

## Focus on Life Dinner

### Packed venue hears attorney John Bursch



*KRTL president Jean Talanda and John Bursch*



*Xander Yoder, 2024 Oratory Contest Winner*

Some 320 people packed the Kalamazoo First Assembly of God's Ministry Center on May 2 to enjoy the fellowship of dear friends, to enjoy an excellent meal, and to hear the encouraging words from our guest speaker: attorney John Bursch of Alliance Defending Freedom.

The event was special from the start. Bishop Edward Lohse, the new bishop of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, offered the invocation. For many in attendance, this was their first time seeing or meeting him. Our 2024 High School Oratory Contest winner, Xander Yoder, presented a thoughtful and insightful speech on the topic of euthanasia. KRTL president Jean Talanda gave introductory remarks and also offered a tribute to long-time board secretary, Cecelia Roberts, one of the founding members of Kalamazoo Right to Life, who served as secretary from 1974 to 1994.

John Bursch's keynote address focused on parental rights, now under assault by Governor Whitmer and her Democratic allies in the Michigan legislature

who are determined to repeal our parental consent law. But first, John talked about recent developments taking place at the US Supreme Court. Alliance Defending Freedom has been actively involved in two recent oral arguments before the Supreme Court: the appeal regarding the abortion pill mifepristone and the FDA's relaxation of the pill's use in first trimester abortions, and the most recent case coming from Idaho. In the mifepristone case, many women are taking the pill without the benefit of an in-person physician consultation. As a result, a significant percentage of women are being admitted to hospital emergency rooms for abortion-related complications. In this second case, the Biden Justice Department is demanding that Idaho hospitals provide abortions for women facing medical emergencies based on a 1986 law: the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA). Idaho contends that its 2023 Defense of Life Act adheres to the Dobbs decision giving states the right to establish abortion policy. Decisions in both cases will come this summer.



*John Bursch of Alliance Defending Freedom*

In discussing his central topic of parental rights, John Bursch talked about rights and responsibilities. Pro-abortion advocates focus solely on rights—the right to abortion—and disregard the fact that along with our free will to follow or reject God’s plan for our lives comes the consequences of behavior contrary to His will. We must take responsibility for our actions. Parents have the legal right and moral responsibility to protect their children, to instruct them in right living, to instill spiritual values, and defend them from physical and emotional harm. He stressed the need to be advocates for our children, to lead by example, and to fight against outside forces that want to drive a wedge between parent and child over the issue of abortion.

Everyone was treated to another wonderful meal compliments of Mike Leeuw and his very professional team at EMA Catering. Likewise, the delicious dessert was donated by the Harding’s Market on South Westnedge in Portage. What a treat!

Thanks to the Light of Christ Academy in Augusta and the St. Monica Youth Group for sending some two dozen students to help set up and then “tear down” after the dinner. Your hard work made the dinner another great success. Wow!



## Editorial: GOP lawmakers complicit when Democrats repeal Arizona’s 1864 pro-life law

*Rob Karrer, KRTL vice-president*

As reported in last month’s issue of Lifeline, the Arizona Supreme Court made a bold and courageous decision to restore the state’s 1864 law that had prohibited abortion throughout all nine months of pregnancy, except for the life of the mother. The ruling was based on the 2022 Dobbs decision that over- turned *Roe v. Wade* and returned the issue of abortion back to the states.

As expected, pro-abortion Democrats were appalled, and within a week they had introduced legislation in the state House to repeal the old law. Even though Republicans controlled the lower chamber 31 to 29, the bill passed because two GOP House members voted with all the Democrats. The same situation transpired when the state Senate approved the bill on May 1. Two Republican

senators voted with their Democratic colleagues to pass the bill.

What galls me most is that the Republican majority had the opportunity to defeat this repeal bill and preserve the law, and thus protect countless lives. But a few weak-kneed lawmakers— probably pro-life and endorsed by Arizona Right to Life, caved to pressure brought on by liberal constituents, the media, and even from some national Republicans who feared a backlash in the November election.

If we believe that life begins at conception, if we believe that abortion is a form of killing (or murder), if we believe in the scientific and medical fact that life in the womb is human, if we believe that all of us are created in the image of God and that God has given each one of us unique gifts and talents and great capacities to love, then we **MUST NOT COMPROMISE**. These Arizona lawmakers had within their grasp the power to defeat this bill. Yet, when it was time to stand tall and defend the right to life of innocent babies, they compromised. To their shame, they compromised and are complicit.

## We Need You!

If you are dedicated and committed to saving babies, and looking for something new and rewarding, then we are looking for you!

