

RCRC 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



RELIGIOUS
COMMUNITY *for*
REPRODUCTIVE
CHOICE

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Who We Are.

MISSION

Rooted in sacred, moral, and reproductive justice values, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC) is a multifaith, intersectional, and antiracist movement for reproductive freedom and dignity leading in spiritual companionship, curating frameworks for faith leaders, and training the next generation of activists.

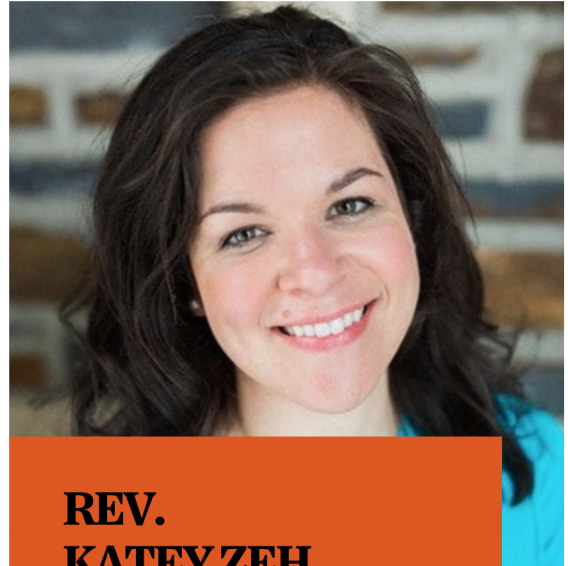
VISION

We envision a world where everyone is free to make decisions about their bodies, families, and futures with the support and care of their communities.

Letter from the CEO

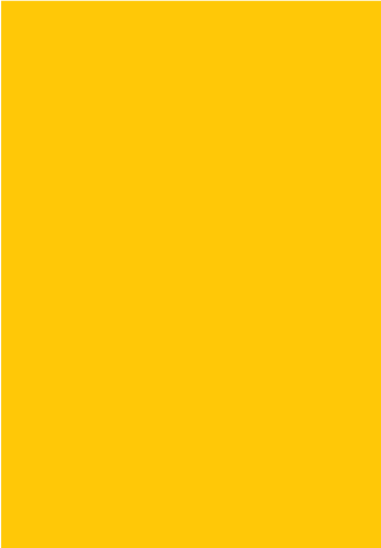
It's been a time of tremendous change in the reproductive freedom landscape and in the country as a whole. We see time and time again that circumstances can change radically on the turn of a dime, often in ways that are beyond our control.

Ever since the fall of Roe, we've watched courts, politicians, and other forms of obstruction deny individuals their bodily autonomy in horrific ways, making it increasingly harder for people to seek reproductive care with the dignity and compassion that we all deserve.



**REV.
KATEY ZEH**
CEO, RCRC

The moral and spiritual injury this causes may not always be visible to the naked eye, but it is all around us.



When the world feels like it's turned upside down, we long for an end to the disorientation. We want to right what feels wrong—and do it this very second. We want to fight, resist, rebel; perform our rage or our mindfulness or our activism.

During times like these, the Serenity Prayer calls us to the present moment to discern what must be accepted, what can and must be changed, and in what ways we can channel our energies into that work of change for ourselves and those we love. The need for our work and the call to our mission—to heal religious stigma around abortion, to stand against the

opposition misusing faith language, and to minister to the movement—are clearer and sharper than ever.

I believe our nuanced, human approach is often missing from conversations and strategies around reproductive legality and morality, and that it is RCRC's sacred duty to offer exactly this to the movement. The work of healing has become a major focus of our efforts: providing care for people seeking abortions, providing care for the people who provide care, and mending the larger tears in the systems and social fabric that have caused so much harm.



Even in the face of challenges to reproductive freedom, my faith sustains me. It reminds me that we are a community, bound together by love and a shared belief in the sacredness of every individual.

Our organization's name change this year, from Religious Coalition to **Religious Community for Reproductive Choice**, reflects this commitment. We are people of faith who use the tools we have to continue the work of advocating for, and providing, reproductive healthcare, and pursuing religious freedom and reproductive freedom together. My hope is rooted in community.

