

Resolution in Support of Justice through Individual Choice in Reproductive Health

For Congregational Meeting 9-25-22

After the overturning of Roe v. Wade by the United States Supreme Court in June 2022, which action dissolved a constitutional right to abortion that had stood for half a century, our Unitarian Universalist values and our congregation's decades of commitment to reproductive justice call us to faithful action. As officials in Nebraska and other states proceed to protect, limit, or ban abortion, we will not be silent.

Our faith tradition has a long history of progressive witness for freedom and justice. Soon after the merger of Universalism and Unitarianism, the new Association (1961) adopted statements in support of civil rights and the rights of women. Since well before Roe v. Wade, Unitarian Universalists have declared unequivocally that we support every person's right to make decisions about their own bodies and reproductive health, including the choice to seek abortion care. Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, Unitarian Universalists have supported movements working to make abortion accessible and affordable and to destigmatize abortion within our society. In time, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations added advocacy for those facing oppression based on their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. We have offered sexuality education across the lifespan within our congregations, and have advocated for these beliefs in the public sphere.

Our own congregation is a part of this proud history. In the 1980s, our minister was dubbed the Minister of Mayhem by the local religious right for his steadfast work escorting women through hostile opponents to obtain reproductive care. Our members were instrumental in a series of dialogues held on abortion in the early 90s. Our congregation has been offering comprehensive sexuality education for decades, and has been a GLBTQ Welcoming Congregation since 2003.

Our congregation affirms this stance recently voiced by our national Side with Love program: "Our Unitarian Universalist faith affirms that all of our bodies are sacred, and that we are each endowed with the twin gifts of agency and conscience. Each of us should have the power to decide what does and doesn't happen to our bodies at every moment of our lives because consent and bodily autonomy are holy. And when disparities in resources or freedoms make it more difficult for certain groups of people to exercise autonomy over their own bodies, our faith compels us to take liberatory action."

We hereby signal our intention and commitment to mobilize our resources – including our church facility, our collective social networks, our time, our pooled funds, the name of First Unitarian Church of Omaha (e.g., as an event sponsor or on a banner), and the power of our leaders speaking authoritatively on behalf of our congregation – in support of reproductive health and justice, including abortion access, in Nebraska and beyond. We aim to listen to and follow the lead of those from affected communities, especially women of color.

We affirm our respect for the diversity of faith traditions around us, and insist that no singular religious viewpoint or creed should guide the policies of our governments. As Unitarian Universalists, we will continue to advocate for the positive expression of sexuality, including choices about reproduction and nurturing, and for a culture of respect and empowerment.