

PEARL, MISSISSIPPI, TAKES THE FIRST STEP IN BECOMING A SANCTUARY FOR LIFE

10/17/2019 · 4 COMMENTS

By Sarah Quale – On October 1, 2019, the Board of Aldermen of Pearl, Mississippi, adopted a resolution to become a “safe city for pre-born children”—the first phase of the Personhood Alliance’s Sanctuaries for Life initiative. Two weeks later, on October 15th, Pearl City Hall was packed to capacity with supporters who came to thank local officials and rally together to begin the work of Phase 2.

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“This is what grassroots activism, church engagement, and Christian statesmanship at the local level looks like,” says Les Riley, president of Personhood Mississippi, the Personhood Alliance affiliate organization that is helping to lead and organize the Sanctuaries for Life initiative in Mississippi. “We now have several cities and counties looking to follow in Pearl’s footsteps.”

Riley notes that the “Safe City Pearl” resolution was adopted on the same day the nearby Jackson city council passed a buffer zone ordinance to limit free speech outside the state’s only remaining abortion facility; an action for which the Jackson city council is currently being sued.

In stark contrast to that ordinance, Pearl’s resolution recognizes the “humanity of the pre-born child” and “urges the citizens of Pearl to encourage the humane treatment of all human beings, including the pre-born child, as well as to promote and defend the dignity of all human life.”

This resolution lays the groundwork for Pearl to pass its own ordinances to protect and honor human life, not participate in its destruction.

The capacity crowd at Pearl City Hall on October 15th, who came to show their support for the Board’s passage of the first step, included pastors and community members from 14 local churches of varying denominations. Pastor Ryan Sullivan of Grace Community Church, who championed the effort in Pearl, addressed the Board of Aldermen to thank and pray for them. Pearl mayor Jake Windham closed the meeting with remarks to encourage them:

“We’re public officials, but if you live out your worldview as a Christian, it should be shown in your government.”

Mayor Windham acknowledged that there may be backlash as the effort moves forward, but said, “If you stand for the Lord, that’s what matters.”

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Pastor Sullivan notes that the desire to establish Pearl as a safe city was birthed out of the community's compassion for pre-born children and their families.

"The kingdoms of men often oppose the compassion and righteousness of Christ's Kingdom, and nowhere is that more clearly seen than in the issue of abortion. We hope to bring as much of the compassion and righteousness of Christ into this dark world as possible."

Sullivan is helping to expand the coalition of pastors and community members who attended the meeting and who have [publicly endorsed Pearl's commitment](#) to protecting pre-born children, under the leadership of the mayor and the aldermen.

"We are thankful for this initial step in a process that will, we hope, strengthen Pearl to truly live out this resolution. We are hopeful that many other cities in Mississippi will also stand for what is right, thus compelling our state government to take notice and end the atrocity of abortion under their jurisdiction."

According to Personhood Alliance president Gualberto Garcia Jones, the Personhood Alliance's three-step Sanctuaries for Life initiative provides a blueprint for towns [and counties](#) who want to "divest from the culture of death and invest in a culture of life." As Pearl looks to begin Phase 2 of this initiative, Garcia Jones provides some context:

"Phase 1 of our strategy is the initial resolution, which simply establishes the moral and legal foundation for becoming a sanctuary for life. That foundation is acted upon in Phase 2, where churches, local government, and community and ministry leaders work together to educate the community about the personhood of pre-born children, build a network of local services and solutions that honor life and family, and prepare the local officials for Phase 3. In that final phase, they pass local ordinances to exercise their constitutional authority and ignore the unjust ruling of Roe v. Wade."

The Personhood Alliance has [25 affiliate organizations across the country](#) who are all working in different ways to support the [Sanctuaries for Life initiative](#). Several affiliates are actively working to bring sanctuaries into their states.

To learn more about the city of Pearl's ongoing efforts, visit the [Safe City Pearl website](#).

*Sarah Quale is president of Personhood Alliance Education, the educational arm of the Personhood Alliance, and the author of the [Foundations online pro-life curriculum](#). She is a member of the International Christian Visual Media Association and Christian Women in Media and is the founder of Educe® online learning.*

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**Sarah**

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