THE RIGHT TO LIFE

Association of Thunder Bay and Area

LIFE – Precious at all Stages

SPRING / SUMMER 2026

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AGM 2026 FEATURES KEYNOTE SPEAKER AMANDA ACHTMAN, FOUNDER OF DYING TO MEET YOU ORGANIZATION

The 53rd Annual General Meeting of the Right to Life Association of Thunder Bay and Area was held on Saturday, April 25th at Summit Church with keynote presenter Amanda Achtman of Dying to Meet You.

This year, a new format for the annual event included the business meeting during the morning, followed by the keynote speaker, presentations by those spearheading local projects, and the latest movie from Euthanasia Prevention Coalition. We received good feedback about the new format. Presentations can be viewed at: https://thunderbay.life/amanda-achtman-in-thunder-bay/

RUN YOUR RACE

By Amanda Achtman

It was a joy to visit Thunder Bay for my first time at the invitation of the Thunder Bay Right to Life Association. Since 2023, I have been on a cross-Canada mission, working to prevent euthanasia and encourage hope.

This summer marks one decade since the legalization of euthanasia/MAID. Before 2016, if a doctor or nurse deliberately ended a patient's life, they would have been prosecuted. But Canada created an exception to the criminal code offense of homicide in order to exempt doctors and nurses from prosecution. That's why I think that Canada's euthanasia law seems to have been devised to protect professionals, not patients.

When most people think of euthanasia, they think of someone suffering physical pain who wants to die. But, interestingly, "pain or the fear of pain" does not even make the list of the top five kinds of suffering leading people to request euthanasia. The main kinds of suffering leading to the request are existential – loss of meaning, loss of autonomy, loss of independence, perceived loss of dignity, feeling like a burden.

While many people in our country lack adequate health care, euthanasia does not so much represent a medical crisis as it represents a crisis of meaning. Most of the people opting for euthanasia are "white, worried, and wealthy" but the effects of widespread euthanasia are also impacting minorities, people with disabilities, and those living in poverty.

Despite the reasons people are opting for euthanasia being largely psycho-social, many of those asking a doctor or nurse practitioner to take their life are, of course, contending with serious illnesses like cancer, ALS, MS, and other challenging conditions.

This makes me think about how I first learned about cancer. Like most Canadians, I grew up with the Terry Fox story. Each year, we would watch a video at school about his life and his Marathon of Hope. Each year, I would ask friends and family members to make

pledges in support of the run that I would do with all my classmates to raise money for cancer research. I remember running the school run differently than how I ran during soccer or tag; this was a run that really meant something. I always felt capable of pushing myself harder, even as a little kid, because of Terry's story. But now, when someone hears the word "cancer", will they think "Terry Fox" or "MAID"?

We have before us two rival visions: a marathon of hope that inspires successive generations or a despair that defeats us before the finish line.

The day after the AGM, Debbie DeBruyne brought me to the Terry Fox Memorial and Lookout, commemorating the spot where Terry had to end his Marathon of Hope. But, because he ran the race of his life and illness so honourably, Terry's run did not actually end there. This past February, it was announced that more than $1 billion dollars has been raised for cancer research because of Terry's legacy.

Fortunately, we don't have to run all the way across Canada to run our race well. But each of us, by our sufferings and how we bear them, sends a message to those we love, to our local community, and to successive generations. No matter what we suffer, there is always someone else who has suffered more than us. With this perspective, we can cheer each other on, help one another up, and create a culture where natural death will be our personal finish line.

Amanda Achtman is the founder of Dying to Meet You, a project of cultural renewal to prevent euthanasia and encourage hope. For more, visit: DyingToMeetYou.com

OTTAWA NATIONAL MARCH FOR LIFE HUGE SUCCESS

On Thursday, May 14, 2026, the 29th annual National March for Life (MFL), organized by Campaign Life Coalition (CLC), took place in Ottawa with thousands of pro-life individuals in attendance, some representing pro-life groups and organizations. This year's theme was "Follow Me".

MFL activities span a week and typically include Masses and prayer services, Candlelight Vigil, Rally on the Hill, Rose Dinner Gala, exhibits by pro-life/pro-family organizations, and a Youth Summit.

Since the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide in 2016, the March has also sounded the alarm over the steadily increasing number of vulnerable citizens killed by medical professionals under the euphemism "MAiD" or "Medical Assistance in Dying". During his presentation at the Rally on Parliament Hill, Alex Schadenberg of Euthanasia Prevention Coalition, revealed the sad statistic that over 100,000 Canadians have been killed by euthanasia.

