

How Prayers for Life Shuttered an Illegal Abortion Center

The true story is spreading far and wide: Following a years-long effort by a unique pro-life coalition, an abortion center in Selma, Alabama which had been operating illegally has finally closed its doors. This city of historic significance in the national civil rights struggle has now taken a stand against the injustice of abortion.

Yet the full story isn't only about cooperation and effective advocacy among local pro-life advocates, with an assist from national groups. As one deeply involved for over a decade in Alabama's movement to protect innocent lives, I saw how prayer played a role in these events as never before.

On May 21, 2015, I received a call from Catherine Davis of The Selma Project asking that Bound4LIFE Birmingham take part in a historical march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. All eyes have been on this small Alabama town because of the Oscar-winning film *Selma*, marking one of America's greatest civil rights battles which took place in this city.

But this march would be different. Catherine Davis was calling for intercessors, unnamed and without fame, who would fast and pray for the mission of uprooting an illegal abortion business being run by Samuel Lett—a back-alley abortionist using The Central Alabama Women's Clinic as his office.

Father Terry Gensemer of CEC for Life had uncovered this horrific reality two years before; he joined efforts with Davis and other pro-life leaders to end this injustice in our state.

Davis made it clear that The Selma Project was a pro-life

coalition rooted in intercession for the ending of abortion—believers praying from a posture of repentance. When we spoke over the phone, continually that one word was on our lips: repentance. We understood our gathering would be centered on God's intercessors owning the sin of our nation and state, chiefly the corruption of abortion.

We would gather, acknowledging before our Lord that we repent for the darkness of abortion and the way it has corrupted our culture—and ended the lives of our children. We need Jesus to step into our mess and heal our land. In that posture of humility, the greatest shakings can come.

On Juneteenth (June 19), a significant date to African-Americans across our nation as the day that slavery ended, intercessors would gather to pray and the next day to march. The Selma Project would expose this illegal abortion center as we came before the courts of Heaven, having faith for healing in this historic city.

Catherine Davis understands the implications of abortion in the black community, making our march on Juneteenth a prophetic sign to the rest of the nation: injustice against these innocent unborn lives must end and will end.

When we arrived Friday evening, June 19, we entered a church filled with pro-life intercessors whom I've grown very close to. Some drove from Atlanta, some flew in from Dallas, others from Washington, D.C., and beyond. It was the sweetest reunion with some of the greatest life intercessors on this side of heaven. I knew in that moment that I was witnessing history, the kind of history written in the eternal book.

We squeezed into a small sanctuary and lost no time in praying and crying out for Jesus to hear us in our trouble, in our darkness, in our sin. Prayer was intertwined with seasoned leaders speaking including Alveda King (niece of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.), Father Terry Gensemer, William Ford,

Dehavilland Ford, Charmaine Yoest and Star Parker.

Pro-life intercessors prayed on the microphone, interceding as the packed church agreed fervently for Jesus' life to break open injustice in Selma. The groundwork was being laid that night. We were preparing the steps for the march the next morning.

Truth be told, the power of the weekend came in those late hours of intercession. The march was only the final clack of the gavel. The march was the public declaration of God's intercessors taking hold as conquerors, trusting in the power of the One who responds to our weak cries.

Catherine Davis had given Bound4LIFE Birmingham the honor of passing out Life Tape to all who gathered to march and pray with us that next morning across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. We arrived early, greeting the people who came and giving them Life Tape that they would wear across their mouths as they prayed silently.

Along with the Life Tape were large posters proclaiming #BlackWomenMatter, expressing the great value of Selma's women and their babies. Their lives are worthy of protection, honor and justice. It was a beautiful scene of people of all ages, backgrounds and racial differences uniting for pro-life prayer.

In an important moment before we marched behind Alveda King, Charmaine Yoest and Catherine Davis, we knelt in solemnness facing the city of Selma. It was a heavy moment, knowing we ached for every intercession we made the night before; we needed the Holy Spirit to make intercessions for us now as we proceeded with desperation and weeping.

As we began marching, I grasped hands with one of my best friends and a fellow abolitionist—Christina Marie Bennett—and we wept. My husband, Matthew, also took the hand of our foster child, who with his other little hand reached out to our

friend Corry Robinson, a pro-life worship leader and minister based in Orlando.

It was a beautiful picture of the church, holding together and pressing forward in prayer for justice and life. As we came to the end of the bridge, we gathered for a press conference—asking for state authorities to take action and prevent Samuel Lett from continuing his illegal and horrific business.

When our time ended, we lingered. We sat together, talking and praying some more. It was bittersweet to leave one another; we felt a desire to wait together in the next hours to see what heaven would do now.

We would not need to wait further than the end of the year to get a glimpse of the victory. Father Terry Gensemer announced on Dec. 30 that the abortion center was shut down, and the historic city of Selma could be considered abortion-free.

The Selma Project and all the intercessions made in that historic weekend would have an incredible and immeasurable outcome. Father God won the battle for His children when He heard our prayers; now we continue on to see life spring forth and injustice fall in our land.

As we enter into a new year, with new statistics and political considerations foremost in our hearts and minds, intercessors hope. We bask in the joy of this newfound victory that came quickly this year in our dear city of Selma, Alabama. We dream of telling our grandchildren about how Jesus moved, and we were there to see it.

We don't bask too long, but to praise God for His mercy and His hand on our land. We move forward to pray deeper, to march further for freedom, for the future generations of our nation and all nations.

The Word of God speaks directly to what our nation faces

today. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, we see what God spoke millennia ago to a national leader: "If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

*Since 2008, **Natalie Brumfield** has served as Birmingham chapter leader for Bound4LIFE—a grassroots movement to pray for the ending of abortion and for revival worldwide. She works as children's director at her local church and volunteers at a local pregnancy care center. Natalie and her husband, Matthew, live in Birmingham, Alabama and love being foster parents.*

Reprinted with permission from Bound4LIFE.