I believe that holding hope for the future connects us to the power that we do have, even when it feels hard to access. There will be a reality beyond the one that we're in and we get to help shape and determine what that is. We do have a say. We can build and grow our community. We can use theological imagination to elevate what we want to see in the world. We do not have to accept that injustice is the norm. We get to hold a vision for the world that is rooted in freedom and compassion.

Hope is a practice. Gratitude is a practice. It is an individual discipline that is magnified when practiced in community. I invite you to hold faith in hope with me.

In Solidarity,

Katey

Meeting the moment.



A new name and look...

Last year, as part of honoring our 50th anniversary of working at the intersection of faith and reproductive freedom last, we took stock of where we'd been, where we are, and where we envision going.

The landscape of this fight continues to shift and we realized that we, too, have evolved along with its demands. The makeup of our supporters—people like you!—has changed, going from the formal and hierarchical structure of organized religion of our beginnings, to a more nimble and sprawling network of individuals, communities, and grassroots groups.

With this in mind, we felt it was time to recognize in words what has been true in substance for quite a while, and we've renamed ourselves:

The Religious Community for Reproductive Choice



RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY *for* REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE



And here's our new look and logo! We aimed to craft an image that could symbolize and communicate our character as an organization:



**Inclusive,
Diverse,
Community-Driven**



**Spiritual,
Sacred,
Peaceful**



**Loving,
Welcoming,
Compassionate**

...with the same heart and commitment.

More than ever, we are set to the sacred task of dismantling and healing religiously-fueled abortion stigma and shame.

This work requires:

- Building and empowering faith communities—ones more diverse and varied than ever!
- Ensuring that people making reproductive decisions receive dignity, compassion, and community care
- Boldly affirming that people of faith have always supported reproductive freedom, and that reproductive freedom and religious freedom are inseparable

**Keep reading to see how
our values were translated
into action this year!**



Building faith communities.

In this post-Roe era, progressive people of faith must come together to gather strength and raise our voices ever louder.

Churches and congregations are no longer the sole province of the faith community. Today it can be found on academic campuses, in community groups and clubs, on the street, or even on the internet.

This year RCRC, continues our focus on building out and connecting with diverse faith communities wherever we can find them.



**Michigan
Organization for
Adolescent
Sexual Health**

✿ In 2024, we continued our collaboration with the **Michigan Organization for Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH)**, which we assisted in the year prior with developing their first ever interfaith-based youth council called MY Faith Advisory Council.

✿ We helped equip students who were **speaking out against an anti-LGBTQ+ ministry** located across the street from a Michigan college with prayers, and we joined the **MY Faith consulting committee** designed “to connect affirming faith leaders to each other and the youth council to support the challenging and sometimes isolating work of organizing from a reproductive justice lens within faith communities.”



Roe Anniversary Press Conference



“Faith and Our Reproductive Futures”

- ✿ On the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, Rev. Katey Zeh spoke at a **press conference with eleven other religious leaders** from around the state of **North Carolina** in support of access to abortion care.
- ✿ More than 75 people of faith from Christian, Jewish, and Unitarian congregations attended. The press coverage reached over 7 million people across the state.
- ✿ RCRC delivered a presentation, titled “Faith and Our Reproductive Future,” to students at a joint even with the **Lutheran School of Theology, McCormick Theological Seminary, and Catholic Theological Union**.
- ✿ We focused on **educating students about the rise of white Christian Nationalism**, and encouraged the embrace a different kind of future—one rooted in **reproductive freedom, dignity, and human flourishing**.

Dignity, compassion, and community care.

We believe we have the sacred duty to create the kind of community that affirms and supports people as they make what are often private, deeply personal, and life-changing decisions about their bodies and families.

We are dedicated to being a source of spiritual care, healing, and education for people in and affected by this movement. We stand in fellowship and solidarity with pregnant people, those who care for them, and the leaders fighting for reproductive freedom.



