

MY STATEMENT ON THE OVERTURN OF ROE V. WADE

SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2022 BY REV. RYAN PHIPPS

DEAREST FRIENDS,

Before we begin our worship today, I wanted to say a few words about the colossal elephant in the room of our own church here in the DMV and in houses of worship across the country.

As a church leader, from time to time, it is incumbent on me to speak to the issues that our world is facing. My role as a pastor is one of a teacher, a caregiver, a comforter, and at times, even an antagonist. It is my hope this morning that my brief statement will do all of these things.

I WANTED TO
BEGIN BY
APOLOGIZING TO
THOSE WHO ARE
AFRAID THIS WEEK
(ESPECIALLY
WOMEN).

I and many others in my line of work have not labored as diligently and discerningly as we should have on this issue.

Many of us have spoken up, but only out of anger and an arrogant unwillingness to foster dialogue with those of a different opinion. And in doing so, we have lost all credibility with those who disagree with us.

Other of us have chosen to be wholly pacifistic on this issue, not wanting to offend anyone, secretly fearing a loss of membership in our churches, resulting in greater financial insecurity for ourselves.

Many of you reading this look to your religious leaders for guidance, care, and courage. And we have failed you on this issue. I am sorry. This week has been a wake-up call for me, too.

TO THOSE WHO
ARE CELEBRATING
THE DECISION TO
OVERTURN ROE V.
WADE,

I plead with you to consider the long-term results of the thing you are celebrating today.

The debate about abortion has very little to do with the things that get debated. Rather, the debate, at its core, is a debate about bodily autonomy.

Can you imagine a world where all forms of contraception are unlawful? Can you imagine a world where it is forbidden by law to eat foods or participate in activities that pose a risk to libido, fertility, or procreation? This kind of world is where the SCOTUS decision ultimately leads.

When a government begins to dictate what a person can and can't do with their body, this is totalitarianism. We are not fully there yet, but the tiny crack in the dam that you are celebrating today will, in time turn into a more significant leak, and then, all of a sudden, you will find yourself thrashing in high water.

I disagree with you and I love you. And I believe in your own right to choose, even if you choose things that I detest. You are

pro-choice in so many other areas of life. And in celebrating this ruling, you are decreasing the probability of your current freedoms extending into the future.

Please, I beg of you. Think from the end. Ask yourself how this evolves in the next 50 or 100 years.

You are giving the government more power to decide how to be and who to be. You are not making the government smaller. You are not making the government weaker. You are making it larger and stronger.

IN CLOSING, I
WANT TO ASK ALL
OF US TO PONDER
A PASSAGE FROM
SCRIPTURE.

Joshua says, "choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

The God of the world is a God that champions the freedom to choose. This God even gives us the freedom to choose other gods or no God at all.

Beloved, our God is pro-choice.

Do our beliefs result in freedom for everyone or only for those who believe what you do?

If it is the latter, on a long enough timeline, that is not freedom for you, either.