

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, March 28, 2025



Top News

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- **Around the World, Many People Are Leaving Their Childhood Religions**
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Trump has ordered the dismantling of the US Education Department. Here's what that means

President Donald Trump's order calling for the dismantling of the U.S. Education Department has complex implications.

The Republican president has argued the federal office hasn't improved student outcomes and is unnecessary in a country where states and local districts primarily control education from funding to hiring and curriculum.

For decades, right-wing activists have called for eliminating the agency, which was created by Congress in 1979. As Trump remakes the federal government, he has assailed the department as wasteful and responsible for spreading "woke" ideas such as programs to support diversity, equity and inclusion and protections for transgender students.

The department has been largely responsible for oversight, enforcing discrimination laws and distributing aid money for schools with low-income students and students with disabilities. Federal funding makes up a relatively small portion of public school budgets, roughly 14%.

apnews.com



A man holds a cross outside of the Supreme Court. Bryan Dozier/Middle East Images/AFP via Getty Images

Around the World, Many People Are Leaving Their Childhood Religions

In many countries around the world, a fifth or more of all adults have left the religious group in which they were raised. Christianity and Buddhism have experienced especially large losses from this “religious switching,” while rising numbers of adults have no religious affiliation, according to Pew Research Center surveys of nearly 80,000 people in 36 countries. Rates of religious switching vary widely around the globe, the surveys show.

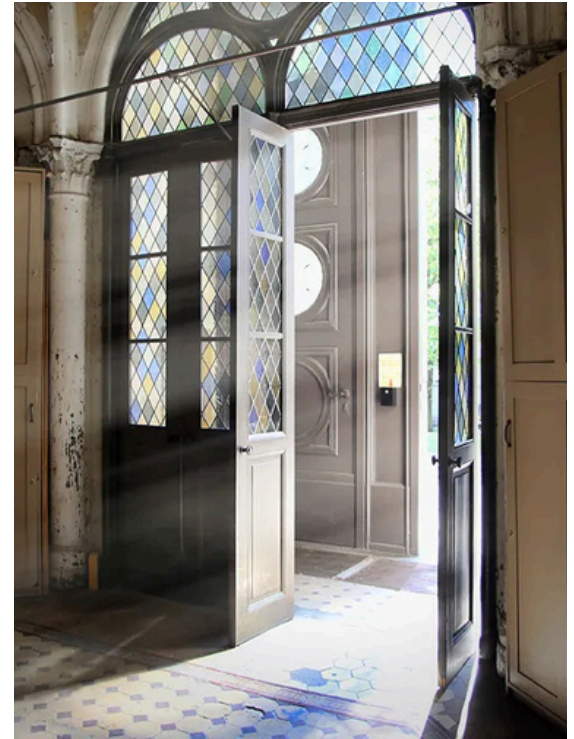
What is religious switching?

Throughout this report, religious switching refers to a change between the religious group in which a person says they were raised (during their childhood) and their religious identity now (in adulthood).

We use the term religious switching instead of “conversion” because the changes can take place in many directions – including from having been raised in a religion to being unaffiliated.

We count changes between large religious categories (such as from Buddhist to Christian, or from Hindu to unaffiliated) but not switching within a world religion (such as from one Christian denomination to another). Refer to the [Terminology](#) section for details.

[pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)



Light shines through the doors of Zionskirche, a Protestant church in Berlin. (Busà Photography/Getty Images)

Americans' Views of Deportations

As the new Trump administration begins to [carry out immigration enforcement](#), Americans largely agree that at least some immigrants living in the United States illegally should be deported, in particular those who have committed violent crimes. However, less consensus exists on how the government should carry out deportations.

Roughly one-third of U.S. adults (32%) say all immigrants living in the country illegally should be deported, while 16% say none should be deported. About half (51%) say at least some should face deportation.

U.S. adults who say some immigrants living in the country illegally should be deported have varying views of who should be removed. Nearly all (97%) support deporting those who have committed violent crimes.

Those who favor some deportations are more evenly divided when it comes to deporting those who have committed nonviolent crimes (52%) or have arrived in the U.S. during the past four years (44%). By contrast, far fewer say those with family ties in the U.S. should be deported, according to a Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 24 to March 2, 2025.

When it comes to law enforcement, the public has mixed views on where officers should and should not be allowed to arrest immigrants living in the U.S. illegally. Majorities of U.S. adults say immigration arrests should not take place in:

- Places of worship (65%)
- Schools (63%)
- Hospitals (61%)

[pewresearch.org](https://www.pewresearch.org)

About a third of U.S. adults say all immigrants in the U.S. illegally should be deported; half say some

% who say ___ immigrants living in the U.S. illegally should be deported

	All	Some	None
Total	32	51	16

Nearly all who favor deporting 'some' immigrants living in the country illegally say that committing violent crime is grounds for deportation

Among those who support *some* deportations, % who say immigrants in the U.S. illegally should be deported if they ...

Committed violent crimes	97
Committed nonviolent crimes	52
Arrived in the country in last four years	44
Have a job	15
Are parents of children born in the U.S.	14
Came to the U.S. as children	9
Are married to a U.S. citizen	5

Note: Refer to topline for full question wording. Respondents who did not offer an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 24-March 2, 2025.
“Americans’ Views of Deportations”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Pew Research Center

Trump signs sweeping executive order targeting election rules



President Donald Trump holds an executive order he signed in the Cabinet Room of the White House on March 25, 2025, in Washington. | Win McNamee/Getty Images

President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed a sweeping executive order seeking to change how elections are administered across the country, especially rules related to citizenship and mail-in voting.

The order immediately sparked concern among voting rights experts, who said the president may not even legally have the authority to do some of the things he directed in the order. If allowed to go into effect, it could disrupt how Americans vote and have their ballots counted in ways that may disenfranchise many legitimate voters for every potential illegitimate voter it stops.