Kalamazoo Right to Life is in need of more board members.

We meet the third Monday of each month at the Father Bart Hall at St. Mary Catholic Church, 939 Charlotte Ave, Kalamazoo, 49048. The meetings last from 6 PM to 7:30-8 PM.

**We are also in need of a new board secretary to take meeting minutes. Filling this position is our most urgent need.**  
**If interested, call or text Rob Karrer at 269-599-4954.**

## RLM Legislative Day honors Barb Listing Attendees hear Wesley Smith talk about euthanasia

Every year Right to Life of Michigan hosts an annual Legislative Day. Genevieve Marnon, RLM's Legislative Director, updates everyone on current and proposed legislation. Pro-life lawmakers are invited to attend the lunch where affiliate leaders can discuss current bills with their local legislators. A guest speaker gives a talk during a morning session. This year was no exception.

Genevieve spoke about pro-abortion bills that would legalize physician-assisted suicide. She also warned that the governor and Democrats in Lansing are eager to repeal our laws on parental consent, informed consent, and the 24-hour waiting period.

Wesley Smith, one of the pro-life movement's most prominent experts on euthanasia addressed the issue, more important than ever since Democrats in Lansing have introduced four bills that would legalize physician-assisted suicide. In his introductory remarks, Smith stated that those favoring euthanasia believe that "compassionate care" for individuals suffering during the final stages of life should include physician-assisted suicide—that death or killing is a reasonable answer to human suffering. The goal is to normalize assisted suicide. Legislation, whether in America or Europe, is progressive. Once euthanasia is permitted for terminal patients, advocates favor expanding the categories: for the chronically ill, for people with disabilities, and finally, for handicapped newborns. In fact, there is no age limit for euthanizing children in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Instead, Smith supports hospice care—genuine compassionate care. People facing death need to know that they are not a burden to society. They are cherished members of our families. They deserve to pass into eternity with loved ones present. Doctors are instructed to "do no harm." Death with dignity IS NOT taking poison to hasten death.

During the afternoon session, RLM staff honored Barb Listing, who stepped down as president after 43 years at the helm. Attendees were treated to testimonials and a moving video featuring Barb down through the years. Barb thanked everyone. She encouraged all affiliate leaders to pray for and support new president Amber Roseboom. Many tears were shed...not in sadness...but in thankfulness for what God has done through Barb Listing, a giant in the national pro-life movement.

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## If My Pro-Abortion Niece Knew How Close She Came to Being Aborted . . .

Mallory was the second unwanted child of unwed parents Paul and Tanya, who had an erratic relationship. In a twist of fate, Mallory now desperately wants a second child.

So much so that she and her husband paid \$25,000 to have eight of their offspring conceived in a petri dish. They linger in a state of arrested development in a cryo-preservation freezer. Four will be implanted in Mallory's surrogate "mother" in the hope that at least one son or daughter survives. The sibling embryos who die in the process are the cost of a second child, not to mention \$90,000 to rent a womb for nine months. To Mallory's dismay, her first surrogate balked when Mallory insisted that she "abort the baby if genetic testing indicates any imperfection." If Mallory knew that as an embryo she was "this close" to being aborted, would she think twice about sacrificing so many of her own embryos? Would she

consider donating the leftover, frozen embryos to infertile couples, or consider adoption instead of surrogacy and possible abortion? Would she wonder why she wasn't aborted? For some reason, before Tanya scheduled the abortion, Paul drove long distance to consult his brother, Tim – a father of two who avoided touchy subjects and personal confrontation. Tim was so taken aback by the thought of his niece or nephew being killed by an abortionist, he couldn't think of the right things to say. With his eyes, he asked his wife to try. Sensing that this was the baby's last chance, she gulped and prayed for help. Since

Paul wasn't religious, she focused on Tanya: "Paul, when you left for two years, Tanya worked really hard to raise your son and become a neonatal nurse, so she could support him. She loves her job, because she helps premature babies survive – many the same age as the baby she's carrying. How can she help preemies thrive knowing she had her own preemie killed? My post-abortive friend has to avoid being near babies because it triggers her abortion trauma. Can Tanya deal with that?" Paul didn't respond. Fearing the worst, Tim broke the tense silence. "Paul, he said quietly, "if you abort your baby, you're not my brother anymore." Tanya and Paul married and have five grown children. Hard as it was, 26 years ago, they let a tiny, unseen embryo live. To their surprise, their "little one" brought them together and taught them the meaning of marriage and sacrificial love. If Mallory knew, would she be grateful enough to love her "little ones" as her parents loved her?