

The challenge of our time: Restoring civility

An unexpected invitation led to an even more unexpected friendship. Now Bob Vander Plaats is continuing the legacy of restoring civility in America:

[Your generosity fuels The FAMiLY LEADER's ministry of reconciliation. Join the effort to restore civility today!](#)

Merry Christmas from TFL!

Bob and Darla Vander Plaats (without Chelsea, this time) look back with gratitude on all God has done this year and wish you a very merry Christmas!

[As you conclude your year-end giving, please consider making a gift to The FAMiLY LEADER. You are a BIG part of what we do!](#)

Combating pornography

The Church Ambassador Network has teamed with Pastor Luke Hukee to combat pornography in the Church by working to free many people from pornography's bondage. Check out virtual equipping meetings, resources, and interviews from Pastor Luke Hukee:

Pastors,

One of the greatest threats we are facing in our churches today is pornography. The research shows it. Our churches are filled with people who are enslaved to pornography. I wish I could say our people look different than the world, but at least in this area we don't. Many of our saints who love Jesus, as backwards as it sounds, are addicted to porn. And here is something maybe even crazier: 93% of churches have nothing in place to combat it. But we can change that. By God's grace we can develop ministries or implement materials already available to help our people find freedom from something that is crushing so many of their lives. Listed below are a number of resources that we have found helpful in the fight against porn in our church. I hope these resources listed can be of assistance to you.

With grace,

Luke Hukee
Pastor, Walnut Creek Church

Join Pastor Luke Hukee to learn about the blight of pornography in and outside the Church and how churches can combat pornography behind their own walls.

[Pastor Equipping Seminar: Combating pornography](#)

[Listen to Pastor Luke Hukee discuss pornography and more on Faith Works Live, 99.3 FM](#)

Research Resources:

Josh McDowell: [The Porn Epidemic Portfolio](#)
[The Porn Phenomenon](#) by the Barna Group
[Fight the New Drug.org](#)

Ministry Resources:

“Clean” by Doug Weiss

“The Game Plan” by Joe Dallas

[Conquer Series](#)

“Redeemed Sexuality” by Andrew Boa

“Sexual Sanity for Women: Healing from Sexual and Relational Brokenness” by Ellen Dykas

“Making All Things New: Restoring Joy to the Sexually Broken” by David Powlison

Accountability Resources:

[Covenant Eyes](#)

[Accountable2You](#)

VIDEO RECAP: Heartbeat faces Dec. 7 hearing

Iowa’s nation-leading Heartbeat Law was in court Friday, Dec. 7, as Planned Parenthood and friends tried to get the law struck down without even a trial.

The FAMiLY LEADER’s Bob Vander Plaats and Drew Zahn were on the scene, witnessing and reporting on what happened:

Now, here’s what YOU can do next: No matter how Judge Michael Huppert rules, the losing side will almost certainly appeal to the Iowa State Supreme Court. And now, YOU will have the opportunity to have YOUR voice heard on the matter!

The FAMiLY LEADER plans to file an official, on the record, amicus brief targeted for that appeal that specifically comes from “We the People.” **It’s about time America’s courts recognize they only get their power from us.** So when you join

with thousands of other Americans in signing the Heartbeat petition, YOUR name will be listed among “We the People” calling on the courts to defend life!

[Sign the petition for life that will be entered into official court records!](#)

In the video below, TFL’s Chuck Hurley explains why this bold move from “We the People” is so historic and so significant:

You’re going to want to be able to tell your children and grandchildren that YOUR name was counted among the Americans who stood up for life on this day!

All you have to do is fill out the petition form at the link below to add your name to this historic record:



When you’re done filling out the petition, know that the more people who sign it, the louder our collective voice will be. **So SHARE this page!** Share it with your online friends, your family, your pastor, your church, your small group, your neighbors, your book club, your Christmas card list – anyone and everyone who might stand with you for life.



Click on the image at the left for a [downloadable bulletin insert](#) your pastor or church can use to encourage your fellow church members to both sign the petition AND pray for issues specific to the fetal heartbeat law court challenge!



