

2006
ROE V. WADE DINNER
SATURDAY - JANUARY 28

Town Hall Meeting
4:00-6:00 PM

Panelists will share what's happening in Kentucky. Come join the discussion.

Dinner & Program
6:30 PM

Join us in celebrating another year of reproductive freedom in Kentucky! Be inspired by our keynote speaker Rev. Lucinda Laird, moved by music and satisfied by the feast.

Event Held At:

Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church
318 W. St. Catherine St., Louisville, KY

Registration and detailed information. on page 11. Registration deadline is January 19.

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Lucinda Laird

"Pro-Choice and Faithful: NOT an Oxymoron"



The Rev. Lucinda Laird has been the Rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church for 8 years. She has been a priest for 23 years, and served churches in New York and New Jersey before coming to Kentucky. She has a B. A. Degree from Barnard College, Columbia University, and an M.Div. from the General Theological Seminary in New York City. She is a native of New Orleans.

The Rev. Ms. Laird is firmly pro-choice, but is interested in finding new ways to discuss the issue, because she feels that the terms "pro-choice" and "pro-life" strike her as terms which leave little room for change or compromise. Her pro-choice and feminist outlook is based on her understanding of the Christian Gospel as a radical call to justice, love, peace and mutuality, and she is committed to proclaiming a gospel of grace over against a currently prevalent gospel of fear.

Report from the National RCRC Convention

By Anne Maron

Melanie Phillips, our newest board member, who is also the Director of Religious Education at the Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Universalist congregation, and I were the representatives of the Kentucky affiliate to the National Convention of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice. The conference was held at the Doubletree Hotel Crystal City in Arlington, VA.

Entitled "In Times Like These, Putting Faith Into Action", the conference began with a welcome from Rev. Carlton Veazey and a Town Hall Meeting at which our very own Dr. Paul Simmons was a panelist. The discussion focused on the role of religion in our personal relationships, sexual lives, and reproductive health decision-making and the challenges we face living out our religious beliefs "in times like these."

At dinner that first night, the keynote speaker was Diana Alstad, Ph.D., who spoke about her work and publications regarding abortion. Her papers are posted at www.rit.org under editorials. Two paper worth reading are: *Abortion As a Moral Act* and *Teen Abortion: Why Parental Consent Makes No Sense*.

A "Put Your Faith Into Action" prayer breakfast on Friday morning featured Dr. Paul Simmons once again. We urge you to visit the www.rcrc.org website to learn more about the legislation (Prevention First Act, and the Responsible Education About Life Act) that you can help support.

Friday included a workshop called Creating Effective Messages. Through a lively and interactive workshop, we learned about values-based messaging and the elements of a good message. What we learned is that values-based messaging enables us to speak with passion/provides invincibility; frame the issue to win; and, create common sense. This program was given by Thaler Pekar & Partners, LLC. I thought they were extremely effective and would recommend them to anyone who wants communications help. See their web site for more information: www.thalerpekar.com or contact them by email: tpekar@thalerpekar.com.

That afternoon we had an Affiliate Plenary session, the annual face-to-face meeting of all of the representatives from the state affiliates. This was an opportunity to learn about the structure of RCRC, to meet other folks out there working in the field, and to vote for our (Eastern Affiliates) representative to the board of directors of RCRC. There was only one candidate, Barb Avery, who has been the backbone of the Ohio affiliate for many years.

Other workshops included Financial Planning and Management, Risk Management and Insurance for Affiliates, and Contact Management and Fundraising with eBase. During the Financial Planning workshop we discussed various fundraising methods. At the end, I mentioned the Kroger Gift Cards that KRCRC has been using since the idea was introduced to our board by Lauren Kehr about a year ago. Everyone loved the idea, and I was glad I mentioned it.



Kaye McSpadden (Pres. Indiana RCRC & Gil and Bettye Schroerlucke's daughter), Anne Maron and Melanie Phillips at the National RCRC Conference.

Thanks, Lauren! If you don't have a Kroger Gift Card yet, be sure to purchase one at our Roe v. Wade Dinner on January 28th.

While we were in our workshops, other meetings were taking place: Seminarians for Choice, Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom (SYRF), and the Youth Advisory Committee. A Shabbat Dinner and another prayer breakfast gave us the opportunity to express our spiritual longing and unity "In Times Like These". In addition, lunches and dinners provided opportunities to learn and to just schmooze with others. The three and a half days that we were all together was a warm, friendly and spiritually uplifting gathering of souls.