**Nurses for Sexual
and Reproductive
Health**



We held a training for Nurses for Sexual and Reproductive Health (NSRH) called **“Faith and Nursing: Navigating the Complexities of Spirituality within Nursing Care.”**



Our training addressed **issues of grief and shame** as they relate to spirituality and reproductive justice, and about how nursing practitioners might handle these concerns from **religious or spiritual abortion patients.**



In addition to providing a grounding in the spiritual aspects of our Compassionate Care program, this was also an opportunity for nursing students and practitioners of faith to **embrace their spiritual identities** as **beneficial to their work with patients,** especially when the need for spiritual care arises in a clinical setting.



abortions
welcome

Abortion Poetry and Storytelling

After we published the poem, the contributor wrote us to say:

“I was able to share this [poem] with my mom who was very proud. I’m grateful for the opportunity to share in spaces like the one [RCRC is] creating.”

✿ **Abortions Welcome** is a virtual companion for people seeking spiritual support before, during, and after abortion. It is meant to be a safe harbor amidst the sea of anti-abortion rhetoric on the internet.

✿ This year, we **published several new resources** to the site, including an original poem about a person’s decision to end a pregnancy and their commitment to advocating for reproductive freedom.

✿ We also added a new reflection about the experience of purchasing abortion pills online. The piece entitled, “I ordered freedom online,” describes both the technical and emotional aspects of **ordering abortion pills when living in a state with an abortion ban**.



Compassionate Care Virtual Training

This year we held our first ever **virtual Compassionate Care for the Abortion Journey** training! The event was free and open to anyone who was interested in learning about the **new barriers abortion-seekers must now face in a post-Roe era**, and being a source of comfort and strength.

Nearly 200 people registered and more than 80 participated in real time, making this one of our most popular virtual events. We had learners from all over the U.S. (plus Canada!).

These included clergy, therapists and social workers, professors and students, nurses and doctors, midwives and doulas, activists, clinic escorts, and more.

Many attendees were people of faith, and many had chosen abortion for themselves in the past.



The feedback from the training was overwhelmingly positive. Here's what some of the participants had to say:



“I was really pleased at the honesty and sincerity of the entire event. Respectful and compassionate putting the dignity of the individual at the forefront of the discussion was important to me.”

“This was one of the most amazing webinars I have attended.”

“My views were expanded with greater compassion. The women's stories were particularly moving and had an impact on my thinking.”



“This training was very insightful and also a place where some dialogue could happen and I would 100% recommend it.”

Religious and reproductive freedom.

Working with people of faith for over five decades, we know that they support reproductive freedom. Despite what a vocal minority of religious conservatives claims, the majority of Americans of faith support reproductive freedom because of our moral and religious beliefs, not in spite of them.

And we believe that faith should protect and guide people instead of being weaponized against those who hold different beliefs.



Christian Supremacy Course Launch

- ✿ This fall we launched a new course on our Religion and Repro Learning Center: **“Wrath of an Angry God’: The Rise of Christian Supremacy in the United States,”** We offered it for free to our network in the lead-up to the presidential election.
- ✿ The course explores the decades-long rise of **Christian Dominionism** and its **influence over U.S. politics** and legislation. More than one hundred thirty people enrolled in the class.



Women's Health Center Clinic Blessing

Creating **rituals of blessing for reproductive health care clinics** to affirm their work and the spaces as sacred is one of RCRC's most powerful programs.

This fall we did a blessing ritual for the staff and board of two health care clinics, **Women's Health Center of West Virginia (WHC-WV)** and **Women's Health Center of Maryland (WHC-MD)**.

For nearly fifty years, WHC-WV has served its community with comprehensive reproductive health care, including gender-affirming care and abortion care, but when the **West Virginia legislature banned abortion** in 2022, WHC-WV had to stop providing abortion care. This was a devastating loss for both the staff and the community they served.





In the wake of this crisis, the staff banded together to raise money to **open a new clinic across the state line in western Maryland**. In September of 2023, Women's Health Center of Maryland opened its doors to provide the full-spectrum of reproductive health care, including abortion care and gender-affirming care.

To honor the resilience of the staff as well as the grief they have experienced, we worked closely with their leadership team to **design an affirming ritual** that was led by **local faith leaders and members of the WHC staff**. RCRC ensured that the WV staff were able to travel the 3.5 hours to the MD clinic to participate in the blessing, which was the first time that the two staffs were together in person.

The ritual centered the stories and experiences of the staff, who expressed both devastation over and gratitude for their work caring for their communities, which includes full-spectrum reproductive health care, gender-affirming care, and harm reduction care. We were also honored to hear from one of the **original members of the Clergy Consultation Service, Rev. Jim Lewis**.