Click on the image at the left for a [downloadable print petition](#) that you can use to gather written signatures. The more signatures, the better! Instructions for use are on the form itself.

This is a historic moment, and our leaders in government need to hear the voice of the people. They need to hear YOU ... because babies in the womb have no other voice to speak for them. [Sign the petition today!](#)

Heartbeat Petition: Tell the courts to protect life!

This is a historic opportunity for you and a historic moment for America.

For a limited time, you can get **YOUR NAME** entered into the official court record, telling America's judicial system you want to see babies' lives in the womb protected by law.

[**Sign the petition for life that will be entered into official court records!**](#)

In May 2018, the State of Iowa passed the most pro-life law in the nation, protecting babies from abortion from the moment their heartbeat can be detected. But now that law faces court challenges.

And that's where YOU come in.

A Polk County judge has struck down Iowa's Heartbeat Law. But if that ruling is appealed, The FAMiLY LEADER will have the opportunity to file a "friend of the court" brief that includes the names of thousands of Americans who are asking the judicial system to uphold the Heartbeat Law and defend the lives of babies in the womb. This presents a truly unique opportunity for you to add YOUR name to the official record, calling on the courts to protect life.

You're going to want to be able to tell your children and grandchildren that YOUR name was counted among the Americans who stood up for life on this day!

All you have to do is fill out the petition form at the link below to add your name to this historic record:

SIGN THE PETITION!

When you're done filling out the petition, know that the more people who sign it, the louder our collective voice will be. **So SHARE this page!** Share it with your online friends, your family, your pastor, your church, your small group, your neighbors, your book club, your Christmas card list – anyone and everyone who might stand with you for life.



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“Heartbeat” has its day in court: Dec. 7

Iowa’s Heartbeat Law faces a motion for summary judgment hearing at the Polk County Courthouse in Des Moines on Friday, Dec. 7, at 10:30 a.m.

Depending on how the judge rules, this hearing could mark the only opportunity the public has to continue participating in support of the Heartbeat Law. Iowa’s Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders, therefore, have issued a call to pro-life Iowans to come to the courthouse on Dec. 7 to show their support for unborn life in Iowa.

The following is the text of an email The FAMiLY LEADER sent

to supporters, encouraging pro-life Iowans to be a voice for the silent innocents in the womb on Friday, Dec. 7:

Planned Parenthood hopes its most recent legal maneuver will make Iowa's Heartbeat Law just quietly go away.

Now, *Iowa's unborn children need you* to make sure there's nothing "quiet" about it.

The voice of the innocent in the womb has been ignored long enough! Iowa's children need YOU to be their voice on **Friday, Dec. 7 at 10 a.m.**

Mark your calendars, reserve the day off work, and gas up the car to come to the Polk County Courthouse in Des Moines on Friday, Dec. 7. The hearing is scheduled for 10:30 a.m., but you can bet the courtroom will fill up fast, so come early to show your support of Iowa's unborn children!

Let me be completely transparent: Depending on the judge's ruling, this may be *the only opportunity for the public to participate* in the fight for Heartbeat.

So come, show support for Heartbeat, for the Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders, for the legislators who passed the law, and for the attorneys defending it. Join us in prayer. Join us in being a voice. Join us on Friday, Dec. 7, in standing up for unborn lives in Iowa.

Help wanted: TFL seeks to fill 2 key positions

The FAMiLY LEADER is seeking qualified candidates with a commitment to our Christian faith and vision for cultural

transformation to fill two available positions: Vice President of Development and Social Media Coordinator.

Vice President of Development

The FAMiLY LEADER is seeking a Vice President of Development to assist in fundraising. The Vice President of Development is responsible for the overall coordination of the Development Department and for leading the Development team to accomplish its core mission: meeting the annual income budget and securing long-term income and membership growth for TFL. The position is responsible for developing and implementing long-range strategic plans to achieve the organization's long-term objectives for income and membership growth and is responsible for developing with the President's Office a plan for personal contact by the President with selected donors including emails, letters, notes, phone calls, and meetings. A qualified candidate would possess education or experience in the field (an MBA is preferred) and should have 5-10 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising management of major gifts, direct marketing, and estate gifts, strong knowledge of TFL, the conservative movement, and excellent relationships with leading conservative donors. Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter to nathan@thefamilyleader.com.