The hotel and facilities were very nice, the food was great, and we left exhausted and happy that we had come and were able to learn so much. So thank you for giving us this opportunity. We will try to use what we have learned to strengthen our chapter and to increase our effectiveness as we move forward into 2006.

Voice for Choice is a publication of the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

KRCRC
PO Box 4065
Louisville, KY 40204

Tel: 1-866-606-0988
E-mail: info@krcrc.org
Web: www.krcrc.org

Gilbert Schroerlucke, Editor
JoAnn Burch, Distribution Coordinator

Statement from National RCRC

Citing the long-standing national consensus supporting the right of women to make reproductive decisions, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice urges the U.S. Senate to reject the nomination of Judge Samuel Alito to the U.S. Supreme Court. Aspects of Judge Alito's record on reproductive rights show a radical legal philosophy that would reverse and overthrow basic guarantees that have been essential to women's progress over the past 30 years. In a nation that affirms freedom, equality, and dignity, Judge Alito holds legal views that are directly counter to our country's highest aspirations. RCRC bases its opposition to Judge Alito's nomination on two instances indicating Judge Alito's judicial philosophy.

As a lawyer in the Reagan Administration, Judge Alito was actively involved in devising the government's position in *Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists*, a 1985 Supreme Court case in which the government asked the court to uphold Pennsylvania and Illinois laws that imposed numerous restrictions on abortions, including that women be required to provide a variety of personal details. The government went even further and argued that the court should disregard precedent and overrule *Roe* and "return the law to the condition in which it was before that case was decided." The Court rejected the government's argument and struck down the Pennsylvania statute. Judge Alito expressed his pride in taking part in this case, writing in an application at that time for a promotion to deputy assistant attorney general, "It has been an honor and source of personal satisfaction for me to help to advance legal positions in which I personally believe very strongly. I am particularly proud of my contributions in recent cases in which the government has argued in the Supreme Court that the Constitution does not protect a right to an abortion."

In his 1991 dissenting opinion in the Third Circuit Court decision in *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*, Judge Alito disregarded expert evidence about spousal abuse of pregnant women and concluded that a law requiring married women to notify their husbands prior to an abortion would not unduly burden women's access to abortion. When the case reached the Supreme Court in 1992, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, whose seat he is nominated to fill, voted to strike down that provision. Justices O'Connor, Kennedy and Souter said Judge Alito's opinion would give a husband a "troubling degree of authority over his wife" and place the most vulnerable women "in the gravest danger" of abuse. The Justices invoked the possibility of state regulation over many more aspects of women's behavior—smoking, drinking, exercising, using contraception, having surgery—if husbands were granted control over their wives' decision about abortion.

Whether Judge Alito will uphold the precedent of *Roe v. Wade* and whether he will set aside his personal views cannot be answered before he is confirmed. Too much is at stake for women's basic rights and freedoms to risk confirming Samuel Alito to a lifetime position on the Supreme Court.

A Commentary

By Dr. Paul Simmons, PhD

There she goes again. Margie Montgomery makes diatribe against legalized abortion a full-time career as in her essay printed in the Aug. 27, 2005 *Courier-Journal*. Her statement is full of typical Margie-esque accusations with major misrepresentations hidden beneath a thin veneer of truth.

She is right, of course, to say that Feminists for Life are openly oppositional to legal abortion. Sidney Callahan, rightly quoted by Montgomery as a case in point, has said that "women will never climb to equality and social empowerment over mounds of dead fetuses." Callahan is a minority voice among feminists believing as she does that abortion should be prohibited by law.

One of the truths Margie underscores but does not admit is that most feminists see no contradiction between support for legalized abortion and being a wife and mother. Opting out of childbearing is not the aim of the feminist agenda, contrary to Margie's claim to the contrary. Nearly a fourth of all abortions in the United States are by and for women who are also married and mothers.

Margie wants all women and all Americans to embrace the problematic notion that all fetuses are persons from the moment of conception. Thus she calls for the law to recognize the "equality of all human beings," which she thinks includes embryos and stem cells. Her battle against *Roe v. Wade* has been relentless, but hardly supportable on logical, moral or biblical grounds.

The notion that an embryo (much less a stem cell) is a person is a religious proposition, not a scientific statement, and certainly not supported by scripture. Religious groups are deeply divided on the question but the Supreme Court has ruled that, for purposes of the law, an embryo is not a person or citizen with rights. The Court's approach leaves Montgomery and other anti-choice people perfectly free to believe as they will, but not to impose their views on others.

