

Voice for Choice

Newsletter of the Kentucky Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

Join us for our 15th annual Roe v. Wade Dinner on Saturday, January 17, 2009

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church • Louisville, KY

AGENDA

4-5:30

- Presentation by SIECUS
- Q&A Session

6-8:30

- Dinner featuring Steve Clapp; music by Cynthia Fletcher & Cat Boyd
- Book Sales & Exhibits

KRCRC's annual Roe v. Wade dinner this year will begin with a Town Hall Meeting from 4 to 5:30 pm featuring a presentation by representatives of SIECUS – the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, founded in 1964 to provide education and information about sexuality and sexual and reproductive health.

SIECUS affirms that sexuality is a fundamental part of being human, one that is worthy of dignity and respect. They advocate for the right of all people to accurate information, comprehensive education about sexuality, and sexual health services. SIECUS works to create a world that ensures social justice and sexual rights.

SIECUS recently released a special report on abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Kentucky. The report, which compiles data on the major federal funding sources of abstinence-only-until-marriage programs as well as vital health statistics and outcomes in the state, paints a sad picture of our state that uses some of the worst, fear-based abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula and lags behind national averages on many important adolescent indicators related to teen pregnancy and STDs. Come and hear about their report and learn what we can do about it together.

Our keynote speaker is the Rev. Steve Clapp. Steve is the President of the Christian Community, Inc. a nonprofit research and development company focused on the health of congregations and nonprofit organizations. He is the author or coauthor of over 30 books on congregational vitality. He will discuss his groundbreaking study and book, *Faith Matters*.

How do religious faith and congregational involvement influence the sexual values and behaviors of teenagers? *Faith Matters* shares what the authors learned in a study of 5,819 teenagers involved in faith-based institutions. Conducted between 2000 and 2002 by Christian Community, Inc., the *Faith Matters* study surveyed teens from Protestant, Roman Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, Jewish, and Islamic traditions, with 38 different Protestant denominations represented. The study also surveyed 2,049 clergy and 442 adult youth workers. Of particular note, teens are virtually unanimous in wanting their faith-based institutions to do more to help them relate their faith to dating, sexual decision-making, marriage and parenting.

Steve is a fascinating speaker who is returning for his second visit with KRCRC. He was here in October, 2007, to present his findings at our conference for clergy, parents and youth educators on comprehensive sexuality education. You will not want him to stop speaking!

Music will be provided by Cynthia Fletcher, a Louisville professional vocalist and musician who will lead us in singing "Love Will Guide Us" and another spiritual. She will be joined by Cat Boyd, a local clinic escort, who will sing and play the marimba.

We will also present our annual awards for Service and for Courage (Dr. David Gunn Award). ■



Rev. Steve Clapp

Please see page 4 for ticket information.

A broad array of religious groups and faith communities have come together to urge President-elect Barack Obama to make reproductive health a priority in the first months of his administration. To view a copy of the collaborative letter to the 44th president of the United States, go to <http://www.krcrc.org/issues/dearmrresident.cfm>.

Perspectives from the chair:



The celebrations of Barack Obama's election are barely dying down as we go to print with this newsletter.

We may dare to hope that our country will once again live up to its creed: that all men and women are created equal.

Women can enjoy full citizenship only when they control their own bodies. The work we do to ensure that must continue, just as it did after Roe V. Wade.

KRCRC has focused on prevention through comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) for teens. In order to provide CSE in our schools, churches and synagogues, we must first work to convince Gov. Beshear to refuse Title V funds (federal) that pay for abstinence-only education programs as well as so-called crisis pregnancy centers. We started a petition at the state fair, and you will have an opportunity to sign it at our Roe v. Wade Dinner.

Then we must support the Responsible Education About Life Act (R.E.A.L.) that was described in our last newsletter and again in this one (see opposite page). It can be the basis for providing CSE in our schools.

In addition, we encourage church/synagogue representatives to examine the possibility of teaching CSE within their faith-based

communities. As our keynote speaker for the 2009 Roe v. Wade Dinner, Steve Clapp makes a powerful case for doing this. We hope you will join us at the dinner to hear him.