Job Duties:

- Develop and implement long-range strategic plans to achieve the organization's long-term objectives for income and membership growth
- Develop with the President's Office a plan for personal contact by the President with selected donors including emails, letters, notes, phone calls, and meetings
- Create and execute an annual budget plan to meet short-term income and donor growth goals
- Manage a multi-million dollar caseload of top and high-profile donors
- Structure the Development Department as needed over time to

optimize its effectiveness in accomplishing its mission

- Maintain timely and effective reporting systems to track key performance metrics throughout the Development Department
- Work with external coalition allies
- Work with outside consultants, educational institutions, and other outsourced resources to improve the body of development knowledge, import best practices and keep TFL on the cutting edge of nonprofit fundraising

Strategic Planning

- As a member of the senior management team, the Vice President of Development participates in the overall planning activities of TFL, developing specific and measurable department goals that advance TFL's vision and mission and complement, augment, or support the goals of other departments
- Establish department priorities, prepare and monitor the department budget, provide overall direction for staff activities under the President, and lead by example. Use department resources effectively to achieve TFL objectives

Education: MBA preferred

Experience: 5-10 years of experience in nonprofit fundraising management of major gifts, direct marketing, and estate gifts; strong knowledge of TFL and the conservative movement; and excellent relationships with leading conservative/Christian donors

Management: Key management skills including strategic planning and goal setting, budgeting, staffing, performance counseling, mentoring, and career planning are required

Communication: Excellent writing, presentation, and strong public speaking skills; an articulate advocate of TFL's vision and mission

Computers: Comfort working with needed software including Microsoft Office, Outlook, CRM/ Donor database such as Blackbaud, and Salesforce.com

Special Skills/Requirements:

- Understand and support the TFL mission and vision for America and the department's goals and objectives
- An understanding of and commitment to conservative principles is required
- Ability to effectively interact with the rest of the management team; a team builder
- A strong commitment to and personal relationship with Jesus Christ and active membership in an evangelical New Testament church

Social Media Coordinator

The Family Leader seeks a full-time Social Media Coordinator (SMC) to oversee the day-to-day operation of TFL's social media platforms. The SMC is responsible for creating, managing and using digital platforms, including our websites, to deliver TFL's policy content and messages to prospective and current members of our key audiences. The coordinator will track how we engage with the audiences, ensure all platforms are linked and used appropriately, keep audience lists up-to-date and segmented as needed, and analyze results to improve strategies. The SMC will educate the rest of TFL's team about audience insights and the best practices for impact. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to: daily coordination of TFL's social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc., researching and curating content for social media platforms, and facilitating the creation of graphics and videos for social media, including working with other designers and TFL team members. The SMC should be willing to work odd hours when the news cycle demands. Qualified applicants should possess an active Christian faith and agree with TFL's statement of faith. He/she should desire to see Christian principles applied in the civic arena and should have experience with digital campaigns, data analysis, and content creation and curation across platforms. Experience with marketing, photography, and

photo editing are a plus. Interested candidates should send a resume and cover letter to nathan@thefamilyleader.com.

‘Doing life together’: Des Moines church rethinks poverty

by Daniel Sunne (Photo: Des Moines Register)

For 25 years, Phil Herman fought gang growth in the Chicago metro through social work. Caring for troubled kids from poor families, Phil learned firsthand the traps good-intentioned Christians fall into when helping the poor. Now Pastor Herman is guiding a church plant in one of the poorest neighborhoods of Des Moines, as they operate a thrift store, a preschool, a six-week summer program, and even rental housing for low-income neighbors.

“I’d come from poverty, and I was going to continue to work in poverty,” Pastor Herman told The FAMILY LEDER.

After 25 years in Chicago doing full-time social work and part-time ministry, he returned to Iowa, realizing he could do both. Originally taking an associate pastor position at Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk, he felt drawn to leave the growing suburb and minister in the poorer areas of Des Moines.

