

Eliminating the Religious Stigma of Abortion



2010 Annual Report



*from the Executive Director
The Reverend Rebecca Turner*

Building upon nearly thirty years of experience in faith-based work for reproductive justice, Faith Aloud engaged in its most pioneering work yet during 2010.

The evolution of this organization has been exciting and challenging. Once a local group, Faith Aloud's services now reach women in every state—and even beyond! We reach women through our compassionate counseling by highly trained clergy, we reach women through our unique religious resources that are being used by abortion clinics across the continent, and we reach women through an assertive online presence.

The recession of the past two years was hard on not-for-profits. We sadly watched some outstanding reproductive justice organizations close their doors. Faith Aloud made sacrifices too, but we also faced the crisis with a determination that led us to focus all our energies on our most unique and vital services and to find new ways to operate in a more “virtual” world.

These efforts were successful: we not only stayed afloat, we did more with less! We expanded our counseling services, trained more counselors, created new resources for clinics, and made public appearances around the nation.

I am optimistic for the future of Faith Aloud and resolved to provide a better future for women, a future where religious faith gives strength to women, a future without shame.



from the President of Faith Aloud
The Reverend Krista Taves

I am proud to serve as the President of Faith Aloud because I believe that the work we do has the power to shape and change the way we understand reproductive justice in the United States. We do this by claiming our moral authority not in the secular language of rights, but in the faith-based language of unconditional love and grace. Faith Aloud goes to the heart of the matter, the women who are considering abortion or have had an abortion, and says, "We are here for you. We love you. We will listen to you, pray with you, stand with you as one loved by the God you believe in."

My hope for the future is that our counseling service grows to serve an even greater proportion of the clinics in North America and that we are able to branch out into Mexico and expand our ability to offer our services in Spanish. My hope is that Faith Aloud will become a full partner with clinics to respond to the religious and spiritual needs of the women they serve.



from the President of the Faith Aloud
Missouri Policy Project
The Reverend Teresa K. M. Danieley

Faith Aloud provides a unique voice for women and families in Missouri. Every time I meet with legislators, I am reminded of how critically important it is that Faith Aloud's staff and members make our voices heard in Missouri. Sometimes, it feels like we are a "voice in the wilderness" - outnumbered by those who would pretend that issues of reproductive justice can be dealt with simply. When I feel this way, I become even more committed to Faith Aloud's work and pray even more fervently that justice will prevail for women and families in Missouri.

I am especially energized by our work on the CARE bill - which would ensure that all female rape victims in Missouri would have access to Emergency Contraception in all Emergency Rooms. This is a place where we are finding common ground with people across faith and party lines. I pray that the CARE bill will be passed in 2011 - demonstrating compassion and care for women in Missouri.



The History of Faith Aloud

In 1967, St. Louis area clergy eagerly accepted the invitation of Judith Widdicombe, the director of Reproductive Health Services, to counsel women who wanted to get to New York City for legal abortions. They became a part of a loose national affiliation known as the Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion.

In 1973, that group became the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and their goal was to defend the recent Roe v. Wade decision and to protect the right to abortion on the federal level. But opponents took the fight to the states and in 1982 an independent Missouri RCAR affiliate was formed. As the legal arguments evolved, so did the language, and in 1993 the organization became the Missouri Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice.

MORCRC became the star of the RCRC affiliate system and flourished under the consistently strong leadership of its Executive Directors:

1982-1989	Ann Cox
1989-1995	Jean Stewart Berg
1995-2001	The Reverend Cynthia S. Bumb
2001-present	The Reverend Rebecca Turner

Groundbreaking programs began in Missouri and quickly spread to other states. These included: All-Options Clergy Counseling, Reproductive Loss Counseling, Peaceful Presence, Naomi's Daughters, and organized clergy testimony in state legislatures. The Missouri RCRC was the only affiliate to have an office with multiple full-time staff and year-round programming.

