

Trump Allies Prepare To Infuse 'Christian Nationalism' In Second Administration

Spearheading The Effort Is Russell Vought, President Of *The Center For Renewing America*, Part Of A Conservative Consortium Preparing For Trump's Return To Power.

By Alexander Ward & Heidi Przybyla *Politico.com*
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In Influential Think Tank Close To Donald Trump Is Developing Plans To Infuse Christian Nationalist Ideas In His Administration Should The Former President Return To Power, According To Documents Obtained By POLITICO.

Spearheading The Effort Is Russell Vought, Who Served As Trump's Director Of The Office Of Management And Budget During His First Term And Has Remained Close To Him. Vought, Who Is Frequently Cited As A Potential Chief Of Staff In A Second Trump White House, Is President Of The Center For Renewing America Think Tank, A Leading Group In A Conservative Consortium Preparing For A Second Trump Term.

Christian Nationalists In America Believe That The Country Was Founded As A Christian Nation And That Christian Values Should Be Prioritized Throughout Government And Public Life. As The Country Has Become Less Religious And More Diverse, Vought Has Embraced

The Idea That Christians Are Under Assault And Has Spoken Of Policies He Might Pursue In Response.

One Document Drafted By CRA Staff And Fellows Includes A List Of Top Priorities In A Second Trump Term. “Christian Nationalism” Is One Of The Bullet Points. Others Include Invoking The [Insurrection Act On Day One](#) To Quash Protests And [Refusing To Spend Authorized Congressional Funds On Unwanted Projects](#), A Practice Banned By Lawmakers In The Nixon Era.

CRA’s Work Fits Into A Broader By Conservative, MAGA-Leaning Organizations To Influence A Future Trump White House. Two People Familiar With The Plans, Who Were Granted Anonymity To Discuss Internal Matters, Said That Vought Hopes His Proximity And Regular Contact With The Former President — He And Trump Speak At Least Once A Month, According To One Of The People — Will Elevate Christian Nationalism As A Focal Point In A Second Trump Term.

The Documents Obtained By POLITICO Do Not Outline Specific Christian Nationalist Policies. But Vought Has Promoted A Restrictionist Immigration Agenda, Saying A Person’s Background Doesn’t Define Who Can Enter The U.S., But Rather, Citing Biblical Teachings, Whether That Person “Accept[ed] Israel’s God, Laws And Understanding Of History.

Vought Has A Close Affiliation With Christian Nationalist William Wolfe, A Former Trump Administration Official Who Has Advocated For Overturning Same-Sex Marriage, Ending Abortion And Reducing Access To Contraceptives.

Vought, Who Declined To Comment, [Is Advising Project 2025](#), A Governing Agenda That Would Usher In One Of The Most Conservative Executive Branches In Modern American History. The Effort Is Made Up Of A Constellation Of Conservative Groups Run By Trump Allies Who've Constructed A Detailed Plan To Dismantle Or Overhaul Key Agencies In A Second Term. Among Other Principles, The Project's "[Mandate For Leadership](#)" States That "Freedom Is Defined By God, Not Man."

The Trump Campaign Has Said Repeatedly That It Alone Is Responsible For Assembling A Policy Platform And Staffing For A Future Administration. In Response To Various News Articles About How Conservatives Are Preparing For A Second Trump Term, Campaign Advisers Susie Wiles And Chris LaCivita Said In A Memo Late Last Year: "Despite Our Being Crystal Clear, Some 'Allies' Haven't Gotten The Hint, And The Media, In Their Anti-Trump Zeal, Has Been All-Too-Willing To Continue Using Anonymous Sourcing And Speculation About A Second Trump Administration In An Effort To Prevent A Second Trump Administration."

Trump's Campaign Declined To Comment For This Story.

Rachel Cauley, CRA's Communication Director, Said "The So-Called Reporting From POLITICO In This Story Is False And We Told Them So On Multiple Occasions."

