



# Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute

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“Every woman has a unique set of circumstances. This complex, extremely personal decision about abortion needs to be made by a woman in consultation with her family, her faith, and her health care provider, not by politicians.” – *Vernita Gutierrez, Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute*

“The power to bring new life into the world is part of a sacred relationship between a woman and God. The decision of whether to continue a pregnancy, whatever circumstances might have prompted such a difficult question, also belongs between a woman and God in consultation with those whom she trusts. Anyone who would presume to force her violates not only her rights, but the divine relationship as well.” – *Rev. Angela Herrera, First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque*

“As a United Methodist woman of faith, I affirm with heartfelt support our denomination’s position that believes women ‘deserve access to services and care that empower their personal decision-making.’ And as a mom, I believe in responding with compassion to women who need access to reproductive healthcare and may be struggling with a difficult decision such as this.” – *Courtney Fowler, Great Plains Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church*

“As an African American clergywoman, I believe women should be afforded the space to make intimate and personal decisions about their reproductive lives without interference from politicians seeking to police women’s bodies.” – *Rev. Lacette Cross, Covenant Baptist United Church of Christ*

“As a person of faith, and someone who believes in the health and happiness of all people, I firmly believe we all have the right to plan when and if to have a child. Taking that right away from a woman is nothing short of unconscionable. There is no room for laws like this in the holistic lives of women. Please stand on the side of the woman who needs your support. She needs your voice. She needs your vote.” – *Rev. Shannon Fleck Speidel, Disciples of Christ*

“As a woman of faith, dedicated to educating and advocating for women and girls of color, poor women and rural women, I find H.R. 36 not only out of step with the foundations of my Christian beliefs, but clearly inflexible pseudo moralistic paternalism on the part of legislators. Your insistence on maintaining your position is dangerous as women and girls, with various life and medical circumstances, require abortion-care as part of their well-woman care. If your job is truly dedicated to upholding the tenets of human rights, then women have spoken for ourselves, our families and our communities. Your job is to listen and carry out justice for all despite your personal piety.”

– *Cherisse Scott, SisterReach*

“Attempts like this to ban abortion are a red herring. They reinforce negative stereotypes about women who seek abortions and they detract from the very real need to address the reasons that women cite for terminating their pregnancies. Effective public policy related to abortion must be informed by women’s lives and experiences.”

– *Rev. Dr. Rebecca Todd Peters, Elon University*

“It is strange to see those opposed to the Affordable Care Act on the grounds that it was inserting the government between you and your doctor continue to draft legislation that explicitly does this very thing in specific circumstances. Medical decisions should be made by the patient in consultation with their doctor. Passing legislation to dictate patient choices due to lawmakers’ personal views violates that relationship and should be avoided as a matter of public policy in all cases.”

– *Matthew Ellis, Episcopal Health Ministries*