After more than 40 years of talking about a woman's right to choose abortion, we learned that the foundation of our opponents' arguments against abortion was actually their need to control who has sex with whom and under what circumstances. We knew that we could not ultimately win the right to abortion unless we also dealt with this religious ideology about sexual behavior.

We also realized that the greatest impediment to reproductive freedom was the religious stigma attached to women's sexuality and abortion. This stigma influences women's behavior, doctors' behavior, and legislators' behavior. With this broader understanding of reproductive justice, we separated from the national RCRC in 2008 and became Faith Aloud.

As Faith Aloud, our purpose is to eliminate the religious stigma of abortion so that women can make reproductive choices freely and without shame. Our programming and resources continue in the innovative spirit of our past and are admired and endorsed by women's justice groups nationwide. In recent years we have also developed enduring relationships with abortion clinics, their staffs, and their national associations.

Faith Aloud maintains two vital organizations:

The 501c3 "Faith Aloud" is a national spiritual counseling agency for women considering or choosing abortion and provides religious resources to abortion clinics.

The 501c4 "Faith Aloud Missouri Policy Project" is a Missouri advocacy organization that works to improve government policies for sexual and reproductive health in our home state.

2010 In Review



Counseling

The Faith Aloud toll-free number received an average of 12 calls per week from people requesting spiritual counseling about abortion. A woman from Alabama believed it was in her daughter's best interest that she sign the consent form for abortion, but was worried about losing her salvation if she did. A woman from Pennsylvania wanted help in resisting her boyfriend's pressure to have an abortion that she didn't want. A woman from Canada wanted to talk about the abortion she'd had 20 years ago. A woman from California needed help in coming to terms with her responsibility for making adult choices. These examples are simple composites of the stories we hear every day. Women want to know that they are good in God's eyes, especially when faced with difficult decisions.

Training Clergy

Clergy training events were held in St. Louis, Iowa City, and Pittsburgh. Clergy and seminarians were trained in our unique curriculum "Pastoral Care Before and After Abortion" so that they could confidently counsel women and families in their own congregations and for our toll-free counseling line. Over 200 clergy have been trained over the past two years. 35 of these are currently on our call to regularly respond to requests for help.



Sharing Our Message

Faith Aloud was present at abortion conferences, on college campuses, in pulpits, in homes, in community meetings, in clinics, in parades, at exhibits, and in legislative hearings. We presented workshops, trainings, legislative testimonies, sermons, educational programs, and house parties in Colorado, Missouri, Iowa, Florida, Pennsylvania, New York, and Washington.

Creating New Resources

Faith Aloud created and distributed hundreds of DVDs of spiritual abortion counseling and tens of thousands of patient counseling cards for clinics. We initiated the alternative campaign "40 Days of Prayer to Keep Abortion Safe and Legal" and created posters for clinics to display when they are under siege by sidewalk bullies.

2010 In Review (cont.)



National Launch

In the fall, Faith Aloud designed “Don’t Panic” packages for clinics in order to introduce our unique spiritual resources. These were mailed to 204 abortion clinics around the country and the response was phenomenal. Most abortion care providers really do want to meet the spiritual needs of the women they serve. Other packages were mailed to over 100 media outlets.

Online Presence

Faith Aloud has its own YouTube channel with 17 original videos. We maintain our own blog with entries about reproductive justice written by our staff and volunteers. Our Facebook page, where we post daily reproductive health news, has about 1,300 friends and grows daily. We keep our friends informed with Twitter updates, an informative website, and bi-monthly interactive email alerts.



Missouri Policy Efforts

Faith Aloud participated in four Lobby Days and testified at five legislative hearings. We sent four Action Alerts and distributed information through online sources and radio news stories about policies that would impact reproductive health. All of our policy efforts are in collaboration with a large number of other advocacy organizations who are also working for sexual and reproductive justice.



Recognitions

Faith Aloud’s Executive Director, the Rev. Rebecca Turner, was honored by the Abortion Care Network as the “2010 Person of the Year” for offering innovative religious resources to professional abortion care providers.