The genius of *Roe* was that it allowed women to make decisions about pregnancy terminations in the early stages of gestation based on their own religious beliefs as to the moral acceptability of abortion. No particular religious teaching should be forced on all women. Each brings her own beliefs and personal assessments of life and its burdens and opportunities to the decision. No woman is required to abort; no woman is to be prohibited from terminating an early pregnancy. *Roe* made it clear that government was to be neutral in the theological debate about fetal personhood.

The legalization of abortion underscored the dignity and respect due to women who choose to terminate a problem pregnancy. The legacy of illegal abortions was widespread death from sepsis among women and exploitation by the underworld which monopolized the

Continued on next page.

practice. Bringing abortion into the mainstream of society was an effort to assure women the best of medical care. Women made desperate by a problem pregnancy should not be subjected to the humiliation of back-alley abortions.

The situation of women in 1923 made it understandable that Alice Paul, the author of the original Equal Rights Amendment would say that "abortion is the ultimate exploitation of women." Her comment was not, as Montgomery put it, a condemnation of abortion but a commentary on women's dependent and vulnerable status.

Thanks to Roe, abortion is now one of the safest procedures women can undergo. Montgomery says there were 23 deaths from induced abortions in 1992-93, believing that proves her contention that abortion is a threat to women's health and life.

What she did not explain was the medical circumstances that surrounded the abortions. Maternal deaths in abortion are typically associated with life-threatening conditions the woman experiences. The abortion may well have been incidental to the woman's dying and likely an effort to save her life.

The Centers for Disease Control says that abortion in the first trimester of gestation is nine times safer than live childbirth. That statistic never occurs in anti-abortion literature since it removes one of the primary scare tactics used against women. Because the CDC and other health agencies which monitor abortions do not support her charges, Montgomery says they are engaged in a cover-up of abortion deaths!

Margie also made no mention of the fact that abortions have actually increased under the Bush Administration which has a harsh anti-choice posture. The reasons women give for abortion seem to support the claim that their social and personal well-being requires access to legal abortion. Unchecked fertility and uncontrolled pregnancies assure an out-of-control population growth and the continued confinement of women to the home during the childbearing years. A pregnancy is not just for nine months, but typically for 18 years of maternal duty.

Further, the infant mortality rate actually increased in 2002 while it had been steadily decreasing. Infant mortality rates indicate decreased support and healthcare for mothers and babies, further supporting the feminists' claim that women are basically on their own when it comes to support for children. Ironically, those who are most against choice also seem most strongly against social safety nets for pregnant women and other minority groups.

Montgomery also trots out the scare tactic that women will have mental health issues following abortion. Research shows, however, that women who have an abortion need not fear a greater chance they will have a severe bout of depression. Women who experience depression following either live childbirth or abortion follow the statistical pattern for all women in this age group. (*The Archives of General Psychiatry*, August, 2000). In other words, they would likely have had a bout of depression regardless of whether they

were pregnant or not, whether they aborted or whether they gave birth.

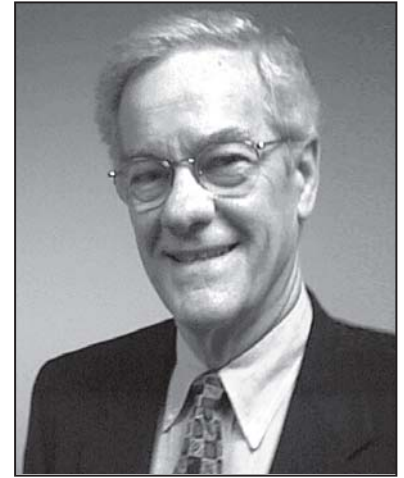
There are thus four great values for women and families from the legalization of abortion.

First, women are provided with the best of medical care and thus liberated from the threats of early death from botched abortions.

Second, women are given respect and dignity, not driven into the underworld of secrecy, humiliation and shame.

Third, all Americans are allowed to act on their own personal religious and moral beliefs about contraceptive and reproductive choices.

Finally, families in general and women in particular have their options expanded as they plan the number and spacing of children. These are wonderful gifts and basic rights that modern Americans should be able to take for granted. They constitute social arrangements that bless us all and make us a civilization committed to human freedoms.



Paul Simmons

Dr. Paul Simmons, Professor of Ethics
University of Louisville Medical School

Whose Decision is it?

By Kate Cunningham

Whose decision is it, to end a problem pregnancy? Your parents? Your husband? Your boyfriend? Your minister? Your pharmacist? Your legislator? YOU? If you think some straight talking and common sense should prevail in personal medical decision making, join us in Frankfort some Tuesday, Voice for Choice, Page 8 Wednesday and Thursday morning during the 60-day legislature, beginning for us on January 10.



