



Reflection on SCOTUS Decision on Roe v Wade

24 June 2022

I have been thinking a lot this week about the impact if the leaked draft decision by a majority of the U.S Supreme Court, overturning Roe v. Wade were to become the law of the entire United States. It is hard to even imagine what could happen to the lives of hundreds of thousands of women in our country who would no longer have the right to determine what happened to their bodies. They could become pregnant while living in abject poverty, resulting from rape or incest, occurring when they were underage, causing potential death to the mother, or countless other circumstances

And I wondered what I could say to such a woman as a Unitarian Universalist. I believe we have a number of principles that clearly have something to say about this issue. For example, our covenant to “affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.” How could a law that does not allow a woman to determine if or when she will have children be said to affirm and promote her value and worth as a human being? And where is the “justice, equity or compassion” in such a law that denies over fifty percent of our population of their rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Further, our principle that affirms “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process” in no way supports the undemocratic ruling that six judges, mostly men, can make a decision for all the women of child-bearing age in the country and the men who are in relationships with them. That is certainly not what democracy means to me as a UU. And statistics indicate that is not the belief of over 70% of the people in our country. Nor does this ruling promote “a free and responsible search for truth and meaning.”

So, what can we do? I am convinced that we must use all our compassion and strength to oppose this ruling in every way that we can. For those who think it is not right for them to have an abortion, they can reject that option for themselves. But they do not have the right to impose their decision on others. We do not live in a theocracy where a minority can impose their beliefs on others.

We say we live in a democracy, which means that the will of all the people should rule. As a person of faith, I believe that I am called to speak truth to power and my hope is that others will join the call to regain our democracy from those who want to impose their will on others.

Affirmed,

Betty

Rev Dr Betty Stapleford
President, Board of Trustees