Faith Aloud honored four heroes in reproductive justice during the 2010 Faith Aloud Awards: Anne Baker, Marlene Hammerman, the Rev. Allen Ladage, and Senator Robyn Wright-Jones.

2010 Financial Statements



501c3 "Faith Aloud"

INCOME		TOTAL	\$120,198
Donations	\$72,434		
Grants	27,000		
Sunnen			
Roblee			
Anonymous			
Banquet	8,237		
Sales	1,574		
Reimbursed	10,953		
EXPENDITURES		TOTAL	\$116,556
Executive Director	\$65,858		
Conference and Travel	4,924		
Other personnel	4,083		
Rent & Utilities	8,530		
Equipment & Supplies	10,664		
Financial and Legal Services	7,654		
Board Expenses	879		
Community Education	13,964		
	BALANCE	+\$ 3,642	

501c4 "Faith Aloud Missouri Policy Project"

INCOME		TOTAL	\$35,000
Grants	\$35,000		
Ms. Foundation			
EXPENDITURES		TOTAL	\$15,802
Contracted Services	\$10,000		
Rent & Utilities	1,101		
Financial & Legal Services	1,400		
Community Education	3,301		
	BALANCE	+\$19,198	

The management of Faith Aloud assumes full responsibility for the accuracy of this report.

Faith Aloud Products



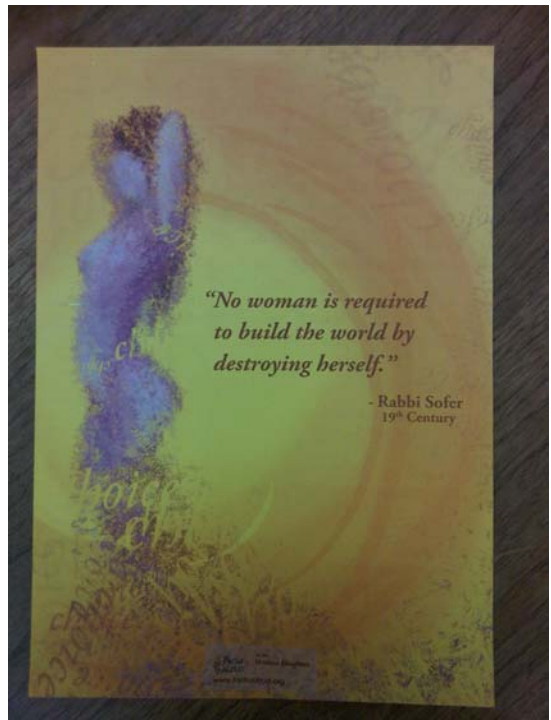
Free spiritual counseling
for pregnancy options or
after your abortion.

Compassion. Respect.
Confidentiality.
We are clergy of many faiths.
We're here to listen.

Toll Free 1-888-717-5010
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www.FaithAloud.org



I have faith in women.





What Does the Future Hold?

We have to admit that there is a lot of bad news out there about the threats to women's reproductive rights. And that makes Faith Aloud *more important than ever!*

Here is our dream of the future:



Clergy will be trained even in cities that we can't get to! We're going to train more clergy by putting our training course online so that it can be accessed and completed anywhere, anytime. Once these newly trained clergy are certified by Faith Aloud, we'll have more counselors to respond to women's requests for counseling.



Women everywhere will hear about us! We're going to advertise our services to reach more women nationwide. We will focus on web-based advertising to reach young women during their reproductive years. We will continue to expand the number of abortion clinics, doctors' offices, counseling organizations, crisis hotlines, and women's groups who refer women to us for abortion counseling.



We'll reduce the shame of abortion! Our fun products encourage women to talk about their experiences. They remind women that they are good in God's eyes and help them accept themselves and their decisions. We'll keep our creative team busy making the best products available.



