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Evangelicals push 'Theology of Sex,' abortion reduction

by Adelle M. Banks by Religion News Service

The National Association of Evangelicals May 20 launched an initiative to reduce abortions by promoting a "Theology of Sex" for churches and pledging to find common ground with opponents on abortion.

"There's a sense that, whatever our laws are, abortion is a problem because of the underlying issues of how we treat sex," said Galen Carey, director of government affairs for the Washington-based umbrella organization.

NAE leaders have concluded that churches are not doing a "good job" of teaching about sex and marriage and should better address the high percentage of cohabiting unmarried young adults, including many evangelicals.

"Addressing that subject will do a lot, we think, to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies and the number of abortions," Carey said.

A Gallup poll commissioned by the NAE found that 90 percent of evangelicals consider "hormonal contraceptives" to be morally acceptable, and three-quarters consider abortion and unmarried sex to be morally wrong. Less than a third -- 30 percent -- think national religious leaders are doing a good or very good job at addressing the issue of abortion.

NAE officials have planned nationwide forums to promote dialogue about abortion reduction. Carey hopes they will include academics, counselors, teachers and representatives of pregnancy resource centers.

"These conversations should build on our shared concerns for human dignity, protecting children and promoting healthy families and communities," the NAE said in a resolution.

Its new 24-page "Theology of Sex" booklet declares "Yes, sex is good!" within the context of heterosexual marriage and says that "God is forming a new life in his image" in both planned and unplanned pregnancies.

"Sex is a responsible act only in a relationship in which the couple is willing to care for any children that can come from that union," it states.

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