



On the 40th Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*

An Affirmation of Faith and Reproductive Justice

January 15, 2013

We are faith leaders committed to justice and dignity for all God's people. We believe that all individuals, families, and communities should have the rights, recognition, and resources they need to thrive.

We affirm the sacredness of conscience—even when it leads to disagreement or conflict—as a foundation of religious liberty.

Our faith compels us to work for economic, social, racial, gender, and reproductive justice. We believe in protecting a woman's well-being and sacred decision making. We respect the vibrant diversity of faith and belief in our country. History has taught us the deep violence that results when a singular theological teaching is imposed on a diverse and pluralistic nation, particularly concerning the beginning and development of life.

We recognize that a woman's decision to become a parent exists within a larger context. A host of factors—including her economic circumstance, access to health care and sex education, personal safety, housing situation, and support from family and community—shape her ability to flourish and fulfill her God-given potential as an individual and as a parent.

We believe that faith communities—longstanding leaders in the fight for justice—should lead the fight for reproductive justice.

We pledge to do our part, individually and collectively, through the following efforts:

- Educate our communities about reproductive justice and engage them in reproductive justice work.
- Work for economic, environmental, health, immigrant, gender, and racial justice so that a woman who wants to be a parent may raise her child with dignity.
- Stand up for women's reproductive health as a religious and a moral issue.
- Work to reduce inequities in our health care system that disproportionately affect low-income women and women of color.
- Ensure that all women, regardless of their economic circumstances, have access to safe and affordable abortion care.
- Uphold the religious freedom on which our country was founded by protecting individual right of conscience and opposing the codification of singular theological teachings on a pluralistic, democratic society.
- Support policies that honor religious diversity and respect women's decision making.

The Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute at the Center for American Progress

- **Urooj Arshad**, Advocates for Youth, Washington, D.C.
- **Rev. Elizabeth D. Barnum**, Ordained United Church of Christ Minister, Barrington, RI
- **Rev. Darcy Baxter**, Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, Hayward, CA
- **Rev. Dr. Mariah Ann Britton**, Moriah Institute, New York, NY
- **Rev. Victoria J. Ferguson**, Kindred Moxie, LLC., Atlanta, GA
- **Lyndsey Godwin**, Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee, Nashville, TN
- **Samantha O. Griffin**, Black Women's Health Imperative, Washington, D.C.
- **Courtney J. Hoekstra**, Presbyterian, Louisville, KY
- **Rev. Heather Johnson**, Atlanta's John Marshall Law School, Atlanta, GA
- **Cathy Levy**, Ohio Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Columbus, OH
- **Kyle Meerkins**, Pro-Choice Resources and Family Tree Clinic, Minneapolis, MN
- **Dr. Sarah Morice Brubaker**, Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, OK
- **Rev. Lorena M. Parrish**, Fort Washington Collegiate Church, New York, NY
- **Rev. Dr. Rebecca Todd Peters**, Elon University, Elon, NC
- **Dr. Caryn D. Riswold**, Illinois College, Jacksonville, IL
- **Rev. Madison T. Shockley II**, Pilgrim United Church of Christ and Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, Carlsbad, CA
- **Kacie Starr Triplett**, former Alderwoman, St. Louis, MO
- **Rev. Matthew Westfox**, United Church of Christ, All Souls Bethlehem Church, Brooklyn, NY
- **Katey Zeh**, United Methodist, Cary, NC

The Center for American Progress's Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute trains and provides resources to a new generation of faith-based leaders to be public champions of reproductive justice. Twenty leaders from around the country are participating in the Leadership Institute, including clergy, sexuality educators, advocates, scholars, writers, and staff from mainline Protestant denominations. The Faith and Reproductive Justice Leadership Institute is supported by a generous grant from the Ford Foundation.