going on in our schools teaching kindergarteners there aren't two genders and fifth-graders how to "change" their sex. At the same time, Illinois public schools are failing kids to learn to read and write. So he said he is proud of President Trump's efforts and we should all be thankful.



Which led to this surprise by House Democrats.....

Out of nowhere, Democrats popped out five hostile resolutions onto the House floor to debate shortly before adjourning. HR 118, the first one they "debated," condemned the wholesale pardons of the Jan. 6 defendants. Dems got emotional

continued ...



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and started blasting Trump and painting pictures of pardoning people who attack police and now what do we say to a little girl who asks a legislator why Trump is pardoning someone who has an Auschwitz T-shirt? Of course, nothing was contained in the resolution about the wrongfully convicted or suffering innocents in palpable conditions, but this resolution wasn't meant to be objective.

Anyway, GOP Leader Tony McCombie asked for a caucus. When they came back, all GOP reps filed in, including McCombie, and then proceeded to walk back out of the chamber en masse in protest and held a news conference. Pretty bold. So, House Democrats had to essentially stand around and talk to themselves in this "echo chamber" while passing the below resolutions. It took a lot of wind out of their sails.

HR 115 STOP-IMMIGRATION ACTION

(Rep. Dagmara Avelar) passed 073-000-000

HR 116 CONDEMNNS-SPENDING FREEZE

(Rep. Will Guzzardi) passed 073-000-000

HR 117 CONDEMNNS-TARGETING DEI

(Rep. Kam Buckner) passed 073-000-000

HR 118 CONDEMNNS-JAN 6 PARDONS

(Rep. Angelica Guerrero-Cuellar) passed 073-000-000

HR 119 STOP-TARIFF PLANS

(Rep. Dave Vella) passed 073-000-000 *

Speakers Available for your church or for any group on a variety of topics:

- ✓ Teaching our children in kindergarten through grade six to love life.
- ✓ Telling preteens, teens and adults the truth about abortion.
- ✓ The Christian's Role in the Public Square
- ✓ IFI Springfield Update
- ✓ Vaccinated America: A System with No Breaks
- ✓ Assisted Suicide and the Sanctity of Human Life: One Christian Doctor's View
- ✓ The Blessings of TrailLife USA Troops
- ✓ Stolen Innocence (*protecting children*)
- ✓ The Fear of God vs. The Fear of Man
- ✓ The Normalization of Sin
- ✓ No Rusty Swords
- ✓ On a Mission from God
- ✓ The Liar



Did You Know?

The 2024 Illinois Report Card for our state's 866 school districts, published by the Illinois State Board of Education, reports that only 31.1% of students have met or exceeded proficiency standards in English Language Arts. For math proficiency, it is 26.1% and in science it is 53.1%. How is it then that 88% of students graduate from these schools?

If that isn't bad enough, according to our friends at *Wirepoints*, "Illinois will spend approximately \$44 billion in K-12 education dollars for just 1.85 million students – just shy of \$24,000 per student." The Chicago Public School system supposedly spends "just over \$29,900 per student." And just remember, your property taxes pay for these failing results.

\$29,900
per student!



In the meantime, woke teachers and administrators are focused on social engineering, humanistic training, sexual immorality, revisionist history and other godless subject matters. *



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Prayer Requests . . .

As winter winds down and we look forward to warmer weather, let's all pray with hearts filled with gratitude for all God has done and all He will do in us and through us throughout the rest of the year. We have many good reasons to be filled with great hope and anticipation, trusting Almighty God will use us for good works that He has already prepared for us.

(Ephesians 2:10)

The Word declares, "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20). We humbly ask

Please Pray . . .

- Thank the Lord for the nine pro-life executive orders issued by President Trump during his first week in office.
- Thank the Lord for President Trump's bold moves to protect our southern border, combat transgenderism and quash the un-American ideology of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- Thank the Lord for federal and state officials who support the sanctity of life. Pray that they will become outspoken defenders of innocent human life from conception to natural death.
- Thank the Lord for His gift of self-government. Thank Him for the freedom we have to vote for local officials in the Consolidated Elections on April 1st. May God have mercy on our local government authorities. May we/they be good stewards of this responsibility.
- Thank the Lord for His gifts that have been enshrined in the First Amendment. Praise God for religious liberty, the right to assemble peacefully, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances.
- Thank God for the freedoms we have to worship Him freely in this state and nation. Pray for stronger local churches and bolder pastors who are not ashamed of the Gospel.
- Please pray that efforts to indoctrinate children in government schools will fail and that local school boards and administrators will reject the woke agenda for all students.
- Please pray that assisted suicide legislation would fall short of gaining support in the Illinois General Assembly this session.
- Please pray that legislation to legalize prostitution would make no progress in Illinois during this legislative session.
- Please pray that efforts to regulate home education in Illinois would fall apart.
- Please pray that Illinois lawmakers would know, fear and obey the God of the Bible; that they may recognize Jesus Christ as the Son of God and His work on Calvary to redeem us from our sins;
- Please pray that God will give wisdom and discernment to the honest public servants in Springfield who must work in the swamp of corruption and that they would have courage to serve the Lord with fear and trembling and not shrink back from calling out every form of wickedness. (Psalms 2:10-11, Ephesians 5:11);
- Please pray that many godly counselors and advisers will surround our elected officials and that local pastors and Christian leaders will intentionally seek opportunities to visit and minister to these men and women. (Proverbs 11:14);
- Please pray that God will work in the hearts of key federal officials, including President **Donald J. Trump**, Vice President **JD Vance**, U.S. Senate Majority Leader **John Thune**, U.S. Senate Minority Leader **Charles Schumer**, U.S. House Speaker **Michael Johnson** and U.S. House Minority Leader **Hakeem Jeffries**. (Proverbs 21:1);
- Please pray that God will work in the hearts of key state officials, including Governor **JB Pritzker**, Lt. Governor **Julia Stratton**, Illinois Senate President **Don Harmon**, Illinois Senate Republican Leader **John Curran**, Illinois House Speaker **Chris Welch**, and Illinois House Minority Leader **Tony McCombie**. (Proverbs 21:1). ❀

for a fresh outpouring of Your Spirit, that You would empower us to proclaim Your truth with boldness, to love with Christ-like compassion, and to draw more hearts into a saving and transformative relationship with Jesus.

We need to remember the prayer Jesus taught us: "Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Let that be our guiding cry in every meeting, every project, and every conversation. Use us, Father, as vessels for Your glory. ❀



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