Each year Thunder Bay RTL offers a subsidy to those who want to attend. Those receiving subsidies are asked to report on their experience, in order to share the experience and their takeaways with our members. This year, three Thunder Bay RTL members attended and their full reports can be found on our website thunderbay.life.

In addition to Alex Schadenberg, many others, including clergy, politicians, and leaders of pro-life organizations, spoke during the pre-march rally. Ales Primc, who was a key organizer of a referendum in Slovenia that rejected euthanasia. "His statements on Parliament Hill were the key takeaway for me", reported Debbie, one of the MFL attendees. She explained that Ales had visited the War Memorial earlier, and he reminded those at the rally on the Hill that during the wars, Canada sacrificed our young people to save lives in other countries. Then he added that now Canada is saving lives in other countries by sacrificing our old and vulnerable people through euthanasia, because the world is watching in shock and disbelief at the number of people being euthanized in Canada due to rapid expansion including elimination of the requirement of being near death from an incurable illness, the lax guardrails, and even consideration to expand eligibility solely for mental illness. "That statement was a shocking, rude awakening of how

UPCOMING EVENTS:

CLC Annual Life Chain:
Sunday, October 4, Thunder Bay

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat:
October 16-18, Thunder Bay

National March for Life:
Thursday, May 13, 2027, Ottawa

March for Life Youth Summit:
Friday, May 14, 2027, Ottawa

bad things are in Canada. Canada has become the cautionary tale for other countries contemplating legalization of euthanasia. Canada is the example of what not to do." In his keynote address at the Rose Dinner, held later that evening, Ales explained that language is power and a weapon, and a key strategy to his success in Slovenia was to not use the euphemistic language of the aggressors. He strongly advised us to never refer to Canada's euthanization of people as "Medical Aid in Dying" ("MAID"), but rather refer to it as what it is: "Killing people with a poison injection", or more simply, "poisoning people".

Joanne, another MFL attendee, was inspired by Rebecca Kiessling, who also spoke at the rally, as well as at the Youth Summit the following day. Rebecca Kiessling, is a pro-life activist, a lawyer, and a person conceived in rape. Joanne's favourite quote: "Did I deserve to die for the crime of the man who raped my mother?" Rebecca is a staunch defender of the life of all babies, even those conceived in rape.

Teresa Wenzell reported on the Silent No More speeches on Parliament Hill that took place immediately following the March. "My main takeaway was how powerful the testimonies were from women who had experienced abortion." She added, "I thought it was beautiful that they were willing to speak openly in hopes of inspiring others to value life and better understand the emotional pain that abortion can cause for mothers." Teresa also noted how peaceful this year's MFL felt. There was an absence of the few counterprotesters that are usually present.

To see the full reports by participants, visit our website thunderbay.life

Highlights of this year's MFL can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krSBrM4q2G4

The next National March For Life will take place in Ottawa on Thursday, May 13, 2027. Updates will be posted at https://marchforlife.ca/

Subsidies for Thunder Bay Right to Life Members will be available. If you plan to attend, start planning now!

IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO RENEW YOUR RIGHT TO LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2026.

Go to thunderbay.life

ALLIANCE FOR LIFE ONTARIO AGM AND CONFERENCE

Alliance for Life Ontario (AFLO), the umbrella organization of Thunder Bay Right to Life, held their AGM and Conference in Windsor June 19 and 20. This year's theme was "Choice: Eugenics in Disguise". Our President attended the meeting and conference. Keynote address and presentations were given by:

Dr. Christina Francis is a board-certified OB/GYN pro-life advocate, currently working in the US. She spoke extensively about: how the abortion pill works; the dangers to women experiencing unsupervised abortions in their homes; the expanded use, especially in rural areas and smaller communities; its ease of accessibility, even by ordering electronically and delivery by mail; and, the successes of the Abortion Pill Reversal, how it works, and the many babies saved. Jakki Jeffs, AFLO Executive Director, added Canadian content: There are currently only 17 OB/GYN physicians in Canada who are willing to take part in Abortion Pill Reversal.

Dr. Mark Moster is a senior researcher, advocate for the disabled, currently living in Virginia Beach City. He spoke about Eugenics including its historical roots (1920s), to the Nazi practices of continuing exterminating "useless eaters", and drew terrifying parallels to the current Canadian euthanasia practices. He affirmed that many throughout the world are watching in horror as Canada's euthanasia program is expanding at unprecedented rates. He was aware and expressed remorse for the 100,000 people killed by the lethal injection in Canada.

Dr. Barbara Farlow is a member of Patients for Patient Safety Canada. After the loss of her daughter Annie, born with Trisomy 13, she has worked to raise awareness about hospital safety, patient rights, and the importance of asking critical questions.

