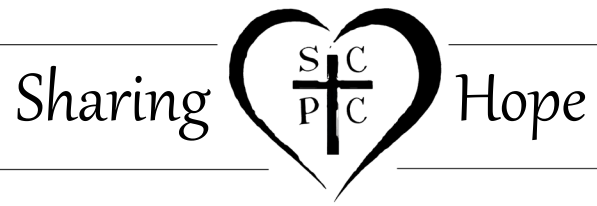


Sanctity of Human Life Month January 2025

A Letter from the Director of the Shenandoah County Pregnancy Center

Dear friends:

In 1988, then President Ronald Reagan declared Sunday, January 17, as the very first Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. He called “. . . upon the citizens of this blessed land to . . . reaffirm their commitment to the dignity of every human being and the sanctity of every human life”.



This year, we recognize Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 19th but celebrating life is not top of mind for all Americans. Since the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022, Americans have voted 17 times on ballot initiatives

to protect abortion rights. Those who support abortion have won 14 times, while those who affirm life only 3. In November, the Virginia House of Delegates Privileges and Elections Committee passed HJ1, a constitutional amendment protecting reproductive freedom. This amendment, a gateway to abortion on demand, still has a ways to go, but the slope is slippery.

The grim reality is that those who uphold the sacredness of life are in the minority. We are strangers in a strange land.

Fortunately, God cast a vision for His children living as exiles in Jeremiah 29:7. “Seek shalom for the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its shalom you will have shalom.” Strangers living in a strange land are to seek shalom on behalf of the place that God has planted them.

Shalom, often translated as “peace,” is so much more. Shalom is wholeness, soundness, flourishing. It is our health, our happiness, our prosperity. It is the harmony of relationships and the flourishing of creation. Shalom is the abundant life of Jesus.

So how do we seek shalom? Thankfully, God’s word not only casts a vision, but provides very practical instruction.

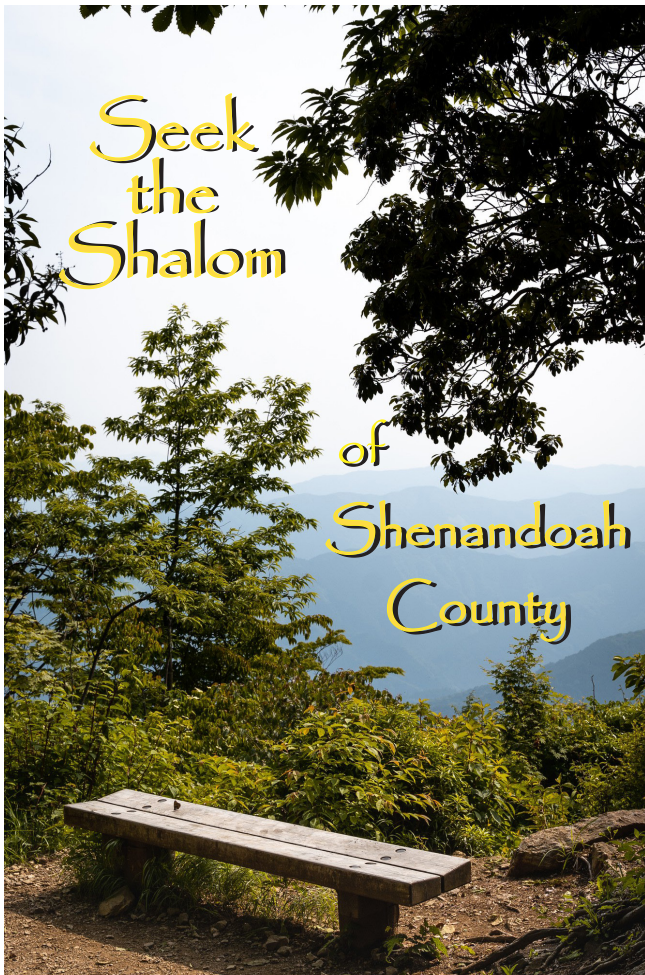
Pray for Shenandoah County and the people who live here. *Shalom is a prayerful posture of absolute dependence on God and confident expectation that He works through the prayers of His people.*

Marry, have children, build homes, and plant yourself where God has purposely placed you. Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. Multiply followers of Jesus Christ; don’t decrease! *Shalom is discipleship and teaching others all that Jesus taught.*

Plant a garden and enjoy its fruit. Bring Eden here, to this place, and continue the work of caring and tending the garden given to humanity at creation. *Shalom is obedience to the Lord of the harvest.*

Resurrect neighborliness. The families that the Shenandoah County Pregnancy Center serves are neighbors that need prayer, discipling, and to experience the fruitfulness of Eden. Seeking shalom is never from a distance. It’s personal. It’s living and sharing the abundant life of Jesus in word and deed to the person in front of us. Not only at the Center but across backyard fences, at Little League practice, at Walmart, in our classrooms, and in our places of work and worship. *Shalom is loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.*

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Broken to Whole

Testimony of Abortion Recovery Group Participant

The secret shame of my abortion imprisoned me in pieces of guilt, shame, fear, anger, heartache, and loneliness. As a believer in Christ Jesus, I knew that my sins had been forgiven . . . washed clean, but the guilt and regret of



this choice that I had made as a teenager felt so unforgivable. Why would He, how could He ever see me as clean? It was easier to keep my secret and punish myself than to accept that God wanted me to be free of the pain, guilt, and shame.

My friend, if you can relate to my story, please consider the Surrendering the Secret Bible study. Through God's word and the sweet, caring women in my class, I was able to feel understood. We all knew what the other was going through. I felt safe to share my burdens and received loving support as I worked through the study. (And still do have support

even after I have finished). They helped me to understand that it was okay to let go of my shameful secret, which allowed me to finally forgive myself and knowing that God had given me freedom through His forgiveness. Ephesians 3:16-19 is a passage that helped me during this study. It gave me courage and comfort.

If you are broken from a past abortion decision, join Surrendering the Secret Abortion Recovery Group. This course gently and lovingly leads women of all ages on a journey of healing and freedom in a way only Jesus can through His Word. The next group will meet on Wednesdays from 6 to 8pm at the Center beginning on Wednesday, March 5th. Text/call Lisa in confidence for more information. 540.268.0028.



You are invited to a screening of Seth Gruber's *The 1916 Project*

Sunday, January 19th at 6:30pm

Hosted by Shenandoah Community Fellowship Church - 197 Patmos Road, Woodstock

The 1916 Project is the work of Seth Gruber and his team at the pro-life organization, The White Rose Resistance. Gruber documents the history of Planned Parenthood and its founder, Margaret Sanger, and traces a direct path from Planned Parenthood to the secular moral revolution and our current culture of death. www.the1916project.com.

A Letter from the Director

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The shalom of our neighbors is our shalom. You see, followers of Jesus Christ are more than a pro-life movement. We are Kingdom bringers. We believe and pray Christ's words—God's Kingdom come, God's will be done, here as in heaven. When we seek the shalom of the city, the words of Jesus become our reality and the reality of those around us. For in Shenandoah County's shalom we have shalom.

In establishing Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, President Reagan called the people of this nation "blessed." Today, fellow exiles, blessed and beloved by God, let's choose life in all its fullness and the welfare and prosperity of this place we call home.

God simply asks: Pray. Multiply. Plant.

I wish you Shalom,

Lisa Schroeder

Save the Date!

Spring Celebration and Fundraiser

Friday, April 11th at the Yellow Barn

Guest speaker: Ryan Bomberger with the Radiance Foundation.

www.radiancefoundation.org

Call Barbara at the Center for more details or to reserve your seat.