We are also very honored that SIECUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States) will be the focus of our Town Hall Meeting. I cannot emphasize enough how much their offer to come to Kentucky to help us means. According to their report on Kentucky, published in our last newsletter, "Kentucky lags behind national averages on many important adolescent indicators related to teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections." Please, please plan to attend this Town Hall Meeting. This is an unusual opportunity for Kentuckians to hear from national experts and to formulate a plan of action.

Finally, I hope some of you had the chance to hear Dr. Jocelyn Elders, former Surgeon General of the United States, at the Unity Dinner of the Alliance Against Racial and Political Repression on November 22nd at Masterson's. She spoke of the need to act with "determined boldness" to fix health care in this country. To save money we did not send out a separate fund request letter in November as in years past, but we need your support and participation. We hope that you will donate to KRCRC with determined boldness so that we may continue to fight the fight for women's health and reproductive justice.

Anne Maron

Anne Maron, KRCRC Chair

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The Courier-Journal has launched its new Faith and Religion Web page. Check it out at the easy-to-remember www.courier-journal.com/faith.

People of Faith for REAL

Responsible Education About Life Act

RCRC supports the Responsible Education About Life Act (REAL) (H.R. 1653, S. 972), federal legislation to provide \$204 million to states for programs that provide honest, medically accurate, complete, age-appropriate sex education; programs that the public almost universally supports and that studies show can be effective in helping teens stay healthy. As people of faith, we believe it is a moral imperative to provide children and teens with all the information they need to make responsible and informed decisions about their health.

Tell your representatives in Congress and the Senate to sign on to the R.E.A.L. Act. You can do this by visiting the homepage of the Religious Coalition (rcrc.org) and following the links.

from the Daily Women's
Health Policy Report
Opinion
Nov. 3, 2008

Common Misperceptions of 'Typical Woman' Having an Abortion Examined in New York Times Column

New York Times columnist Michael Winierip writes that he had "long assumed" the typical woman undergoing an abortion was a "teenager in high school who finds herself pregnant and is not ready to raise a child," but he concedes that his assumption was "wrong."

According to two studies released by the Guttmacher Institute – one in 2002 and one in September – the "typical American woman having an abortion" is in her 20s (57%), the parent of one or more children (60%), economically disadvantaged (57%), lives in a metropolitan area (88%), has never married (67%), believes herself to be a Christian (70%), has graduated from high school (87%) and attended at least some college (57%).

Winierip writes, "Watching the presidential candidates speak about their views on abortion at the final debate, I wondered how many Americans understand who the typical woman getting an abortion is." He adds, "While the media have recently shown us teenagers who decide to keep their babies or put them up for adoption – like Juno," the title character of the popular movie, "Sarah Palin's daughter Bristol and Jamie Lynn Spears – I don't think we know the parent in her 20s having the abortion."

Winierip interviewed three women in their 20s who had had abortions. The women "had several things in common" -- they all were balancing work and raising their children and were considered lower middle class, Winierip writes. The three women also "were deeply conflicted about the decision" to have an abortion "but grateful for the option," Winierip writes (Winierip, New York Times, 11/2). ●

“No woman is required
to build the world
by destroying herself.” -Rabbi Moses Sofer

Roe v. Wade Dinner Ticket Information

Tickets are \$30 per person, \$55 per couple, or \$260 for tables of ten. For reservations, please mail your check, made payable to KRCRC, with your name, address and phone number, no later than January 10th to:

KRCRC
P.O. Box 4065
Louisville, KY 40204

A limited number of discounted tickets will be made available to students.

The dinner will be held in the brand new facility at St. Matthews Episcopal Church, 330 N. Hubbards Lane in Louisville. The facility at the church is huge, and we will have plenty of space to spread tables out for your comfort.

Catering will be by Drew Patterson, who specializes in broasted chicken, and Tiffany Taylor of First Unitarian Church. The delicious new menu should satisfy any palate.

Please join us for an exciting evening of learning and celebration! ●

Sign up for the Daily Women's Health Policy Report



The Daily Report is a free daily e-mail summary on reproductive health policy and news (formerly published by the Kaiser Family Foundation since 1989).