“When I started exploring the north side of Des Moines, it was very similar to what I experienced in Chicago,” he said. “It felt like coming home.”

When Pastor Herman approached the Evangelical Free Church of

America Central District about starting a church plant in the Highland Park neighborhood, he had no idea they had been looking for someone to do exactly that for four years.

Highland Park Community Church started by building relationships with families through programs at Madison Elementary School. True Bible Baptist Church and Pastor Rod Bradley partnered with the new plant, both in reaching out to the school and by allowing them to use their building on Saturday evenings. This partnership continues, as the churches work together on youth programs, remodel True Bible Baptist Church's building together, and even share periodic joint services.

Still a church plant, Highland Park Community Church has an aggressive, ambitious vision for community outreach.

"How can we provide services to the community that meet a need, but still point people back to the Church," Pastor Herman asks. "We're supposed to be the light in the darkness."

Their first of four objectives the church targets is economic development that recognizes the dignity of the church's neighbors. Highland Park Community Church operates the Renew Resale Shop, a thrift store that expects its patrons to pay reasonable prices for quality donated items. Patrons can work at the store helping with needed tasks to earn in-store credit. By requiring patrons purchase or earn products, patrons leave with dignity and a sense of accomplishment. The church can also support its other ministries from resources brought in by the store, rather than the other way around.

"This is a place where the community feels welcome," Herman said. "The staff of Renew Resale spend a lot of time listening and praying with people. That's not normally the case with a thrift store."

Obria Clinic, a women's health service with clinics around Iowa, is also partnering with Highland Park Community Church

and will be opening a clinic in partnership with Renew Resale Shop, pointing once more to the comprehensive vision for care for their community.

Highland Park Community Church's second objective area is educational enrichment and youth development. In partnership with other local churches, the church hosts afterschool programs at local elementary and middle schools and is working to expand programming both in the schools where programming is already offered and to the local high school. Further, the six-week "Summer Adventure Camp" provides educational and Christian teaching to elementary students, offering a safe, productive, and fun option for students.

Preparations are also well under way for a third objective, the Precious Beginnings Children Center.

"There is a desperate need for safe and quality places for children's care," Herman said. "We want to provide here the safety and quality that a kid in West Des Moines or Ankeny has."

Their final objective emerges when you listen to Pastor Herman speaks passionately about the injustice he observes in rental housing in his neighborhood: "The Old Testament prophets speak long on this – that it is wrong to take advantage of the poor."

[A February Des Moines Register article](#) describes housing provided by one notorious Des Moines landlord who had only 17 of 45 inspected rental properties pass code inspections. Desperate residents are afraid to report landlord violations without the money to find better housing, many even lacking the legal protection of a lease.

Highland Park Community Church now owns two properties and has one rent-to-own contract. The church plans to have 5 properties by Christmas. Pastor Herman hopes to set an example as well as provide affordable housing for desperate families

in the Highland Park neighborhood.

Pastor Herman believes the lessons he learned from Chicago and the examples set by pastors like Wayne Gordon and Raleigh Washington in Chicago are important for his new home in Des Moines.

“I do believe that Des Moines is behind in their understanding of how to help people in poverty,” Herman told The FAMiLY LEADER. “I think Des Moines has a lot of good intentions, but good intentions aren’t necessarily biblical; we can do things that make us feel good that God doesn’t want us to do. I’ve seen a better way.”

Unlike most organizations, Highland Park Community Church expects recipients to pay back into its anti-poverty programs. As well as helping support the church’s ministries, Pastor Herman believes this model better follows biblical examples of charity and avoids the lack of accountability that often grows up around well-intentioned Christian giving. The church’s summer program charges a small fee, the Renew Resale Shop gives nothing away, and housing costs are fair, but not free. If someone can’t pay, they are either expected to pay when they are able or to provide volunteer work.

Citing a lesson learned giving away free products in Chicago, Pastor Herman states that in giving free gifts, “Gratitude turns into expectation, which turns into dependency.”