A big part of the work of dismantling and healing religiously-fueled abortion stigma involves transforming the public discourse around it.

RCRC works to loudly and proudly reclaim the moral high ground and affirm that abortion—along with all reproductive choices—and faith are not mutually exclusive, and that many theologies and faith values acknowledge the necessity and sacredness of bodily autonomy.

Below are some examples of venues that have helped carry our message forward in 2024.

The logo for The New York Times, featuring the name in a white, blackletter-style font on a black rectangular background.The logo for The Christian Century, with the words "The", "Christian", and "Century" stacked vertically in a black serif font.The logo for the Wisconsin Independent, featuring the word "the" in a small font above "WISCONSIN INDEPENDENT", which is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The logo for Religion News Service (RNS), with the letters "RNS" in a large, bold, red, sans-serif font, and "RELIGION NEWS SERVICE" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font below it.



Gratitude:

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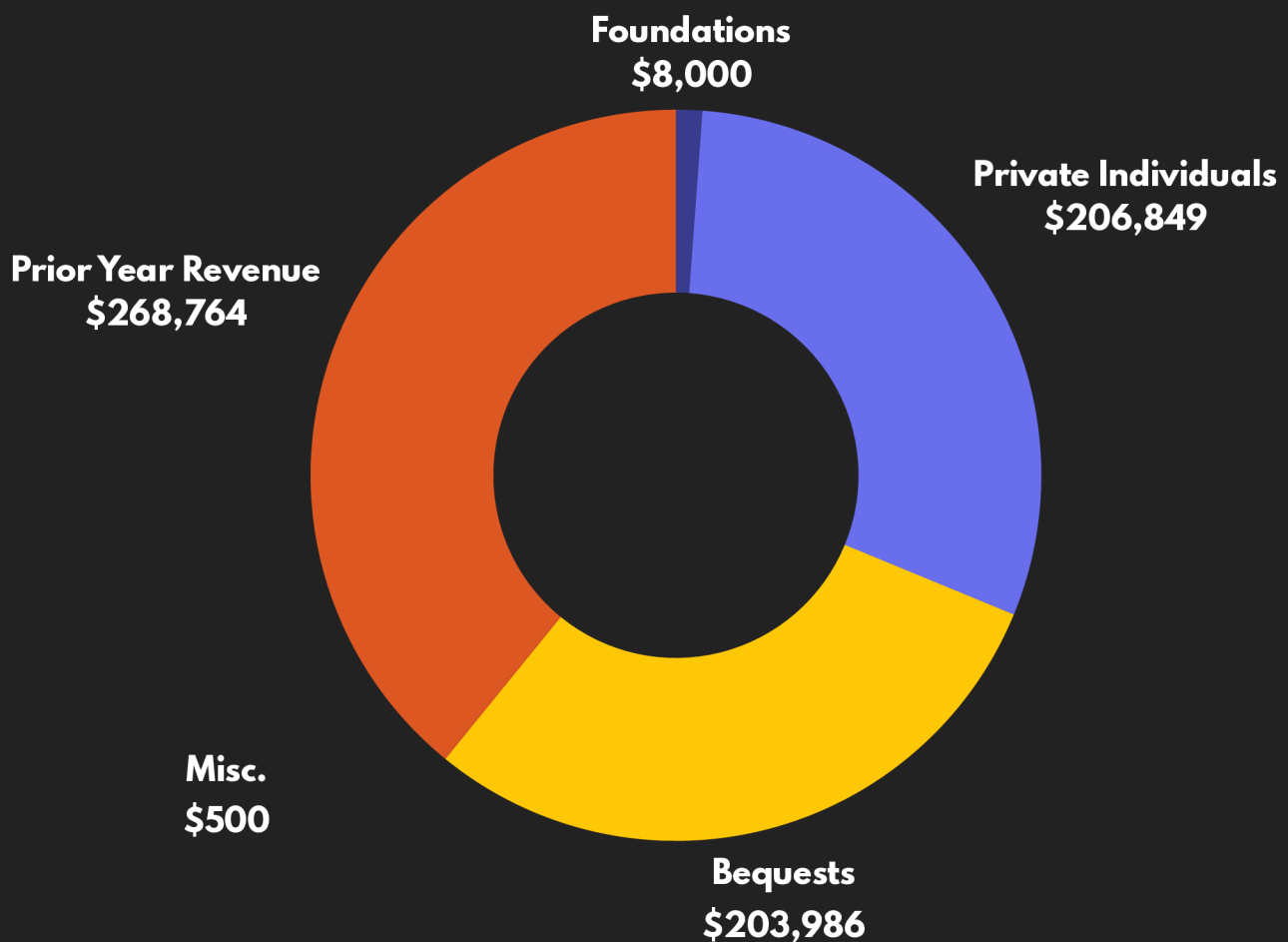
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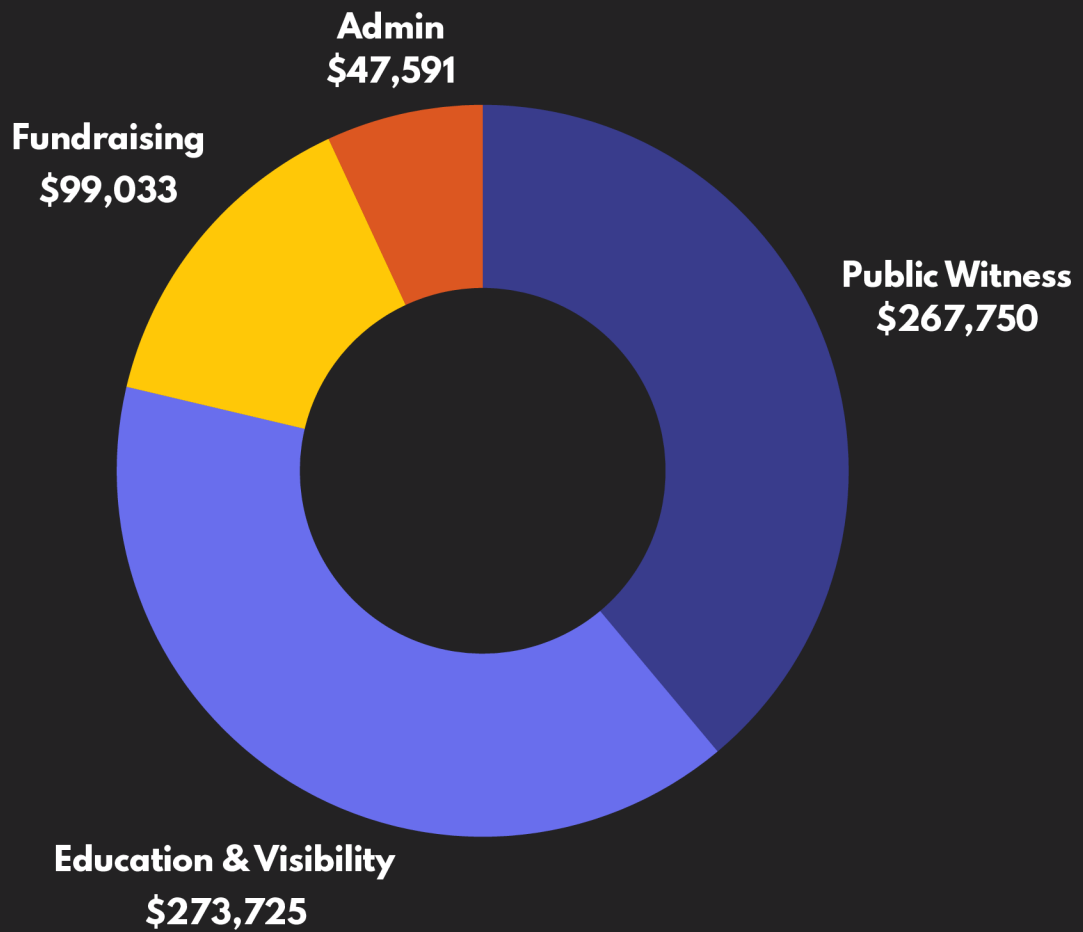
Roy W. Wolfram

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Financial Statements.



2024 Support and Revenues
\$688,099



2024 Total Expenses
\$688,099

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