



For All to Live in Abundance

Jessica Quinn
Online Communications Specialist

It was chilly standing in the shadow of the imposing pillars of the Supreme Court on the morning of December 1st. I stood a way back in the crowd. I had been asked by organizers if I would be comfortable acting as one of the advocates standing between the growing mass of those crying for reproductive freedom and the hecklers holding graphic images and screaming obscenities towards us. Standing there, holding my sign with the words “Abortion is Essential” repeated in bold print, I could not see the speakers leading the rally. I could barely make out their words over the hateful chanting of the men standing behind me, but for one moment a line came through from the pastor speaking at the front: “God is abundance.”

In John 10:10 (New Revised Standard Version), Jesus says, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” The speaker that morning went on to say that not everyone has been granted access to abundance; in fact, many have been structurally barred from experiencing abundance. She was talking, in this context, about access to safe, legal and affordable abortions and reproductive health care.

The idea of abundance stuck with me throughout the afternoon as I read updates from the oral arguments of [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization](#) and as news trickled into my inbox about the new Omicron variant, which further underscored the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine. [According to experts](#) at the World Health Organization, while vaccination rates in high-income countries approach 70% of the population, less than 5% of the people in low-income countries have received even one dose. The global failure to share vaccines equitably is taking its toll on the most vulnerable.

Oppressive abortion bans and the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) share the characteristic of falling hardest on those who already face structural barriers to health care access – Black, Indigenous and People of Color; women; those working to make ends meet; and people with disabilities. The result is that people in need are blocked in varying degrees from access to a life of abundance. Actionable steps can, and

must, be taken to move us closer to that vision of a life of abundance for all—a life where everyone has what they need to experience safety and to thrive.

The [Women's Health Protection Act \(WHPA\)](#), reintroduced in Congress in June 2021, would safeguard access to high-quality care and secure constitutional rights by protecting patients and providers from political or religious interference. It would bar state and federal legislation that imposes medically unnecessary regulations on access to abortion services, including medication, mandatory waiting periods, or out and out abortion bans.

To bolster global vaccination, the World Trade Organization must [pass a Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights or "TRIPS" Waiver](#) that would require WTO countries to extend monopoly protections on COVID-19 vaccines, tests and technology. This would represent an essential step in addressing growing vaccine inequality, which is a pertinent factor in further mutation of the virus.

God intends abundance for all, which means all persons should have access to the care they need. The good news of the gospel is that scarcity is a myth. Abundance, in the way we are called to live it, means access to a full range of reproductive health care, including abortion, and it means being able to live, work and learn without fear of illness or death from a serious virus because some prioritize profit over human life. May we all move towards a nation and a world where each of us experiences the life of abundance God has planned for us.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jessica Quinn is the Online Communications Specialist for the United Church of Christ.

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