Email: info@nationalpartnership.org

The following is an excerpt from the Daily Women's Health Policy Report Abortion News:

Ms. Magazine Examines Referrals to 'Crisis Pregnancy Centers' By College Health Centers

Nov. 5, 2008

The current issue of *Ms. Magazine* examined how many college campus health centers are referring students with possible unplanned pregnancies to "crisis pregnancy centers." According to *Ms. Magazine*, the centers offer "only limited options to pregnant women while purveying a strong antiabortion message" that often is not explicit in the centers' advertising or the names of the facilities. A summer 2008 survey of campus health centers by the Feminist Majority Foundation -- which publishes *Ms. Magazine* -- found that 48% of the 398 centers that responded to the survey routinely refer women who think they might be pregnant to CPCs. Eighty-one percent said they also refer women to full service health clinics to give students "all of the options." There are an estimated 2,500 to 4,000 CPCs in the U.S., many of which are affiliated with evangelical Christian ministries. ●

New Report Outlines Seven Values that Motivate Women's Activism and Reframe American Democracy

Community
Family
Equality
POWER
COMPASSION
BALANCE
Practice

A new report, *The Challenge to Act: How Progressive Women Activists Reframe American Democracy*, issued by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) today calls for political leaders and progressive activists to speak to the values that inspire women to act for social change. The report was informed by a diverse Working Group on Women's Public Vision.

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, a member of the project's Working Group, said, "Just as Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Rev. William Sloane Coffin and Rabbi A. J. Heschel provided moral leadership for progressives forty years ago, it makes sense for today's progressive movement leaders and politicians who want to change society to call upon the strength and inspiration that people derive from their values. Political leaders hoping to understand what inspires women to vote and take action, in particular, will need to pay attention to the language and approach of progressive women activists. These women are transforming their communities and, as the report title suggests, reframing our democracy."

Based on over 120 in-depth interviews with women from diverse backgrounds, the report provides a portrait of a hope-filled, faith-based political vision that is inclusive and inspiring. It finds that even in the midst of their significant differences, progressive women activists often articulate a core cluster of values that are integral to their motivation for engaging in social action. These seven values provide the basis for an innovative and transformative approach to politics and public life, according to the report.

The values outlined in the report challenge current debates about "moral values" by providing a different vision for American democracy – one that is enhanced by the experiences of progressive women activists who feel called to serve their communities but whose voices and priorities often go unheard and unaddressed in public life.

The seven values highlighted in the report are: Community, Family, Equality, Power, Compassion, Balance and Practice. The report describes these values as "Community, where people from all walks of life gather to define and pursue the common good; Family, which offers life-giving relationships and shared care-giving; Equality, which gives us all the opportunity to pursue our own chosen goals and paths; Power, which ensures that public life includes and responds to diverse voices; Compassion, which is a sensitivity to the emotions and experiences of others that requires us to eliminate injustice and respect the complexity of others' life choices; Balance, which allows us to negotiate the multifaceted nature of our lives without sacrificing our most cherished goals and ideals; Practice, which enables us to bring our values to life through action."

"This report is timely given the deep insecurity about the future of our economy. We see now a great need for rethinking the path of our nation, and the values lived out by the women we interviewed – such as community, equality, and compassion – provide us with the frame for a new set of priorities," remarked Dr. Barbara Gault, acting president of IWPR. "They provide us both a means to and a vision for a better America."

The Challenge to Act lays out specific examples of how these values could reshape progressive politics and organizing at the national and local levels. As an example, the report considers how popular conceptions of policies supporting mixed-income, mixed-use housing are challenged when viewed through the lens of the value of community. This value makes it clear that these policies are not simply targeted welfare policies but rather policies that encourage interconnectedness and community building and that engender a sense of trust and solidarity across difference, all of which strengthen our democracy.

Health Care is a Human Right

Support Single Payer National Health Insurance, HR 676.

Sign the petition to enact HR 676, the United States Universal Health Insurance Act:
www.kyhealthcare.org
 Then circulate paper petitions to get signed.



continued from page 5

The Institute for Women's Policy Research conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialogue, and strengthen families, communities, and societies. IWPR focuses on issues of poverty and welfare, employment and earnings, work and family, health and safety, and women's civic and political participation.

New Report Outlines Seven Values

The report also gives the example of poverty among single mothers, a lightning rod issue that has received a great deal of focus in the "moral values" debate. The authors argue that approaching the issue of support for poor single mothers through the framework of compassion, or sensitivity to the experiences of others, calls on us to recognize that we all come up against hardship and that adversity and circumstance often present us with less-than-ideal choices. It also calls on us to consider policy responses that fill the resource needs of poor single mothers rather than one-size-fits-all prescriptions like marriage promotion that make assumptions about the choices women have made.

