

Dear Friends in Christ,

This is a tumultuous weekend. The Supreme Court has overturned decades of settled law and ended the right of a person to choose to end a pregnancy. The decision will fall most heavily on women who are not privileged, who struggle to make ends meet and it will fall on women of color who too often are in that position. My heart is heavy for many reasons: for those women who will now suffer, and for any situation where abortion seems like the only way forward - that is its own kind of tragedy.

I know that across our many congregations there is a wide variety of opinions about this overturning of settled legal precedent. The Episcopal Church has long supported women and children and also the ability of a woman to work with a physician to determine if a pregnancy should continue. That means that in our homes this weekend there is an uncomfortable mixture of rage and sorrow, rejoicing and satisfaction, or some mixture in between.

However we feel about this struggle today, our roots as the church go back much further than 1975. Our call as believers begins with our Lord Jesus Christ. In him is all our hope and prayer and leadership. He himself walked and ministered, healed and welcomed in a deeply divided society. No one was outside the reach for his love.

This remain true today.

It also means that on whatever side you find yourselves there is a call to rebuild connection. We are not directed to call down fire on those with whom we disagree. We are called to follow our Lord who showed his love for us by taking up the cross. All disciples are called to take up our own cross, knowing that Christ himself walks with us through every kind of deathliness to new life.

The Catechism of the Book of Common Prayer tells us that the mission of the Church is to "restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."

The work of reconciliation is work we are especially called to do. It is the hard path to life. Underneath all other actions or advocacy let us re-weave a common understanding of life together based on reconciliation in Christ.

And in all of this, my siblings in Christ, let us rest on the strength of God and ask for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, trusting our God who, for the sake of His name, promises to lead and guide us. We will continue to share resources that can support the pastoral needs of our congregations.

The words of this Psalm, found in the evening service of Compline, seem timely today.

Psalm 31

1 In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;
 let me never be put to shame;

Deliver me in your righteousness.

2 Incline your ear to me:
 Make hast to deliver me.

3 Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe,
 For you are my crag and my stronghold;
 For the sake of your name lead me and guide me.

Below my signature are some beautiful resources to help us listen and talk with one another across significant difference, and also a statement from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. I commend them to you and your congregations.

In Christ,

-The Rt. Rev. Megan M. Traquair
Bishop