



Church Connection March 2019

*Strengthening,
Preserving
& Promoting
Marriage,
Family, Life &
Religious Liberty*

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.
Ephesians 4:28.

But godliness with contentment is great gain.
1 Timothy 6:6

Join us for...

*"Making Wisconsin Great
One Family at a Time"*

This is an outstanding and practical challenge by Julaine Appling, WFC president.

Thurs., Mar. 7, 6-8 p.m.,
Portage Pizza Ranch

Thurs., Mar. 14, 6-8 p.m.,
Weston Pizza Ranch

Thurs., Mar. 21, Pastors' Day
at the Capitol

Thurs., Apr. 11, 6-8 p.m.,
Fond du Lac Pizza Ranch

Time to Vote! April 2, Tuesday

Wisconsin non-partisan elections. We will be electing a Wisconsin State Supreme Court justice.

Gambling: A Bad Bet For Families

We have often been asked why Wisconsin Family Council maintains that gambling is not "family friendly." At the core of our mission is strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage and family. When we see activities with proven track records of hurting families and destroying marriages, we believe it is important to sound an alarm. Gambling qualifies as an activity that hurts families.

As gambling has evolved and grown in Wisconsin, so have increased problems. In 1993, coinciding with the expansion of casino gambling in the state, the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling was formed and funded. Funds for this organization come largely from Native-American casino profits.

Here is the sad irony: As the state agreed to expanded gambling, it also knew the result would be expanded problems, so it created an organization specifically to help problem gamblers.

Keep in mind also that the state gets money from the casinos by virtue of the compacts entered into with the tribes. As the casinos increase their take, the state gets more money for the budget.

Here are some recent statistics as reported by the Wisconsin Council on Problem Gambling (www.wi-problemgamblers.org):

- Approximately 333,000 Wisconsin residents have a gambling problem. ["Problem" is defined as affecting their finances, their families, and their employment. This conservative number represents over 5% of Wisconsin's total population.]
- Calls to the Council's 24-hour Helpline have increased 366% since 1996, the first year the line was implemented.
- In 2018 the Helpline received a record-setting 13,869 calls.
- In 2018 the average debt of callers contacting the Helpline was \$76,821.
- Seniors and adolescents are at high risk to become addicted to gambling.



(continued on back)

Please Pray

Please pray regularly—privately and corporately—for your elected officials. I Tim. 2:1-4

The Problem With Gambling

There are many biblical considerations relative to gambling. For example, those who gamble often are hoping for “luck” to meet their needs instead of trusting the Lord and honoring Him with honest labor (Prov. 3:5 & II Thess. 3:10).

Gambling also appeals to the love of money which is a source of all kinds of evil (I Tim. 6:10).

Gambling is also notorious for taking advantage of the poor, which is offensive to God (Psalm 72).

Did You Know?

March is designated as Problem Gambling Awareness Month. It should tell us something about the extent of gambling problems in our culture when we dedicate a whole month to its awareness.

For further information and helpful recommendations on what you can do to make a difference, please visit www.citizensagainst-gambling.com.

- Gambling related embezzlements continue to rise in Wisconsin.
- Suicide rates are 20 times higher among pathological gamblers compared to non-gamblers.
- 65% of compulsive gamblers commit crimes to finance their gambling.
- Six to twenty percent of adolescents develop gambling problems.
- People who have other addictions are at a higher risk of becoming addicted to gambling.

None of these statistics are good for families. Studies continue to show that gambling increases the likelihood of family breakdown through divorce, and increases the likelihood of domestic violence, child abuse and child neglect. Talk about high stakes! Families are the ones who end up being the biggest losers, but this in turn also becomes a significant loss for everyone since fragmented families cost taxpayers millions of dollars every year.

With the advent of Internet-based gambling, people can gamble privately at home or on-the-go on their smart phones. Daily Fantasy Sports groups are pushing for this form of legalized gambling in Wisconsin, even though the Wisconsin State Constitution prohibits Internet-based gambling. They are seeking to circumvent this prohibition by calling their business a game of skill rather than a game of chance. Additionally, Native American tribes are pushing hard to expand current casino operations and have sought or are seeking approval to build off-reservation casinos in, at a minimum, Beloit and Shullsburg.

The state-run lottery is no better than any other form of gambling. Essentially the government is counting on citizens to lose money to the state lottery in order to fund state spending. This is perverse and tends to prey on the most vulnerable. Research shows that in Wisconsin, the highest per capita lottery sales are within zip codes with the lowest per capita income.

Those who run gambling enterprises are in it for one reason—to make lots of money. The odds are *always* stacked against those who play the games. The “house” wants—and needs—people to lose. What gamblers often don’t understand until too late is that they stand to lose a lot more than money when they play this very high-stakes game. That is why Wisconsin Family Council believes gambling is a very bad bet for families.

About Wisconsin Family Council

Wisconsin Family Council is a 501 (c)(3) organization that has been advancing Judeo-Christian principles and values in Wisconsin since 1986. We have largely done this by informing Wisconsin citizens, policymakers and churches about the important legislative and cultural issues so that they can be involved in strengthening, preserving and promoting marriage, family, life and religious liberty in our state.

“Church Connection” is published monthly by WFC and is available to churches in Wisconsin.

PO Box 14440 | Madison WI 53708 | 888-378-7395 (toll free) | info@wifamilycouncil.org | wifamilycouncil.org