Kate Cunningham

We volunteers, mainly from Louisville and Central Kentucky, meet in the Capitol Annex basement cafeteria at 9 a.m., to discuss the day's issues and make a list of legislators to visit and committee meetings to attend.

It's reality TV and Sixth Grade Civics. We get to see real democracy at work, more subtle than sausage-making, but just

as bloody. Phone or email Kate Cunningham for more information and to let us know when and where to look for you at the Capitol Annex.

When a local pharmacist can refuse to fill your emergency contraception prescription, saying "a fertilized egg [even before implantation] is a human being," you know that ideology has trumped science at the drug store. The awful truth is that we are now lobbying to get access to Family Planning methods! Kentucky already has so many restrictions on abortion access that the ideologues have moved on to attacking birth control pills. Do you think that perhaps the impetus behind this movement is a drive to subjugate women? After all, if a woman has no control over her own reproductive future, she has no control over any other aspect of her life.

To contact Kate:

by e-mail: kate.cunningham@juno.com
by telephone: 502 339-1381.

Privacy as a Reproductive Issue

By L. W. Knowles

The words privacy and private are the old timers of the reproduction debate. But neither appears in the Bill of Rights or in the 13th, 14th, 15th Amendments. Why are they so popular?

Ironically, the concept of privacy is forty years old this year! In *Griswold v. Connecticut*, decided in 1965, the Supreme Court protected, constitutionally, the right of access to birth control devices. In the opinion of the Court, Justice Douglas cited the 1st Amendment's right of association, the 3rd Amendment's ban on quartering soldiers in private homes, the 4th Amendment's forbidding unreasonable searches of homes and persons and the 5th Amendment's security against self incrimination. Taken together these Amendments, he wrote, created a "zone of privacy" and this privacy was an independent constitutional right needing no mention in the text of the Constitution!

In subsequent years many have questioned the legitimacy of a Constitutional right of privacy. But no one disputes its popularity, along with apple pie, as an American



Lawrence W. Knowles

Lawrence W. Knowles is Professor of Law Emeritus at the University of Louisville and executive editor of *The Journal of Law & Education*. He will be writing a series of brief articles explaining reproductive issues from a legal perspective.

TEEN TALK

What you need to Know About Sexuality Education

By Melanie Phillips

What do the words “reproductive choice” mean to you? One college student said “Reproductive choice is the right a woman or a couple has to choose if, when, and how to have children. It includes access to birth control, abortion, adoption, and the right to carry a dangerous pregnancy to term” (Research commissioned by RCRC). Choice means something different to every woman depending on her circumstances and situation.

For teens, choice also means having enough information to make well-informed decisions. It is impossible to make a good choice if you do not have enough information. This is why sexuality education is so important. A variety of sexuality education programs exist and some may be more effective than others. Think about your school. Is sexuality education offered and if so, what type? Is it abstinence-only or a more comprehensive program?

Comprehensive sexuality education programs not only discuss abstinence, but also provide plenty of information about contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, abortion, adoption, and reproductive physiology. They provide all of the information you would need to make decisions about your sexuality. As a middle or high school student, you should be entitled to receive the best and most accurate information. When someone doesn't give you all of the information, they are limiting your ability to make the best choices for yourself. You have a right to be healthy emotionally, physically, and spiritually, and being healthy means having a right to information on topics that concern your personal well-being.

Many teens are being vocal about this and they are spreading the news that schools and even churches need to provide comprehensive sexuality education! Here's how you can do it too

If you are a spiritual teen, find out what your church or synagogue believes about sexuality and sexuality education. Talk to your youth group, youth leaders, or another important adult in your congregation such as a minister or rabbi. Explain your views about sexuality education and if the adults are positive about this, ask about organizing a program.

Find out what sexuality programs exist. The Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ have teamed together to create the **Our Whole Lives** program (also known as OWL). This is a comprehensive program that not only includes all of the important information you need, but also helps you to think more about your values as a spiritual youth. Youth who have completed the program not only come out more knowledgeable, but they are better able to articulate their values and beliefs to others. For more information on OWL, go to www.uua.org. You should also find out if there is particular program your church denomination or synagogue has used in the past.

Use existing resources to promote sexuality education in your community or congregation. Here are a few to help you get you started:

The Advocacy Manual for Sexuality Education, Health, and Justice: Resources for Communities of Faith, edited by Sarah Gibb, published by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries. This book tells about different types of sexuality education programs and explains why comprehensive programs are so important.

