

Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
 122 W. Franklin Ave. Suite 303  
 Minneapolis MN 55404  
 612-870-0974 Fax  
 612-870-4361  
 info@mnrcc.org  
 www.mnrcc.org

## SUPPORT OUR WORK

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to support work for religious freedom and reproductive justice.

- \$500
- \$100
- \$35
- other \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ (include area code)  
 EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check here to remain anonymous.

Detach and send to:  
 MN Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
 122 W. Franklin Ave. #303, Minneapolis, MN 55404  
 Contribute by credit card online at  
 www.mnrcc.org

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## A Letter from the Executive Director

**A**s the new Executive Director of the Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (MNRCCRC), I am humbled to have the honor to lead this organization and build on the tremendous foundation laid by previous Executive Directors. There is no doubt that this is an exciting moment for MNRCCRC as we begin a new chapter in our story. I am writing to both introduce myself and to thank you for your continued support.

I grew up in Kenya, where abortion is illegal and where I saw women die from botched, back street abortions. This broke my heart, and I became a strong supporter of comprehensive sexuality education and legalizing abortion to prevent these senseless deaths. When I moved to Minnesota, after living in New Jersey for seven years, I was thrilled to discover MNRCCRC, an organization that has allowed me to combine my faith with my advocacy for women's rights. Two years ago, I joined the MNRCCRC Board of Directors, and as I've worked closely with others in the faith and pro-choice communities, I've been continually impressed by the unique perspective that MNRCCRC contributes to both of these communities.

Your commitment to MNRCCRC and your investment in our work has enabled and will continue to enable us to:

*(continued on next page)*

## Upcoming *Our Whole Lives* Trainings

*Our Whole Lives* helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. These trainings are for adults who want to teach the OWL curriculum in their congregations or a community setting.

### Junior/Senior High Combined OWL

**When:** Friday, October 1, to Sunday, October 3, 2010

**Time:** 5:30 pm Friday evening to 4:00 pm Sunday afternoon

**Where:** Rochester, MN— First Unitarian Universalist Church

**Registration Deadline:** September 10, 2010

Registrations will be accepted from September 11 to September 27 only if space is available.

**Fee:** On or before September 10: **\$180**

September 11– September 27: \$200 (if space is available)

### Grades K-1 & 4-6 Combined OWL

**When:** Friday, October 15 and Saturday, October 16, 2010

**Time:** 12:00 noon on Friday to 9:00 pm Saturday

**Where:** St. Paul, MN— Macalester Plymouth United Church

**Registration Deadline:** September 24, 2010

Registrations will be accepted from September 25 to October 11 only if space is available.

**Fee:** On or before September 24: **\$150**

September 25– October 11: \$180 (if space is available)

Fee includes all snacks and meals, including meals, including lunch on Friday. Fee **does not** include curriculum.

To register: <http://www.psduua.org>

## Letter from the Executive Director, *continued*

- Provide free, confidential counseling to women and couples experiencing unplanned and problem pregnancies.
- Train hundreds of youth and adults in comprehensive, faith-based sexuality curriculum.
- Ensure the presence of pro-choice leaders in our State government and faith communities, leaders who talk about women's health in the context of love and compassion rather than fear and control.

There will be many exciting opportunities for you to get involved with our programming as early as this fall when we will host the MNRRCRC Annual Meeting in November.

Whether you live near the Twin Cities or not, please call or email me if you are interested in partnering with us and contributing your skills and passion to ensuring that the voices of religious pro-choice people can be heard loud and clear.

I encourage your involvement and ideas as well as your continued financial support. Please feel free to contact me at [execdir@mnrcc.org](mailto:execdir@mnrcc.org) with your comments.

Warmly,

Naweichi Temu



## Chipping Away at Reproductive Rights

Some of us have lived most, or all, of our lives in a society where abortion has been safe and legal. We might even take it for granted that it will always remain so. But now more than ever, we need to renew our commitment to reproductive rights and let our congress people and our religious leaders know that we demand access to safe and legal abortions, affordable contraception, and comprehensive sexuality education.

According to NARAL Pro-Choice America, between 1995 and 2008, states enacted 581 anti-choice legislative measures. And according to National Public Radio, 350 bills to restrict abortion were introduced and “more than a dozen states passed new laws aimed at limiting abortion” this year alone.

A recent Oklahoma law—though it has since been blocked—requires women seeking abortions to have an ultrasound and hear a description of the fetus. A similar law just passed in Missouri and will take effect on August 28<sup>th</sup>. In April, Nebraska banned most abortions after 20 weeks gestation on the basis of “fetal pain.” And in March, Utah, a state that already has restrictive abortion laws, passed a law criminalizing “reckless behavior” that leads to miscarriage.

These new laws are disheartening, but they are not the only thing threatening women's reproductive rights; access to abortions is also a major issue. Fewer doctors are providing abortions in fewer clinics and hospitals across the United States. Recent efforts to train more doctors to provide abortions have made a difference, but access to these doctors is still a problem. The recent *New York Times* article “The New Abortion Providers” cited the Guttmacher Institute, which stated that

in the decade after *Roe vs. Wade*, “the number of sites providing abortion across the country almost doubled from about 1,500 to more than 2,900. But by 2000 the number shrank back to about 1,800 — a decline of 37 percent from 1982.”

