



Medical Aid in Dying (MAiD) is legal in a number of the jurisdictions served by our English District congregations, and even in those in which it is not legal, it is merely a referendum and/or a few votes in the legislature away from legalization. Simply and sadly put, *no* jurisdiction is immune from this. Advocates for MAiD tout it as a compassionate means to end suffering, but is that really the case? From the perspective of Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions, clearly not.

Yet, when God says no to something, He says yes to something better! Consider the case of two women, who back in 2014 were dying from stage four glioblastoma multiforme, an aggressive and terminal brain cancer. Brittany Maynard, a 29-year-old woman who was suffering from the disease, made national headlines when she went public with her decision to relocate to Oregon, to gain access to MAiD and end her life “in dignity,” at a time of her choosing. Maggie Karner, who at the time was Director of LCMS Life and Health Ministries and was suffering from the very same disease, responded with God’s better plan. Her own previous experience with her paraplegic father in the last five months of his life showed her clearly that his life at the time wasn’t useless and that in caring for him, she and her siblings grew “in compassion, responsibility, and selflessness.” Considering her own situation, she acknowledged that death is awful and, “... while this leads many to attempt to calm their fears by grasping for personal control over the situation, as a Christian with a Savior who loves me dearly and who has redeemed me from a dying world, I have a higher calling. God wants me to be comfortable in my dependence on Him and others, to live with Him in peace and comfort no matter what comes my way ... I want my girls to learn servanthood and selflessness as they care for me. And I also want them to know that for Christians, our death is not the end. Because our Savior, Jesus Christ, selflessly endured an ugly death on the cross and was laid in a borrowed tomb (no “death with dignity” there), He truly understands our sorrows and feelings of helplessness. I want my kids to know that Christ’s resurrection from that borrowed grave confirms that death could not hold Him, and it cannot hold me either, a baptized child of God!” (The sainted Mrs. Karner’s comments may be found in full at <https://thefederalist.com/2014/10/10/brain-cancer-will-likely-kill-me-but-theres-no-way-ill-kill-myself/>.)

As you deal with MAiD in your community, there are resources available to you to help you in your sanctity of life proclamation. Lutherans For Life (LFL) recently adopted an updated position statement on MAiD titled *Medical Assistance in Dying (Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia)*, which may be found in the LFL position statements booklet at <https://lutheransforlife.org/life-issues/position-statements/>. You are free to reproduce and distribute this statement with attribution to LFL. Additionally, Synod has a variety of resources available at <https://lcmslife.org/tags/euthanasia/>. Your English District Lifeline Team is always available to answer any questions that you may have. We thank God for your Gospel-motivated voices for life. We pray His richest blessings on you as you share His deep love, and His certain promise that our death is not His final word, with those in your midst, church and unchurched, who are suffering and dying. And we pray that He will use your words to bring the unchurched to faith and into the ark of His Church and the joyful hope of eternal bliss in His presence.