Sexuality and Our Faith: A Companion to Our Whole Lives, by Unitarian Universalist ministers, Rev. Makanah E. Morriss and Rev. Jory Agate, and United Church of Christ ministers, Rev. Lizanne Bassham and Rev. Gordon J. Svoboda II.

Both books may be ordered from the following

www.uua.org

www.ucc.org



www.SYRF.org

Spiritual Youth for Reproductive Freedom

The SYRF web site can provide you with information on how to get a SYRF chapter started at your high school or college campus. SYRF is open to youth 16 and older. SYRF provides opportunities for leadership training for youth who are interested in taking active roles on their campuses and in their communities.

The Education of Shelby Knox (video) – This is a documentary about a high school student in Lubbock, Texas, who became an advocate for comprehensive sexuality education. Shelby is a Christian who has grown up in a conservative congregation and community. She has chosen to abstain from sexual activity until marriage, but begins to realize that even

Debating Late-Term Abortions: Morality and the Loss of Even One

By Paul Simmons, Ph.D.

The morality of late-term abortions and what to do about them has lately been center stage in the national debate. Prime-time coverage is now focused on the Supreme Court's review of the law in New Hampshire which restricts access to abortion for a minor by requiring both parental consent and removing any provision to protect her health.

The sorry twin of parental consent laws is the debate over what has been wrongly called "Partial Birth Abortion." Most states have now passed laws prohibiting this procedure, and most of those have no protections for the woman's health.

Right-to-Life forces have a predictable pattern to their arguments against any provision for the woman's health. They focus on the moral gravity of what she intends to do, namely, terminate a pregnancy. Further, they argue, a second trimester fetus just might be viable. For them, the loss of even one fetus overrides any moral or legal obligation to the young woman. Concerns for her health are not as significant as the "life" of the innocent fetus.

The "innocence" of the fetus appeals not only to "Gerber-baby" images of "perfect babies" that might be placed for adoption, but includes all fetuses, whether radically deformed, lethally afflicted or conceived by rape or incest. After all, any concession to common sense would weaken the absolutist argument.

Further, the innocence argument affirms a religious standing for the fetus. The belief is that the fetus has never sinned willfully nor been tainted by the original sin endowed at birth. The fetus thus attains a religious and moral standing that makes it of greater value than that of the woman. The fact that the woman has engaged in sexual intercourse is evidence of her sinfulness and thus her religious/moral inferiority to the fetus. Sexual intercourse involves concupiscence (lust) and thus compromises one's moral and religious standing.

This connection to theological premises for the moral argument against abortion is seldom made publicly, and that for understandable reasons. For one thing, the Constitution forbids any law respecting an establishment of religion. Solid data available to anyone is required to uphold legal restrictions or mandates regarding otherwise private decisions. The anti-abortion argument appeals to metaphysics, not factual data. Another reason is that it is best for purposes of public consumption not to reveal the underlying arguments. Vast numbers of the public seem gullible to simplistic solutions to what is called "a moral issue." To show the entire argument would be to lose the grip on the emotional levers that are exploited by the manipulators of public opinion.

Even a cursory examination of arguments against late-term abortions exposes the sleight of hand at work. Why should any law protect a fetus while sacrificing the woman? A fetus is not a person, in any ordinary sense of that term, nor is it a citizen of the United States. Apart from the abortion debate, such a notion would be laughed out of court. Fetuses do not have the basic biological and neurological capacities

though she has chosen abstinence, many of her peers will not and they need better information in order to make the best decisions for themselves. She debates her own minister as well as other community leaders. This documentary is great for sparking discussion! Here are some ideas that might bring about action...

Show the film to your youth group and allow everyone to discuss their feelings on the subject. Be sure to combine it with pizza or another fun social activity. No one wants to come to an event that's all serious!

Invite your friends over to your house for a private showing. If there is enough excitement, decide what your next steps will be towards advocating for better sexuality education in your community. Will you organize a showing at your school or go to your principal and explain your side together?

Watch it with a friend, family member, or another person from your church or synagogue who doesn't share your views. If you already have a friendly relationship, use the film as a way to discuss your beliefs in a positive way. Be sure not to slam the other person's views though!

Hopefully, this information is enough to get you started down the right path. Remember that some of the best sources of information can be your own parents, ministers, rabbis, or religious education directors! Local family planning clinics such as Planned Parenthood can be good sources of information too. Be cautious when using the web. It can be a good tool, but it can also point you to false or useless information. If you want to know something, ask a well-respected adult or read a book with a good reputation!



