



HISTORY & OVERVIEW OF ANGLICANS FOR LIFE

Anglicans for Life is the only Anglican ministry dedicated to inspiring the Anglican Church to understand and compassionately apply God's Word when addressing abortion, abstinence, adoption, euthanasia, and embryonic stem cell research.

In 1966, with a prophetic sense of abortion's influence on this country, the Rt. Rev. Joseph M. Harte of the Diocese of Arizona founded *Episcopalians for Life*. In 1973, When the United States Supreme Court ruled (Roe vs. Wade) to make abortion legal for the entire nine months of pregnancy, Episcopalians nationwide gathered to say, "This is desperately wrong." Chapters formed in dioceses across the country.

On December 6th, 1983, Judith Fink, The Rev. Paul Mericle, The Very Rev. John Rodgers, Rebecca Spanos, and Kathleen Sweet signed Articles of Incorporation making The National Organization of Episcopalians for Life Research and Education Foundation (**NOEL**) official. The first Board of Directors met in February 1984 to elect Bishop Harte Chairman Emeritus and the Rt. Rev. John Howe (then rector of Truro, Fairfax) as Board Chairman.

From 1983 to 1996, NOEL operated from Fairfax, Virginia where it published newsletters and developed chapters for local parish grassroots activism. Through the work of NOEL Board Members, Presidents, Chapter Leaders, and Volunteers, NOEL's ministry reached nationwide with the love of Christ. Educating Episcopalians about the abortion industry practices and seeking to influence the church by introducing pro-life resolutions at General Conventions was the hallmark of NOEL's efforts during its Fairfax tenure.

1996 was a year of change for NOEL; the board elected the Rev. Geoffrey W. Chapman Chairman of the Board after a brief chairmanship by the Rev. Rebecca Spanos. The headquarters moved from Virginia to St. Stephen's Church, Sewickley, Pennsylvania where the Rev. Geoff Chapman is rector. In 1998, the board appointed Georgette Forney as the fifth President of NOEL a position formerly named "Executive Secretary" and "Executive Director". She followed in the footsteps of her successors, Mrs. Louisa W. Rucker, Mrs. Mary Ann Dacey, Mrs. Marilyn Heigl, and Mrs. Dana Henry. In addition to her marketing background, Mrs. Forney brought her own personal abortion experience and healing to the ministry. Under her influence, raising awareness about both abortion prevention and practical resources for after-care that offer the mercy of Jesus Christ have developed and expanded.

In 2000, NOEL developed a prayer team that now has over 240 members. The prayer team intercedes on behalf of the work of ministry and the many issues it addresses. In 2001, NOEL created the Parish Point Person Program that allowed individuals to provide educational materials regarding life issues to people within their diocese, church, and community.

In conjunction with Priests for Life, NOEL launched the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, in 2003, to educate the public that abortion physically, emotionally and spiritually hurts women, men, and others involved. The Campaign is a non-denominational outreach with no legal or political agenda. It also seeks to promote abortion recovery programs to let people know that there is hope and healing after abortion. The Campaign has created opportunities to work with the many other pro-life organizations in the USA and on an international level.

In 2003, the Rev. D. Lorne Coyle was elected as the new Board Chairman, and the board voted to change the organizations official name to NOEL, without any acronym. The name change reflected NOEL's broadening outreach to the wider Anglican Church body and the non-Christian.

In February 2004, NOEL's Board of Directors adopted the following statements and strategies to guide its international ministry:

NOEL's *purpose* is to be "a life-affirming ministry in the worldwide Anglican Communion." NOEL's *mission* is to "advocate the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death in the Church and society." Furthermore, NOEL has a *vision* to "stand for the value of every human life as revealed in Scripture" and "equip people to develop a biblical response to issues that threaten human life."

We are a fellowship of Anglican Christians who believe the following four statements:

- God values each human life and gives it purpose.
- God ordains marriage and family for the creation and nurturing of human life.
- God desires that we respect and love each person, especially the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable.
- God calls us to minister to people in ways that affirm the sanctity of human life.

In September of 2005, the NOEL Board of Directors adopted a Declaration of Life Statement as a recommended guideline for anyone seeking to set a standard. The statement is: *God is the creator of every human life; therefore, from conception to natural death we will protect and respect every person. Furthermore, we recognize that the unjustified taking of life is sinful.*

In 2006, Ray Yorke, a lay person from Rhode Island, was elected to be the new Chairman of the Board. Before the year ended, the board decided to change the ministry's name from **NOEL** to **Anglicans for Life**. Though the name has changed, the mission will remain the same. Relationships remain the same also. Anglicans for Life will continue to serve those in the Episcopal Church (TEC) as well as all the other continuing groups. Anglicans for Life will work with everyone who affirms the sanctity of life.

Anglicans for Life will employ the following strategies to address our belief statements:

1. Prevent abortion by affirming adoption and marriage as alternatives to abortion; encourage people/churches to develop emotional and financial resources to help pregnant mothers, and promote abstinence for pregnancy prevention.
2. Help people hurt by abortion by raising awareness about the physical and emotional pain experienced afterwards and offer resources for healing.
3. Help people who contact Anglicans for Life to become active in life ministry/outreach.
4. Educate Episcopalians and Anglicans about proposed policies and legislation, so they can be informed, participating citizens working to protect and affirm human life.
5. Market and network Anglicans for Life so that people (Episcopal Church, Anglican Affiliates, Seminaries, and pro-life community) are aware of the organization, its resources, campaigns, and projects.
6. Develop and maintain outstanding resources, materials, and website to educate, inform, and activate people to protect and respect life.
7. Employ good day-to-day management practices and on-going fundraising to support our strategies.

Most of our ministry work focuses on the first two strategies—preventing abortion and helping those hurt by abortion. We approach these two strategies from the perspective of the woman as well as the unborn baby. We believe that by helping pregnant women we can empower them to choose life for their babies. Furthermore, we have found the voice of women with abortion experience to be the most influential in helping people to see that abortion harms women and kills unborn babies. Anglicans for Life wants to extend the love of Christ to those women and their families.

We also approach the abortion issue from a loving, life-affirming perspective which opens the door to those who may not identify themselves as 'pro-life,' but who are willing to help women. Anglicans for Life discourages descriptions like 'anti-abortion' and 'pro-life' to describe our work as it gives people an excuse to dismiss us.

Instead, we have found that our hearts are changed we they share in the experience of helping a woman embrace life and give birth.

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