Now is not a time for complacency. More than ever, our medical schools and politicians and faith leaders need to hear our voices raised in support of reproductive rights. Now more than ever, we need to fight for women's rights and for increased access to abortions.

For more information on how you can help, email [MNRCCRC at execdir@mnrcc.org](mailto:MNRCCRC@execdir@mnrcc.org).



## Don't forget to vote!



The State General Election will be held on Tuesday, November 2.

For a list of pro-choice candidates endorsed by NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota, visit [www.prochoiceminnesota.org](http://www.prochoiceminnesota.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Fall 2010*

### MNRCCRC Annual Meeting

Thursday, November 11, 2010

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Good Samaritan Methodist Church, Edina

RSVP: 612-870-0974 or [execdir@mnrcc.org](mailto:execdir@mnrcc.org)

More information will be sent via e-newsletter

For more information about any of our events, email [execdir@mnrcc.org](mailto:execdir@mnrcc.org) or call 612-870-0974.

## STAY INFORMED!

If you'd like to keep your finger on the pulse of what's happening with reproductive health care and comprehensive sexuality education across the country, sign up for the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice's Action Updates.

Visit [www.rcrc.org](http://www.rcrc.org) and click on "Get Involved" and "Action Center."



### ***Governing Members***

American Baptists for Choice  
Association of Universalist Women  
Midwest Federation of Temple  
Sisterhoods  
Mt. Zion Temple Sisterhood  
National Council of Jewish  
Women, State Public Affairs  
Temple Israel Sisterhood  
Unitarian Universalist Association,  
Prairie Star District  
United Church of Christ, Minnesota  
Conference  
United Methodist Church,  
Minnesota Conference  
United Methodist Church,  
Minnesota Conference,  
Commission on the Status and Role  
of Women (COSROW)  
United Methodist Church,  
Minnesota Conference, Executive  
Committee of the United Methodist  
Women

### **Board Officers & Staff**

Executive Director  
**Naweichi Temu**

Co-Chair  
**Rev. T. Michael Rock**

Financial Consultant  
**Julie Champ**

Co-Chair  
**Kelli Clement**

Secretary/Treasurer  
**Joyce Prudden**

### **HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

If you are interested in volunteering for the Minnesota Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice or if you would like to receive our e-newsletter, please email [execdir@mnrcc.org](mailto:execdir@mnrcc.org).

# From Our Board of Directors

**M**NRCRC had a booth in the exhibit halls of the two denominational conventions recently held in Minneapolis: the Unitarian Universalist Association and the Presbyterian Church USA. Thousands of people passed by, took literature and buttons, and validated the critical need for our faithful, pro-choice work.

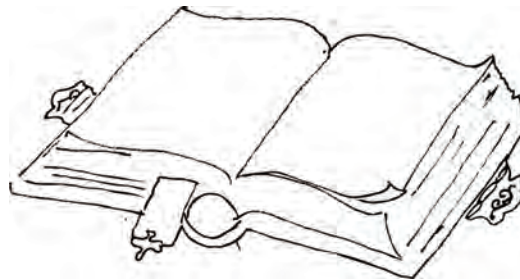
While I was staffing the MNRRCRC booth at one of these conventions, a woman walked by once or twice, then tentatively approached. I had been talking to visitors all afternoon about faith and reproductive justice, and I knew my spiel had grown a little too pat. This woman looked at the RCRC banner, the literature and buttons and said, "What do you mean, religious and pro-choice? How does that work?"

Her earnestness, the longing in her eyes for this to be true, made me respond to her in kind. I talked about how RCRC has helped me articulate a theology of reproductive justice that exists because of my faith, not in spite of it. I talked with her about how RCRC has helped me find other like-minded religious people from many denominations who share this passion, and how we build personal and political power through our faithful commitments in our work. The woman listened to what I had to say and picked up a few brochures. When she pinned the purple *Pro-faith, Pro-family, Pro-choice* button on her shirt, her eyes filled with tears. "I never knew this secret part of my story could be part of my faith," she said. "Thank you."

The work of RCRC makes a difference in people's lives, bringing shame out of shadows, replacing it with love and a sense of justice. We are committed to maintaining MNRRCRC as a healthy and vital organization. Following the happy news of the appointment of Naweichi Temu as our new Executive Director, the Board has been

engaged in focusing our work and creating Board committees to help carry out 4 key areas: Programming, Events, Finance, and Personnel. We welcome volunteers to populate these committees and help move our crucial work forward. If you would like to contribute to the hands-on work of MNRRCRC, please contact either T. Michael or myself. We would be happy to talk with you about ways you can serve that activate your skill-set and passion and respect your time.

Your continued support will help this unique organization remain a significant force in the religious and pro-choice communities. Your support is crucial for the women, men and children who face reproductive injustice every day. It is crucial for the politicians who *want* to hear from pro-choice people of faith. It is crucial for the youth who need age-appropriate, comprehensive sexuality education. Good things are happening in this organization. Join us.



Faithfully,  
Kelli Clement  
Board Co-Chair

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