Melanie Phillips is a member of the KRCRC Board of Directors and is the Director of Religious Education for the Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Universalist congregation in Louisville, Kentucky.

Continued on next page.

innocence are all unpersuasive and reductionistic. Taken singly or together, they fail to explain the idea that a second-trimester fetus is a person with legal and moral claims that are superior to those of the woman.

The woman is undeniably and unquestionably a person. She is a citizen, known and knowing, choosing and making her life around personal values and beliefs. She makes decisions, God being her helper and strength, as one fashioned in the image of God.

That capacity for choice is another clue to the anti-abortion posture. At issue is whether women are free to be decision makers on their own or whether their decisions should be subject to a structure of authority and power. The Right-to-life movement is strongly paternalistic and authoritarian. The woman is seen as inferior morally and thus is consigned to a subordinate social and moral position to that of a man. Her husband or other male should be an authority over her.

Every condemnation of abortion is also a moral condemnation of the woman. The argument is that she has acted immorally and now proposes to do further damage by "killing her child." The negativism of that portrait of the woman pervades the debate about abortion. The corollary is that she is expendable and her health interests are negligible, when compared to the fetus.

Such reasoning is thoroughly religious, but it hardly qualifies as moral. Problematic platitudes are substituted for solid data and actual people are subordinated to entities of questionable status. Anti-choice forces now repeat the mantra that fetuses are not potentially persons but persons with potential. But repeating a clever phrase a thousand times still does not make it true.

Furthermore, it is a moral, not a legal, argument. If a legal point is to be made, they would be showing what vital state interests are at stake and of sufficient gravity to set aside the protections and rights to which the woman is entitled. A fundamental rule of natural law is that each person has the right to protect one's own person and bodily integrity.

That is also presumably the fundamental guarantee of the First Amendment which seeks to assure the woman's right to decide her own best interests without the coercive power of government in collusion with authoritarian religion. She should not have to answer to Puritan moralists or Catholic dogmatists. No woman should be placed in jeopardy or made expendable for the sake of religious prejudices held by others. In America, no person is to be forced to live by someone else's religious beliefs.

The abortion debate is fundamentally a conflict between different religious approaches to matters of reproductive choice and personal health. Opposing beliefs, moral values, and radically different centers of value and authority are at stake. The tensions are not unlike those that exist between various denominations and religious traditions over whether baptism is necessary for salvation or whether there is one God or three, or none. But what earthly power is authorized to settle such disputes? None. Not even the Supreme Court, as was admitted in *Roe v. Wade*. *Roe* left each woman to deal with abortion in the light of her own religious beliefs and moral commitments.

Nor should the debate be "settled" by a powerful block of zealous religious leaders in coalition with misguided ideologues and misinformed politicians. Were Bush committed to Constitutional values, he would not be engaged in all-out attacks against the wall of separation between church and state. His grasp for power is currently and conveniently wed to the grasp for authority by those of the Christian right.

The moral perspective of those favoring choice argues that not even one woman should be sacrificed for the sake of a law based on abstract philosophical and religious premises. Apparently Chief Justice Roberts is willing to allow "a small percentage" of deaths for the sake of preserving a law that is designed to protect fetuses. But God is interested in the overriding value of One. No woman should be forced by law to sacrifice her own health and life for the sake of a fetus. But, she might choose to do so based on her own religious beliefs and moral values. Catholics and Southern Baptists might believe women should be sacrificial victims, but most Americans do not accept such moral nonsense.

We will now wait with bated breath to discover whether the Supreme Court is willing to support laws contrary to the separation of church and state and against the best health interests of the woman. James Madison feared for the future of the freedoms envisioned by the First Amendment he and Thomas Jefferson had so carefully crafted. He thus called for "a prudent jealousy" that guards and protects beloved liberties. For us as it was for him: "Every new & successful example therefore of a perfect separation between ecclesiastical and civil matters is of importance."

Every lever of influence and power should be used to defeat the ugly forces of medieval religion and moral intolerance among us. The effort to subordinate women to a new dogmatism and destroy the First Amendment for all of us must be defeated. At stake is nothing less than women's health and well-being in reproductive matters and the soul of our nation that respects and protects religious differences among us.

Remember!

Send in your *Roe v. Wade* Dinner registrations by January 19th! See page 11 for details!

Update from the KRCRC Board of Directors

by Joan Beal, Chair



Joan Beal, Chairperson
KRCRC Board of Directors

While the politics of this year have cast a grim shadow on issues of reproductive choice, it also strengthens the resolve of many of the supporters of choice. So it has been for KRCRC. While we may be looking at a Supreme Court which will allow yet more erosion of reproductive rights for women, we are also strengthening our own organization for providing more

service and information for those who are concerned about choice.

