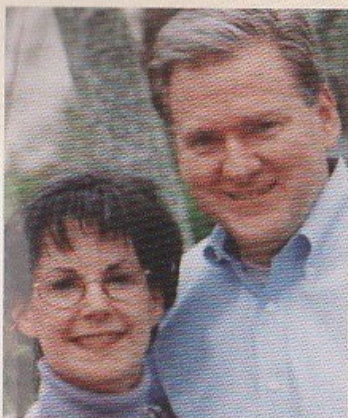


CWA members who
make a difference

CloseUp



Jill and Steve Coward of Matthews, North Carolina, are working to change the Evangelical Lutheran Church of

America's employee health insurance policy, which covers payments for abortions.

How did you learn about CWA?

Jill: We learned about CWA's work through our pro-life friends within the denomination after we began our work to change the policies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

What is the focus of your pro-life work?

Stephen: In 1998 we learned that our denomination's health plan will pay for abortions that are done before 20 weeks of a child's life, even if the mother is merely dissatisfied with the sex of the baby. Our church formed a committee to change this policy on abortion. We began trying to encourage pastors of ELCA churches in our area to take a pro-life stand.

Recently, we were able to pass a resolution to change the policy at the North Carolina Synod of the ELCA. It

will now go on to the ELCA National Convention. We are praying it will come to the floor there. We need to find pro-life delegates to the convention who will be willing to speak in support of the resolution.


What is one of the greatest difficulties you face?

Jill: Many pastors are pro-life, but their greater concern is division within the congregation. We try to educate other church members, but there is a lot of tension. We wish pastors would do more; members will listen to moral authority.

Stephen: Yes, pastors are the gatekeepers, and they control the information received by their congregations.

Can you share what encourages you to continue in this work?

Jill: It looks like a vast ocean where you can't make a difference, but God would not let our work go void. Our motto is "Change a heart, save a life," and our work is just like that, one heart at a time.

Stephen: This isn't my passion, this is God's. I would rather play golf! But God has provided friends who have encouraged us and helped us to do His work. 

For more information about the committee's efforts, visit www.SanctityofLife.org, or call the Cowards at (704) 821-4970.

CWA of North Carolina has many opportunities for you to make a difference. Call State Director Mary Frances Forrester at 1-704-263-1774. For information about CWA in other states, call 1-800-458-8797.