The report was produced by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), a Washington D.C. think tank concerned about policies and practices that affect the lives of American women in all walks of life. Over the two-year research process, the report's authors received input and feedback from IWPR's Working Group on Women's Public Vision, a collaborative of feminist and interfaith leaders across the country.

"Ultimately, the cry for values-based politics is about a search for inspiration and meaning. It's about creating and articulating worldviews that capture our imagination. It is about tapping into symbols, ideals, and even rituals that form a compelling vision for what we hope to achieve in public life," according to Dr. Cynthia Hess, one of the report's authors.

"Political leaders trying to understand progressive women should pay attention to the role of these values in motivating them," Hess said.

"Statistics and policy analysis help to win minds, but they must be combined with a transformative and innovative vision to win hearts. Unapologetic expression of values can motivate all of us to become more engaged in public life and achieve change," according to Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Lt. Governor of Maryland and a member of IWPR's Working Group on Women's Public Vision.

Townsend quoted her father, Robert Kennedy: "We have won, not because we bent and diluted our principles, but because we stood fast to the ideals which represent the most noble and generous portion of the American spirit."

The IWPR report shows how progressives might develop gender-aware values-based visions of America's future. It explores the experiences and words of progressive women activists from across the country.

"If those seeking progressive change would explicitly connect their public vision to their values, our society might be able to achieve the most noble – and yet unrealized – goal of democracy: to empower us all to shape politics and policy for the shared well-being of ourselves and others," said Dr. Heidi Hartmann, IWPR's president. "Progressive women activists can play a key role in helping us reach this goal. In their lives and work, they are living out a values-based public vision that pushes our communities and our country to higher standards for democracy, inclusiveness, and well-being." 🗨️

Local Religious Organizations Support KRCRC

We are happy to announce that another religious organization has become a KRCRC supporter. The Progressive United Methodists Of Kentucky, PUMOK, sent \$100 along with a letter of support and partnership. Welcome, PUMOK!

PUMOK joins other local organizational supporters, including Friends Meeting of Louisville, First Unitarian Church, and Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church. We hope to see the list of organizational supporters grow. ●

To include your religious organization as a KRCRC supporter, send a minimum donation of \$100 along with contact information to:

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

Donations

Donations received
March, 2008 –
November, 2008 are
listed here.

To be included on the KRCRC supporters list, donors must check the box on the donation form that authorizes us to publish the donor's name.

Thank you KRCRC supporters.

Your gifts, small and large, make this work possible!

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In honor of my father, Ampelio Isetti, who volunteers at the EMW clinic to allow patients safe access in Louisville, Ky.
Richard & Bobbie Brown
Sallie Powell
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John & Teouline Rose

In Honor

Of Anne Maron
Of Gil & Bettye Schroerlucke
Of Gil Schroerlucke for his book
Of KRCRC volunteers who keep it going

Supporters listed here contributed a total of \$2,245. A total of \$1,665 was contributed by donors who wished to remain anonymous.

Church Affiliates: Help Us Help You!

For a \$100 donation, we will publish a business card-sized ad for your church in our newsletter. Many choice members wish to find a church that supports choice. This will help connect members to your faith organization. The ad will run for one year (4 issues). Please contact us at 1-866-606-0988. Leave a message and you will receive a reply within 24 hours.



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From March, 2008 through July, 2008, Kroger Gift Card earnings totaled \$1,357. This almost pays the printing costs of one newsletter. Please continue to use your KRCRC Kroger Gift Card. It's an easy way to support reproductive choice!



Order a \$5 gift card from KRCRC. Stop at the Kroger service desk and put some money on the gift card. 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 gifts! It's the gift that keeps on giving!

Contact KRCRC at info@krcc.org to order KRCRC Kroger Gift Cards.

KRCRC Board of Directors Meetings

January 18
 February 15
 March 15
 April 19

(Normally the 3rd Sunday of the month.)

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

St. Matthews Episcopal Church

KRCRC

1-866-606-0988 info@krcc.org

KRCRC supporters are welcomed to attend a KRCRC Board of Directors meeting whether you would like to observe, participate or explore your interest in getting more involved with the work of KRCRC.