At KRCRC, we have been lucky this year to take onto our Board, three more active and committed Board members....Anne Maron, Lauren Kehr, Kathy Schroerlucke and Melanie Phillips. If you are receiving this newsletter, you have probably already had some type of contact with them.

Anne Maron, vice-chair of the Board, has been busy with communication (letters to the editor, contact with reporters, maintaining contact with national RCRC), as well as working on issues such as the implications for reproductive choice when hospitals merge (e.g. Caritas and Jewish). Anne is also covering our emergency phone line and web-based e-mail inquiries. She represented us at the recent national RCRC conference held in Washington, D.C. (See page 2 for her report.) Her leadership is a great asset to KRCRC's work.

Kathy Schroerlucke, board secretary, instituted a more economical and efficient toll-free phone service (see article on page 10) and generally streamlined our overworked volunteer organization. Kathy set KRCRC up to receive online credit card donations from the KRCRC web site which she continues to develop.

Lauren Kehr helped research the new banking system as well as the Kroger cards donation program. She facilitated the 2005 Community Town Hall meeting held before the Roe v. Wade dinner.

Our newest board member, Melanie Phillips, is Director of Religious Education at the Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Universalist congregation. She brings new energy and new ideas to the board. Melanie attended

the national RCRC conference with Anne. She is one of many new contributors to the Voice for Choice newsletter. See her article on page 6.

JoAnn Burch continues to coordinate volunteers to prepare the newsletter mailing and Louis Moseson tirelessly sends thank you notes to donors.

We are but a few, but are many when we count your support. Together we accomplished the following this year:

- Operated a booth at the state fair, staffed by 88 volunteers
- Implemented a toll free phone line
- Distributed *Voice for Choice*, the quarterly newsletter to over 4000 Kentuckians
- Initiated the new web site
- Met with state legislators when the General Assembly is in session
- Escorted women through the gauntlet of hecklers, protesters, and fanatics at the clinic in Louisville

While continuing these activities, we are also in the middle of reorganizing our telephone hot line service, changing our budgeting and financial reporting, planning a new clergy counselor training, developing a revised resource manual and beginning to plan how to reach out to faith communities throughout the state.

We do a lot with a little and could only do this with your support, both financial and volunteer. It is because of your support and the hard work of the Board of Directors that pro-choice stays alive in Kentucky. Having said that, we could always use more. If you would like to help in 2006, please do so. There is always a place for you if you'd like to get more involved.

CONTACT US TO GET INVOLVED:

866-606-0988

INFO@KRCRC.ORG

KRCRC Implements Toll-Free Phone Service

by Kathy Schroerlucke, KRCRC Board Secretary

In October, the KRCRC Board of Directors initiated toll-free phone service by subscribing to the VoiceNation Internet-based telephone voice messaging service.

Prior to the implementation of this new toll-free number, the KRCRC phone was literally a telephone line installed in the home of a KRCRC volunteer and she responded to all KRCRC calls. When she wasn't available, callers were told to call the home number of another volunteer. Between these two volunteers, the world could connect to KRCRC via the telephone for nearly ten years. We owe Virginia Copenhefer and Gilbert Schroerlucke a debt of gratitude for their dedicated service.

The Board wrestled with how to provide telephone access without staff and adequate funds. We learned about VoiceNation through the Indiana RCRC who had been using it for several months with great satisfaction. The Board's decision to use this Internet-based telephone messaging services accomplishes several objectives. We've reduced our telephone costs, saving over \$85 per month. We are now providing wider access via the toll-free number, and we are able to share the responsibility of responding to inquiries.

The VoiceNation service provides 24-hour voice messaging. Callers leave voice messages which are recorded and sent by email to a KRCRC telephone volunteer. This is someone who has been trained to respond. The e-mail includes an audio recording of the caller's voice message, so we hear exactly what is said. The KRCRC telephone volunteer will do his/her best to respond to the call within 24-hours.

The expanded functions in the VoiceNation service enables us to provide pre-recorded outgoing messages or implement fax on demand should we decide to do that.

In 2006, we hope to train a small group of KRCRC volunteers who are willing to take turns being telephone call responders. We are in the throes of developing a resource manual to support this service. If this strategy works, we will be able to provide this valuable service without paid staff and without taxing any one volunteer. If you are interested in helping, please contact us:

by telephone: 866-606-0988 or

by e-mail: info@krcrc.org.