Motivated by the mission to share the love of Christ with its neighbors, Highland Park Community Church’s members continue their work Des Moines. Pastor Herman is driven by his love for his neighbors: “The attitude we’re trying to foster is, ‘We’re going to do life together.’”

Bob Vander Plaats on WOI-TV: Heartbeat Law, 2018 governor's race

The weekend prior to the 2018 mid-term election, Bob Vander Plaats appeared on WOI-TV's "This Week in Iowa" to discuss the election, Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds, and the Heartbeat Law:

Pastor Equipping Webinar: Religious liberty

Continuing the monthly equipping webinars for pastors, the Church Ambassador Network hosted a webinar on religious liberty. Chuck Hurley, TFL chief counsel and ADF-allied attorney, presented on the history, current status, and future of religious liberty, as well as practical steps churches can take. Check out the webinar recording as well as resource links below:

[History of religious freedom in America](#)

[Protect Your Ministry booklet](#)

[Albert Mohler's The Briefing](#)

How do you know how to vote on judges?

Through the years, The FAMiLY LEADER has fielded thousands of requests from friends, wondering how to vote in Iowa's unusual judicial retention races. How DO you know whether to retain the various judges up and down the ballot?

The good news is, there are no Iowa Supreme Court judges on the ballot this November. In the future, however, The FAMiLY LEADER will provide information about the current justices, due in part to some notorious opinions they have rendered in recent years, [including their "finding" an absolute, fundamental "right" to abortion](#) in our Iowa Constitution using "evolving standards."

For the lower court judges who ARE on the ballot, the bad news is we do not have adequate information. When we have asked judges in the past for their judicial philosophy via questionnaires (spending over 100 hours of staff time and thousands of dollars), they have almost unanimously refused to answer. Our efforts – which were ignored by Iowa's judges themselves – have proved too costly to continue in good conscience.

What's more, the current selection process for judges in Iowa (via "nominating commissions," stacked with [mostly] leftist attorneys) makes it difficult for voters to have input or to get adequate information on who to retain or not retain. We encourage you to learn what you can of the judges and use your best discernment, but the deck is stacked against us all.

Thus, The FAMiLY LEADER has supported, and will continue to support, reforms to our judge selection process. Iowa can and must do better. We urge you to join us in those efforts at the Legislature next January!

[Be a part of changing Iowa's judicial selection and retention system. Join the Iowa voters who want to make informed decisions at election time!](#)

My story: Gov. Reynolds is changing the culture

The core of The FAMiLY LEADER's vision is cultural transformation. We seek a revived America that honors God and blesses people.

That's only one of the reasons we're so grateful to Cate Bryan (pictured at left above, Gov. Kim Reynolds at center, and TFL's Denise Bubeck at right) for coming forward and telling us her story. The #MeToo movement has exposed a need for transformation in our culture, and Cate's story of seeking positive, healing change is a powerful example in our divided times.

So we thank Cate for her courage and vulnerability, and we thank Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds for designating October as "Change the Culture Month" in Iowa.

by Cate Bryan

On Oct. 4, 2018, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed a proclamation declaring October as Change the Culture Month here in Iowa. This proclamation is further proof that the governor is continuing her zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment in the workplace, and for that I, in particular, am very thankful.

For five years ago, I was at home, unemployed, sick, and

sleeping to recover from the toxic work environment at the Iowa Capitol.

In January of 2013, I accepted a job offer with the Iowa Senate Republican Caucus, and I expected it to be my dream job. I was working with state senators in both the commerce and economic development committees, and initially, I was very happy in my role, working on bills and learning the legislative process.

But my job soon took a sharp turn for the worse.

One of my colleagues was fired for calling out her superiors over harassment and inappropriate comments by senators and staff alike. Her lawsuit for sexual harassment and wrongful termination would eventually cost the state over \$1 million for failure to respond to a toxic work environment.

My story working at the Capitol ended quickly. I spent the summer of 2013 watching management pretend that everything was squeaky clean for the attorney general's staff. Then, after all the interviews and fear of depositions and trials, one of the caucus staff members approached me with inappropriate conversation at best, harassment at worst.