Women will get religious support right in the abortion clinic! We'll partner with the very best abortion care providers in the country, providing the products they need and training their counselors in how to respond sensitively and effectively to religious questions, even if they themselves aren't religious.



We'll take our message to the media! The public needs to hear religious messages of compassion and support for women making reproductive decisions. Anti-woman judgment and hate will not be tolerated. We'll provide the example of how to speak the language of love.



We'll support public policies that are good for women until every woman can freely make the choices that are best for her and her family.

What Abortion Providers Are Saying About



Charlotte Taft, Abortion Care Network, New Mexico

"Many of us have attempted to bring an exploration of spiritual issues into our clinic practices, but we are not clergy and we don't have the authority to speak for God. Faith Aloud is providing the resources that fill that missing piece. I have been waiting for 40 years for someone to do what Faith Aloud is doing."

Tammi Kromenaker, Red River Women's Clinic, North Dakota

"We are so grateful to Faith Aloud for bringing their ministry to our clinic - we are able to put in a DVD, and it's as if the minister is sitting right in the room with you and the patient. I have played the DVDs for many patients, and at the end - patients will say it is exactly what they needed to hear. Faith Aloud DVDs and other materials are invaluable in our clinic - we use them daily. Faith Aloud staff are AMAZING, kind, caring & truly compassionate people."

Peg Johnston, Access for Women, New York

"Faith Aloud has created the missing link for a great number of women for whom spirituality and religion is important. The affirmation they offer has a huge impact on individuals and how they cope before, after and during an abortion. I am impressed with their ability to respond to needs quickly and innovatively, particularly their rapid response to the 40 Days of Life campaign against providers."

Ruth Arick, Choice Pursuits, Missouri

"In my consulting work I train counselors and medical staff and have found the Faith Aloud materials incredibly valuable. Staff get to work through their own religious and spiritual issues while helping women in their clinics do the same. The DVD that Rebecca Turner created for patients is one of the most powerful counseling tools available to abortion providers. I strongly support this organization and their work. There is a wonderful diversity among this group - in age, gender, ethnicity, and religious background. Each wants desperately to eliminate stigma surrounding abortion."

Sally Burgess, The Hope Clinic for Women, Illinois

"An evaluation card from a patient said, 'The Faith Aloud card by Rev. Rebecca Turner gave me the prayers I needed to make it through the procedure.' Thanks again for your loving work, Faith Aloud!"

LeRoy Carhart, MD, Abortion and Contraception Clinic of Nebraska, Bellevue, NE

"We've been using Faith Aloud materials for years, and they work. In fact, they really work. I am deeply committed to this organization because it is working directly with providers to help women."

Nancy Boothe, Feminist Women's Health Center, Atlanta, GA

"I regard Faith Aloud as a valuable resource for our Center. I know that a phone call to you will put the women we serve in touch with a well-trained clergyperson to discuss personal matters of faith and spirituality. You and your associates make it easier for our health educators and counselors to do their job and have a compassionate reliable unbiased resource committed to being fully present for them when they need it most, providing the right support in a timely manner. You've not only saved us countless hours of trying to find the right guidance for women and families with special needs but also made yourself readily accessible for many who literally have no place else to go. That easily translates into higher quality without adding to healthcare costs. It's really quite gratifying to encounter a support service that actually makes our work easier, but that is exactly what you do. I hope my donation to Faith Aloud offers some assurance that your work is making a difference and will help keep your phone lines open to serve the spiritual needs of our clients when we need you. Y'all ROCK! "

Carol Bunk, Feminist Health Center, Concord, NH

"Last Wednesday I took the 'Jesus Never Shamed Women' poster and stood in front of our protesters while they were out in front of clinic. I stayed for whole time they were there and it felt really good to be doing something positive to let them know we are proud of the work we do and have nothing to be ashamed of. "

Staff

Executive Director
The Reverend Rebecca Turner

Communications Associate
Sarah Barasch

Minister of Advocacy
The Reverend Kimberly Banks-Brown



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