Trump's order asserts that federal law requires all states to reject ballots not received by Election Day, directing the Justice Department to "take all necessary action to enforce" the requirement. The move seemed directly targeted at mail-in heavy states from California to Alaska.

[politico.com](https://www.politico.com)

Abortion fight won, conservative Christians mimic Dobbs tactics to go after same-sex marriage

If you listened closely at a meeting of mostly evangelical Christian communicators, activists and lawyers that took place in Dallas in February, you could hear more than a few panel discussions and hallway conversations repeatedly circle back to the same topic: same-sex marriage.

Having helped to engineer the demise of *Roe v. Wade* after half a century of anti-abortion activism, attendees at the National Religious Broadcasters conference openly discussed plans to make shorter work of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, the landmark 2015 Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage nationwide.

"*Obergefell* is on very shaky ground," Mathew Staver, founder of the conservative Christian nonprofit legal group Liberty Counsel, which leaders describe as a ministry, told the audience of one panel at the conference. "It's not a matter of, in my opinion, if it will eventually be overturned, but when it'll be overturned."

It's a brazen claim critics and legal analysts have dismissed as unlikely in the short term. But conservative Christian advocates say they are emboldened by President Donald Trump's election and the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade* in 2022, and hope justices will eventually respond to a growing list of efforts to overturn *Obergefell* cropping up across the country.

[religionnews.com](https://www.religionnews.com)



In this June 26, 2015, file photo, a man holds a U.S. flag and a pride flag outside the Supreme Court in Washington after the court legalized gay marriage nationwide. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin, File)

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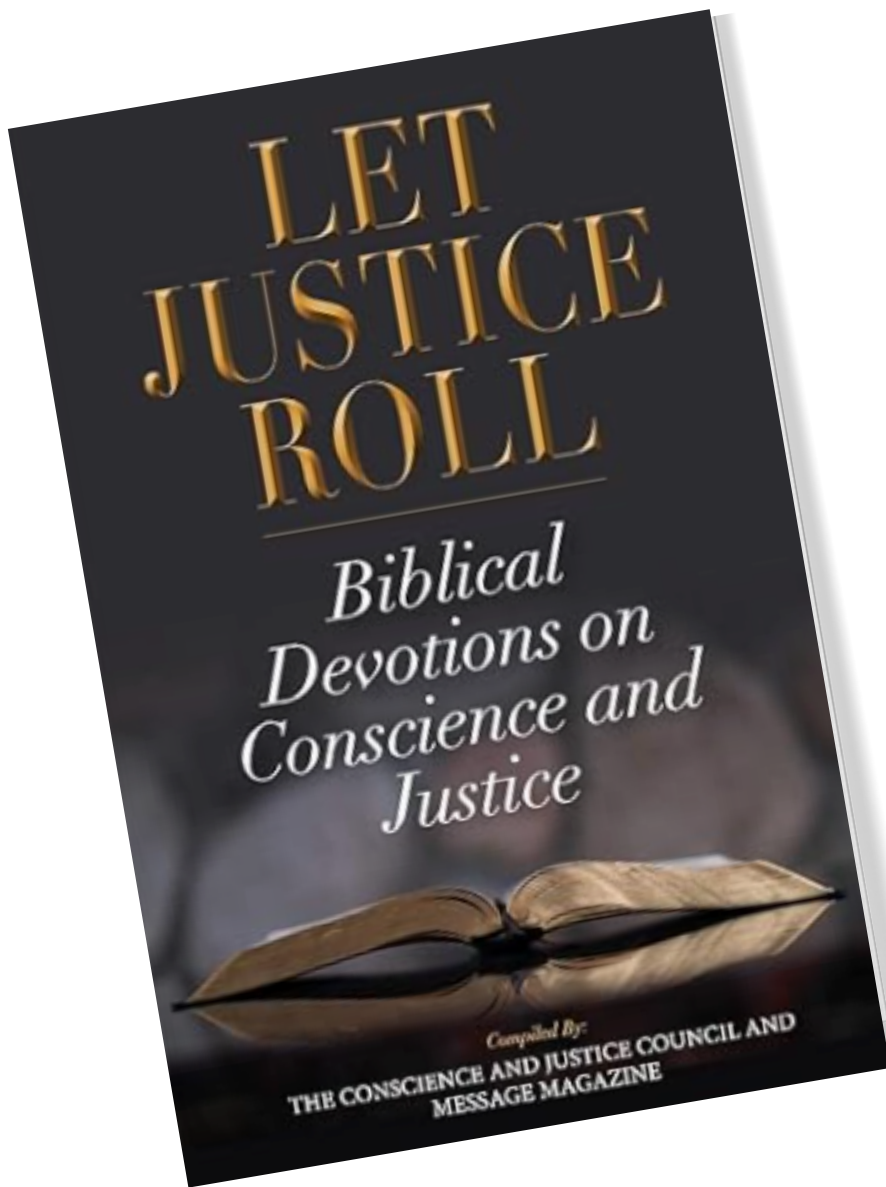


<https://register.adventsourceevents.org/2025CJCConvention>

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Let Justice Roll: Biblical Devotions on Conscience and Justice

"Let Justice Roll" is a compelling devotional that walks the reader through 365 days of biblical insights in freedom of conscience, and social justice. This compilation of articles represents the work of a nationwide network of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) advocates and other connected community activists.

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OUR PURPOSE

This newsletter aims to highlight news articles relating to religious liberty, civil rights, and social justice. The Conscience & Justice Council desires to be attuned with society so that we may change the nation by impacting one community at a time. Articles linked above are meant to provoke thought and discussion on important topics, and do not always express options or views endorsed by the CJC.

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