Two of my male colleagues also heard what was said, and they supported my decision to go to the Senate minority leader for help. Unfortunately, the minority leader (who has since resigned under scandal and is no longer an Iowa senator) refused to listen. I never once heard from him, and my direct supervisor brushed off my concerns.

By then, the stress, fear, and worry was overwhelming my body, and I suffered adverse physical affects – panic attacks, rashes, etc. It came to the point that my Christian counselor, doctor, and husband all agreed that my health was so deeply affected by the job, the toxic work environment, and the leadership's unwillingness to change the culture that I needed to quit. After providing a two weeks' notice, I did.

By the fall of 2013, I was sick for months on end, taking in unemployment, and trying to heal. On some days, if I was able to crawl from bed to unload the dishwasher, I counted it a win.

Thankfully, I had a few things going my way. I had the support and care of my husband and family, and I had faith that God would heal me and find in my experience some way to bring good. In the words of the Gospels, I read and reread Christ's encounters with women and his words of healing. To each woman, Christ met them in their current situation, provided words of forgiveness, and called them to a life of meaning. Reading, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering" (Mark 5:34 NLT), encouraged me to take the time to heal and wait for the next season the Lord had for me.

Through five years I pondered whether to file a lawsuit myself, whether to go public, or whether to merely heal and move on.

Then, in November of last year, I had sudden reason to go public with my story. The Senate minority leader who had ignored my pleas for help in 2013 submitted a public report denying any allegations of harassment from 2013-2017, including the time I had been harassed. The public was pressuring him for answers about the environment at the Capitol, which he refused to give.

I was furious. But during some long drives to see my grandfather, who was in failing health, I resolved that more than just seeking justice, I wanted to find a solution that would bring positive, effective change to Iowa.

So I met with Gov. Reynolds.

Not only was the governor sympathetic to my story, but she also listened to my suggestion that she sign a proclamation to help break the pattern of sexual harassment in our state. She

believed it was the right thing to do for the state. Gov. Reynolds immediately introduced me to her chief policy adviser, who worked with me to create a proclamation addressing sexual harassment.

I can say with full confidence that although the Iowa Senate failed me by refusing to act against harassment, Gov. Kim Reynolds has taken a strong stance against sexual harassment with her zero tolerance policy. For that, I am proud to call her my friend and my governor.

Because of Gov. Reynolds' compassion and leadership, this month we are celebrating the Change the Culture Month in Iowa. The governor led with a significant step to ensure that every human being working in either the public or private sector is treated with respect and dignity, and now I hope Iowa's government leaders will follow her lead and continue to execute proper procedures at the Capitol. I also hope this encourages private companies to follow the governor's lead and encourage their human resources departments to have the tools they need to subdue and eliminate harassment in the workplace.

Though I am so thankful for this day and the freedom it has given me from the past five years, this proclamation is not the end of my goals. I will continue to work with the governor on this yearly event and encourage our legislators to take a stand with the governor.

None of these things would have turned from evil to good, however, unless the Lord worked mightily in, with, and through this situation. And my prayer is that my music students today, Iowa's future, are given greater opportunities than I have had and are far more protected than I ever was at the State Capitol.

The [full text of the governor's proclamation](#) can be read below:

WHEREAS, throughout history, sexual harassment has been a stain on our culture. It is a destructive force in the workplace and in all facets of life; and

WHEREAS, women have found the courage to speak out during this unprecedented moment in time; and

WHEREAS, sexual harassment is not a partisan issue. It cannot be fixed by legislation or rule-making alone; and

WHEREAS, the solution starts with every individual. It is about showing common respect to others. It also is about character and decency; and

WHEREAS, we cannot change behavior everywhere. But, in Iowa, we have an obligation to lead and serve as a role model for other states to follow; and

WHEREAS, what we do in Iowa matters. We must ensure justice and fairness prevails; and

WHEREAS, we must change the culture once and for all:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Kim Reynolds, Governor of the State of Iowa, do hereby proclaim the month of October 2018 as

CHANGE THE CULTURE MONTH