Trump Is Not A Devout Man Of Faith. But Christian Nationalists Have Been Among His [Most Reliable Campaign Activists](#) And Voting Blocs. Trump Formed A Political Alliance With Evangelicals During His First Run For Office, Delivered Them A Six To Three Conservative Majority On The Supreme Court And Is Now Espousing The Christian Right's Long-Running Argument That Christians Are So Severely Persecuted That It Necessitates A Federal Response.

In A December Campaign [Speech In Iowa](#), He Said "Marxists And Fascists" Are "Going Hard" Against Catholics. "Upon Taking Office, I Will Create A New Federal Task Force On Fighting Anti-Christian Bias To Be Led By A Fully Reformed Department Of Justice That's Fair And Equitable" And That Will "Investigate All Forms Of Illegal Discrimination."

On The Eve Of The Iowa Caucuses, Trump Promoted On His Social Media [A Video](#) That Suggests His Campaign Is, Actually, A Divine Mission From God.

In 2019, Trump's Then-Secretary Of State, Mike Pompeo, Set Up A Federal Commission To Define Human Rights Based On The Precepts Vought Describes, Specifically "Natural Law And Natural Rights." Natural Law Is The Belief That There Are Universal Rules Derived From

God That Can't Be Superseded By Government Or Judges. While It Is A Core Pillar Of Catholicism, In Recent Decades It's Been Used To Oppose Abortion, LGBTQ+ Rights And Contraception.

Vought Sees His And His Organization's Mission As "Renew[ing] A Consensus Of America As A Nation Under God," Per A Statement On CRA's Website, And Reshaping The Government's Contract With The Governed. Freedom Of Religion Would Remain A Protected Right, But Vought And His Ideological Brethren Would Not Shy From Using Their Administration Positions To Promote Christian Doctrine And Imbue Public Policy With It, According To Both People Familiar With The Matter, Granted Anonymity To Avoid Retaliation. He Makes Clear Reference To Human Rights Being Defined By God, Not Man.

America Should Be Recognized As A Christian Nation "Where Our Rights And Duties Are Understood To Come From God," Vought Wrote Two Years Ago In Newsweek.

"It Is A Commitment To An Institutional Separation Between Church And State, But Not The Separation Of Christianity From Its Influence On Government And Society," He Continued, Noting Such A Framework "Can Lead To Beneficial Outcomes For Our Own Communities, As Well As Individuals Of All Faiths."

He Went On To Accuse Detractors Of Christian Nationalism Of Invoking The Term To Try To Scare People. “‘Christian Nationalism’ Is Actually A Rather Benign And Useful Description For Those Who Believe In Both Preserving Our Country’s Judeo-Christian Heritage And Making Public Policy Decisions That Are Best For This Country,” He Wrote. “The Term Need Not Be Subjected To Such Intense Scorn Due To Misunderstanding Or Slander.”

To Ingratiate Himself In Conservative Circles — And Christian Conservative Ones — Trump Has Often Turned To Operatives From Them. Among Those Who Helped Was Vought.

As OMB Director In The Trump Administration, Vought Became A Disciple Of The “America First” Movement. He Has Been A Steadfast Proponent Of Keeping The U.S. Out Of Foreign Wars And Slashing Federal Spending.

CRA Is Already Wielding Influence On Trump’s Positions. His Thinking On [Withdrawing The U.S. From NATO](#) And [Using Military Force Against Mexican Drug Cartels](#) Is Partly Inspired By Separate CRA Papers, According To Reports By Rolling Stone.

“Russell Vought Did A Fabulous Job In My Administration, And I Have No Doubt He Will Do A Great Job In Continuing Our Quest To Make America Great Again,” [Reads A Trump Quote Prominently Placed On CRA’s Website.](#)

Trump Will Have A Major Platform To Convey His Vision For Christian Policy In A Second Term When, [On Feb.22 He Addresses A National Religious Broadcasters Forum In Nashville.](#) The Group Is The World's Largest Association Of Christian Communicators.

