

We, the Session Elders of Davis Community Church, oppose the Supreme Court's draft opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, which would remove the Constitutional right to abortion established by *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. We are deeply concerned about the negative impacts this draft opinion, once formalized, would have on the well-being of countless individuals. We recognize the fear, frustration, anger, and hopelessness this draft has stirred in ourselves, our congregation, and the public. Christ calls us to love all people. To love another person includes respecting their bodily autonomy and moral agency. This draft decision does neither. Instead, it contradicts our understanding of God's call for us to love. Therefore: We recognize that people of all genders—including women, trans men, non-binary, genderqueer, and gender-nonconforming individuals—need access to safe, legal abortion services.

We acknowledge that society generally assumes that gestational ability is a feminine trait and that its regulation is embedded in a history of misogyny and sexism.

We understand this is also a racial justice issue given that states seeking to return their citizens to the pre-*Roe* world are in areas with more communities of color, further aiding in our country's deeply-rooted history and tradition of systemic racism.

We acknowledge that ensuring the right to an abortion is also an issue of equal protection in that abortion access ensures that all individuals, regardless of sex or gender, can choose when they will accept the burdens of pregnancy and all of its associated health risks, professional barriers, and personal choices.

We affirm that abortion is healthcare and thus a fundamental human right.

We recognize there is a multitude of reasons people receive abortions but while we may not personally make that same choice, these are personal

decisions that are necessary for their well-being whether physical, emotional, or psychological.

We note that a supermajority of Americans support the constitutional right to abortion and that this draft decision reflects the view of a minority.

We grieve that some in this minority of anti-choice individuals have improperly used religious rhetoric or doctrine to justify denying people their right to abortion, thereby perpetuating religious oppression rather than religious freedom. In addition, it is important we call out the hypocrisy of leaders who claim to be “pro-life” but have opposed the creation and funding of social services that care for life after birth.

We acknowledge that, for many, the question about abortion rights hinges on personal beliefs about when life begins. This creates debate about which life, and which individual’s rights, take precedence. We sympathize that for many this is a thorny question of personal ethics and morals, but we support the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.’s long-held belief that “God alone is Lord of the conscience” and has endowed all humans with the moral agency to make choices.

We realize the catastrophic implications this ruling will have on other fundamental rights, all of which rely upon the same reasoning Justice Alito considers “egregiously wrong from the start”. If the constitutional right to privacy *Roe v. Wade* established is overturned, then the right to marry the person we love no matter their sex, gender, or race; the right to raise our children; the right to access contraception; the right to choose who we live with; the right to bodily autonomy; and all other rights to life and liberty guaranteed to all people in this country and based on this legal precedent will be threatened.

Therefore, we call on the Justices of the Supreme Court, our judges, and our elected leaders to uphold and protect the fundamental right to abortion.

And to our congregation, we vow to live out of our vision of identifying ways we can recover and extend the moral actions of Jesus in ways that shape a better world by partaking in actions that help protect these fundamental rights. We are here to serve you and are open to your ideas on how we as a community can make a larger difference.

*DCC Session*