Lia (Mills) Miloussis is a human rights lawyer, speaker, and author and has been advocating for life, social justice, and the vulnerable since age 12. Lia has previously been to Thunder Bay.

Presentations were recorded and can be viewed at https://allianceforlifeontario.ca/2026-conference-videos/

Rachel's Vineyard Celebrates 10 Years Of Healing in Thunder Bay

Rachel's Vineyard is celebrating 10 years of hosting (almost annual) retreats in the Thunder Bay area with the first retreat held in November 2016 during the Catholic Church's Year of Mercy.

Rachel's Vineyard is an international ministry that reaches out to women and men hurting from past abortion decisions or other difficult pregnancy losses such as miscarriages and stillbirths. We provide a strictly confidential, loving, non-judgmental weekend retreat experience in which people can process their grief and begin to heal. In Thunder Bay, we have chosen an Interdenominational approach to these weekends, with a key component of Biblical scripture exercises that help participants process their grief and regret and begin to experience the unconditional mercy of Jesus Christ.

Our leadership group continues to grow as former participants join our team. We also have produced a public service announcement which can be viewed on our Facebook page. We continually look for more ways to reach those in Thunder Bay and the surrounding area knowing that the grief from abortions is often a well-kept secret, but also knowing that the secret can have very detrimental effects on a woman's physical and emotional health for years afterwards. Since studies show that at least 60% of women share that they made an abortion decision under some sort of pressure, we suspect that there are many more people who would benefit from this weekend. We urge you to contact us and to let friends or family who might be hurting know about this ministry.

Contact MaryJo at cocoa@tbaytel.net or Terry at thoward@tbaytel.net. Our next retreat will be Oct. 16-18, 2026.

A participant shared,

"The entire retreat vastly surpassed ALL of my expectations. I hoped for a piece of healing, not to be healed, but I am."

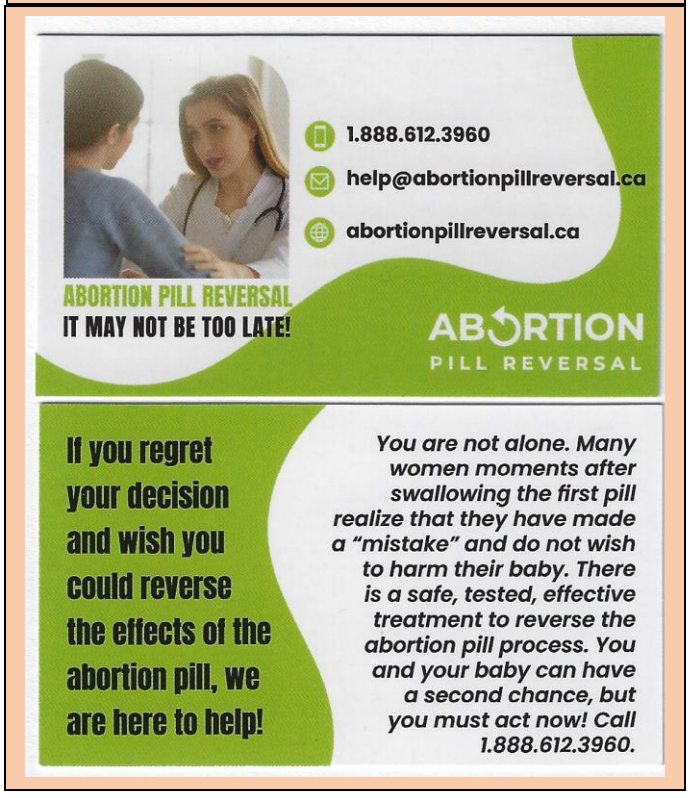
Gabriel Network – Community Ideas and Involvement Invited

Gabriel Network, an initiative committed to supporting and accompanying women and couples who are facing an unexpected pregnancy, is holding an important community meeting on September 21, 2026 at the Oliver Road Community Centre (in the Oliver Room in the lower level) at 7 p.m.

Originally introduced as the Gabriel Project, the evolution to the Gabriel Network involved partnering with Pregnancy Care Canada in order to best prepare to establish a permanent centre to provide support through advocacy, education and provision of practical resources.

All are welcome to attend, but especially those interested in learning more about being involved in the establishment of a pregnancy resource centre to serve the Thunder Bay area.

Contact is MaryJo McDermott at cocoa@tbaytel.net

BILL C-218 TO PREVENT EUTHANASIA SOLELY FOR MENTAL ILLNESS

The recent delay of expansion for mental illness does not mean this is over. We must be vigilant. Go to thunderbay.life to take important action.