

Dear Friends,

It does appear there is now certainty in the leaked documents from the Supreme Court that Roe vs. Wade will be overturned. I have seen estimates that show 20-26 states will ban abortions and some will even criminalize the medical procedure. About 30 years ago, our General Synod voted on a pro-choice resolution and I asked a pastor about it, "How could we?" His response was along the lines of "We believe that people have a right to pick their sins." As a naïve young adult, I couldn't believe we would allow or encourage people to 'sin' and that didn't feel right to me.

As I mentioned on Sunday, abortion is not mentioned in the Bible even once, in favor or against. The reason this is so is because the Jewish people (and most of the Christians in the Bible were Jewish) believed that life began with breath. Fetuses didn't breathe so they weren't alive and people died and the breath went out of their body back to God. Our views of life and death have changed to include brainwaves now, so it is a little more complicated. Though Jewish people still believe that the mother's life/health/well-being is the most important value in making decisions about pregnancy. However, of all the 'sins' that are mentioned in the Bible, this one is not mentioned, but the conservative/evangelical ideology places this 'sin' right at the top and they twist scripture to arrive there.

I will say that to save the life of the mother, and there are many ways a pregnancy can be a threat to the woman, having an abortion is not a sin. I will say that the decision of a young woman or already mother seeing there is no way they can raise or afford a child, or another one, is a sin of our country and society, which puts much effort into helping people get pregnant and delivering the child, but too little energy in helping the child and family thrive, is truly the abomination. We are ranked 53rd, between United Arab Emirates and Bosnia, in terms of infant mortality rates. Our mortality rate is double that of any country in the top ten. There are many

other statistics that show how our country doesn't invest in families and protect our infants and children. The United States is not pro-children, just pro-pregnancy.

With this overturned court-ruling that 'women' don't have rights or privacy, does mean that other 'rights' can also be struck down: gay or interracial marriage, integration (if we can ban interracial marriage, why not bring back segregation of races and sexes), or transgender people who haven't fully received their rights yet to exist.

Some may think I am being Chicken Little here, but 2 years ago, I thought the same about those who said Roe vs. Wade would be struck down. There is an authoritarian movement in this country to give only a few the absolute rights and power. It has always been a part of our nation and cannot be totally eradicated, but in our time, it rears its ugly head; and we must resist so we can restore democracy along with liberty and justice for all.

Peace

Pastor Enno