Trump Is Also [Talking About](#) Bringing His Former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, A Vocal Proponent Of Christian Nationalism, Back Into Office. Flynn Is Currently Focused On Recruiting What He Calls An “Army Of God” — [As He Barnstorms The Country](#) Promoting His Vision Of Putting Christianity At The Center Of American Life.

Vought's Beliefs Over Time Have Been Informed By His Relationship With Wolfe. The Two Spent Time Together At Heritage Action, A Conservative Policy Advocacy Group. And Vought Has Praised Their Yearslong Partnership. “I'm Proud To Work With @William_E_Wolfe On Scoping Out A Sound Christian Nationalism, [He Posted On X, Then Twitter, In January 2023.](#)

Vought Often Echoes Wolfe's Principles, Including On Immigration. “Jesus Christ Wasn't An Open-Borders Socialist,” [Wolfe Wrote For The Daily Caller In April](#) While A Visiting CRA Fellow. “The Bible Unapologetically Upholds The Concept Of Sovereign Nations.”

While Speaking In September At American Moment's “[Theology Of American Statecraft: The Christian Case For Immigration Restriction](#)” On Capitol Hill In September, Vought Defended The Widely-Criticized Practice Of Family Separation At The Border During The Trump Years,

Telling The Audience “The Decision To Defend The Rule Of Law Necessitates The Separation Of Families.”

The Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025 Offers More Visibility Into What Policy Agenda A Future Trump Administration Might Pursue. It Says That Policies That Support LGBTQ+ Rights, Subsidize “Single-Motherhood” And Penalize Marriage Should Be Repealed Because Subjective Notions Of “Gender Identity” Threaten “Americans’ Fundamental Liberties.”

It Also Proposes Increasing Surveillance Of Abortion And Maternal Mortality Reporting In The States, Compelling The Food And Drug Administration To Revoke Approval Of “Chemical Abortion Drugs” And Protecting “Religious And Moral” Objections For Employers Who Decline Contraception Coverage For Employees. One Of The Groups That Partners With Project 2025, Turning Point USA, Is Among Conservative Influencers That [Health Professionals Have Criticized](#) For Targeting Young Women With Misleading Health Concerns About Hormonal Birth Control. Another Priority Is Defunding Planned Parenthood, Which Provides Reproductive Health Care To Low-Income Women.

Wolfem Who Has Deleted Several Posts On X That Detail His Views, Has A More Extreme Outlook Of What A Government Led By Christian Nationals Should Propose. In A December Post, He Called For Ending Sex Education In Schools, Surrogacy And No-Fault Divorce Throughout The Country, As Well As Forcing Men “To Provide For Their Children As Soon As

It's Determined The Child Is Theirs" — A Clear Incursion By The Government Into Americans' Private Lives.

"Christians Should Reject A Christ-Less 'Conservatism,'" He Expanded In Another X Missive, "And Demand The Political Movement We Are Most Associated With Make A Return To Christ-Centered Foundations. Because It's Either Christ Or Chaos, Even On The 'Right'"

Wolfe Declined To Comment.

The Effort To Imbue Laws With Biblical Principles Is Already Underway In Some States. In Texas, Christian Conservative Supporters Have Pressured The Legislature To Require Public Schools To Display The Ten Commandments In Every Classroom; Targeted Prohibitions On Churches Against Direct Policy Advocacy And Organized Campaigns Around "Culture War" Issues Including Curbing LGBTQ+ Rights, Banning Books And Opposing Gun Safety Laws.

"There's Been A Tectonic Shift In How The Leadership Of The Religious Right Operates," Said Matthew Taylor, A Scholar At The Institute, Christian And Jewish Studies, Who Grew Up Evangelical. "These Folks Aren't As Interested In Democracy Or Working Through Democratic Systems As In The Old religious Right Because Their Theology Is One Of Christian Warfare.

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