Check out the VoiceNation web site:
<http://www.voicenation.net>

RESOURCES

By Anne Moran

We have a great book list to pass along to you as well as an interesting website, all from our Missouri RCRC.

Books you should be reading:

1. *God's politics*, by Jim Wallis
2. *The Wretched of the Earth*, by Frantz Fanon
3. *Paul for a New Day*, by Robin Scroggs
4. *The Sacred and the Profane*, by Mircea Eliade
5. *Race-ing Justice, En-gendering Power*, by Toni Morrison
6. *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, by John Boswell
7. *Manhood in America*, by Michael Kimmel
8. *The Arrogance of Faith*, by Forrest G. Wood
9. *Original Blessing*, by Matthew Fox
10. *Embodiment*, by James B. Nelson
11. *The Mardi Gras Syndrome*, by Joan Timmerman
12. *Matters of Life and Death*, by John B. Cobb, Jr.

And news about a website:

The Abortion Conversation Project has many resources at its website to encourage and enable conversation about abortion. Visit their website www.abortionconversation.com and read stories about women who have chosen abortion, download challenging papers for discussion, and find excellent discussion-starter questions.

Are you using a KRCRC Kroger Gift

Order a \$5 gift card from KRCRC. Stop at the Kroger service desk and put some money on the gift. Shop till you drop and pay the bill with your Kroger gift card. When you use your Kroger gift card, it helps raise funds for KRCRC. Consider giving KRCRC Kroger gift cards as holiday gifts! It's the gift that keeps on giving!



2006 ROE V. WADE DINNER

SATURDAY - JANUARY 28

4:00 p.m. -- Town Hall Meeting - engage in conversation with a panel of persons working on pro-choice initiatives in Kentucky.

6:30 p.m. -- Dinner & Program - Join us for a delectable dinner, keynote speaker, music, awards and fellowship.

Childcare during the dinner & program are provided for children under 12 years of age. Provide name and ages in the registration form below.

Event Location:

Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church
318 W. St. Catherine St., Louisville, KY 40203

Parking: Parking lot is adjacent to church. Enter parking lot from alley behind church. Enter alley from St. Catherine Street. Enter church building through side entrance on St. Catherine Street.

Please contact KRCRC with concerns, questions, requests or to make special arrangements.
1-866-606-0988 or info@krcrc.org

ROE v. Wade Dinner Registration

Tear off and send with payment to KRCRC • P.O. Box 4065 • Louisville, KY 40204

Item	Qty	Rate	Total
Roe v. Wade Dinner - Total Adults		\$35	
Roe v. Wade Dinner - Total Senior and Students (12 yrs and over)		\$20	
Roe v. Wade Dinner - Total Children (under 12 years)		\$0	
Kroger Cards		\$5	
Tax Deductible KRCRC Donation			
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED			\$

Check all that apply and provide information as requested. Thank you.

Total number in your party planning to attend the Town Hall Meeting at 4:30 is:

Special disability considerations needed. (Please contact KRCRC to make arrangements)

Vegetarians in our party total:

Child care needed for the following children (list first name and age)

Make check payable and mail to: KRCRC • P.O. Box 4065 • Louisville, KY 40204

NAME

TELEPHONE (area code) + Number

ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE, ZIP)

EMAIL ADDRESS:

The IRS recognizes KRCRC as a section 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. Registration fees for the Roe v. Wade event are not tax deductible, but any donation you make above the registration fee is tax deductible.



Kentucky Religious Coalition
for Reproductive Choice
PO Box 4065
Louisville, Kentucky 40204-0065

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LOUISVILLE, KY
PERMIT NO. 747

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*The Religious Community in Support
of an Individual's Freedom to Choose*



Pro-Choice Owensboro Remembers Clara Oldham

Ms. Clara S. Oldham passed away on August 22, 2005 in Owensboro, Kentucky, at the age of 83. She was a prominent social activist and long time advocate for women's equality. Working with state and national leaders, she devoted much effort to the campaign for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Clara actively supported reproductive freedom in the community, drawing, in part, from her experience as a KRCRC member. To honor her courage, Pro-Choice Owensboro established a fund in her memory. A very generous response from privately solicited contributions allowed Pro-Choice Owensboro to present a gift to KRCRC that strongly reflects Clara's commitment to reproductive choice.

A luncheon tribute to Clara was held on December 10 in Owensboro, with three KRCRC board members present. About 30 attendees viewed the video of the KRCRC's work, shown at the 2005 awards dinner in Louisville. Linda Powe, of Pro-Choice Owensboro, presented KRCRC with the check for the total Clara Oldham Memorial Fund.