

Belated Democrat bid in religious outreach: New Web site for religious voters

News in the [November 2, 2004](#) issue

Less than a month before the national election, the Democratic National Committee unveiled a new Web site for religious voters, as well as a new director of religious outreach, after some earlier campaign fumbles.

The DNC's religion-related Web site, www.kerrysharesourvalues.org, compares Senator John Kerry's proposals on poverty, jobs, the environment, the economy and the Iraq war with those of President Bush. It also includes links to an area where supporters make financial donations.

"John Kerry has a plan to lead our country in a new direction, a plan built on his deep faith, his life of service and concern for our neighbor," said Alexia Kelley, the party's latest religious outreach director. Kelley, a Catholic, started full-time after the party's first religious outreach director, Brenda Bartella-Peterson, resigned under fire for having supported the removal of the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance.

From 1994 to 2002, Kelley worked for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the antipoverty arm of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Kerry, a Catholic who has been criticized by some bishops for his support of abortion rights, has seen a "surge of support" from rank-and-file Catholics, Kelley said.

The Kerry campaign has its own director of religious outreach, Mara Vanderslice, although she assumed a low-profile role months earlier after being criticized by the conservative New York-based Catholic League. *-Religion News Service*