

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, April 25, 2025



The Trump administration launched an anti-Christian bias task force. Here's what it will do

U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi held a press conference Tuesday where she formally launched the White House Task Force to Eradicate Anti-Christian Bias.

Joining her were members of the task force as well as people allegedly affected by anti-Christian bias during the Biden administration.

"Together, this task force will identify any unlawful anti-Christian policies, practices or conduct across the government, seek input from the faith-based organizations and state governments to end anti-Christian bias, (and) find and fix deficiencies and existing and regulatory practices that might contribute to the anti-Christian bias," Bondi said.

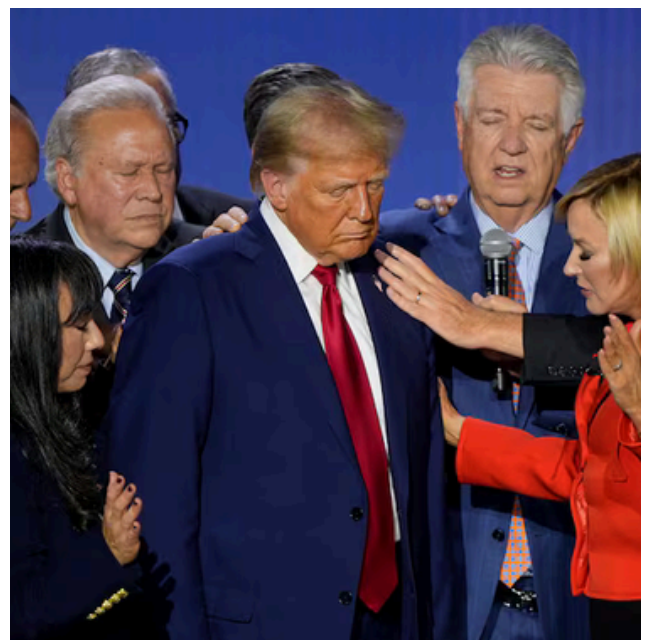
In her remarks, Bondi repeated some of Trump's criticisms of the Biden administration, saying that the previous White House "engaged in an egregious pattern of targeting peaceful Christians."

She criticized the Biden administration for "targeting" pro-life protestors, allowing the FBI to "spy" on Catholic parishioners and declaring March 31 the International Transgender Day of Visibility, which last year fell on Easter.

See more: deseret.com

Top News

- The Trump administration launched an anti-Christian bias task force. Here's what it will do
- Parents on both sides of Maryland LGBTQ+ books lawsuit say religious beliefs guide their positions
- Trump signs executive actions on education, including efforts to rein in DEI
- Francis: Pope from Latin America who changed Catholic Church
- Inside Harvard's lawsuit against the Trump administration



Then-Republican presidential nominee President Donald Trump is prayed over with the Rev. Paula White during the National Faith Summit at Worship With Wonders Church -Anderson, Associated Press

Parents on both sides of Maryland LGBTQ+ books lawsuit say religious beliefs guide their positions

On Tuesday (April 22), the Supreme Court heard arguments in a case set to determine the extent to which families can control what materials their children are exposed to in public school, as parents argued that learning from certain books may violate their religious beliefs.

Mahmoud v. Taylor was brought in 2022, after Maryland's largest school district, Montgomery County Public Schools, introduced a fleet of books centering LGBTQ+ characters to their English language arts curriculum. The parents suing the district are led by Tamer Mahmoud and Enas Barakat, who are Muslim and removed their son from public school after a lower court sided against them. They are arguing against the school district and Superintendent Thomas Taylor.

As the court heard the case, parents and activists on both sides of the issue rallied outside, with many citing their faith as reasoning.

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



Wael Elkoshairi, left, addresses supporters of opt-out options, before oral arguments in the Mahmoud v. Taylor case, at the Supreme Court in Washington, April 22, 2025. (Photo by Reina Coulibaly)

Trump signs executive actions on education, including efforts to rein in DEI

President Trump on Wednesday signed a list of executive actions aimed at both higher education and K-12 schools.

One of the actions takes aim at college and university accreditors, organizations the White House says have "abused their authority by imposing discriminatory diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)-based standards."

Another promises new discipline guidance for K-12 schools, with the goal of "ensuring school discipline policies are based on objective behavior, not DEI," the White House said in a statement.

"Today's Executive Orders pave the way for critical innovations — inviting more competition in the higher education accreditation system, ensuring transparency in college finances, supporting new technologies in the classroom, and more," Education Secretary Linda McMahon wrote on social media.

The collection of orders aim to cement Trump's conservative agenda when it comes to education in America, including rolling back the policies from the Biden administration, bolstering workforce training, improving teaching about artificial intelligence in schools, and launching a new White House initiative on historically Black colleges and universities.

See more: [npr.org](https://www.npr.org)



President Donald Trump speaks to reporters in the Oval Office in February. Alex Brandon/AP

Francis: Pope from Latin America who changed Catholic Church



Photo credit: AP

His ascension to the papacy heralded many firsts. Francis was the first Pope from the Americas or the Southern Hemisphere. Not since Syrian-born Gregory III died in 741 had there been a non-European Bishop of Rome. He was also the first Jesuit to be elected to the throne of St Peter – Jesuits were historically looked on with suspicion by Rome.

His predecessor, Benedict XVI, was the first Pope to retire voluntarily in almost 600 years and for almost a decade the Vatican Gardens hosted two popes.

Many Catholics had assumed the new pontiff would be a younger man – but Cardinal Bergoglio of Argentina was already in his seventies when he became Pope in 2013.

He had presented himself as a compromise candidate: appealing to conservatives with orthodox views on sexual matters while attracting the reformers with his liberal stance on social justice.

See more: [bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com)

Inside Harvard's lawsuit against the Trump administration

In an escalation of the back-and-forth between Harvard University and the Trump administration, the school has filed a lawsuit against the federal government. In it, Harvard argues the government's actions, including freezing more than \$2.2 billion in federal funding, violate the First Amendment and don't follow legal procedures.

"The consequences of the government's overreach will be severe and long-lasting," reads a letter by Alan M. Garber, Harvard's president, announcing the lawsuit. He goes on to detail the type of research the government has "put in jeopardy," including efforts studying child cancer survivors, predicting the spread of infectious disease outbreaks and easing the pain of wounded soldiers.

"Defendants' actions threaten Harvard's academic independence and place at risk critical lifesaving and pathbreaking research that occurs on its campus," the lawsuit reads.

The Trump administration accuses Harvard of failing to protect Jewish students. After Harvard refused to comply with a list of demands from the administration, the Joint Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism announced it was freezing funds.

See more: [npr.org](https://www.npr.org)



People cross Harvard Yard at Harvard University on April 17, in Cambridge, Mass. Sophie Park/Getty Images

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CJC2025

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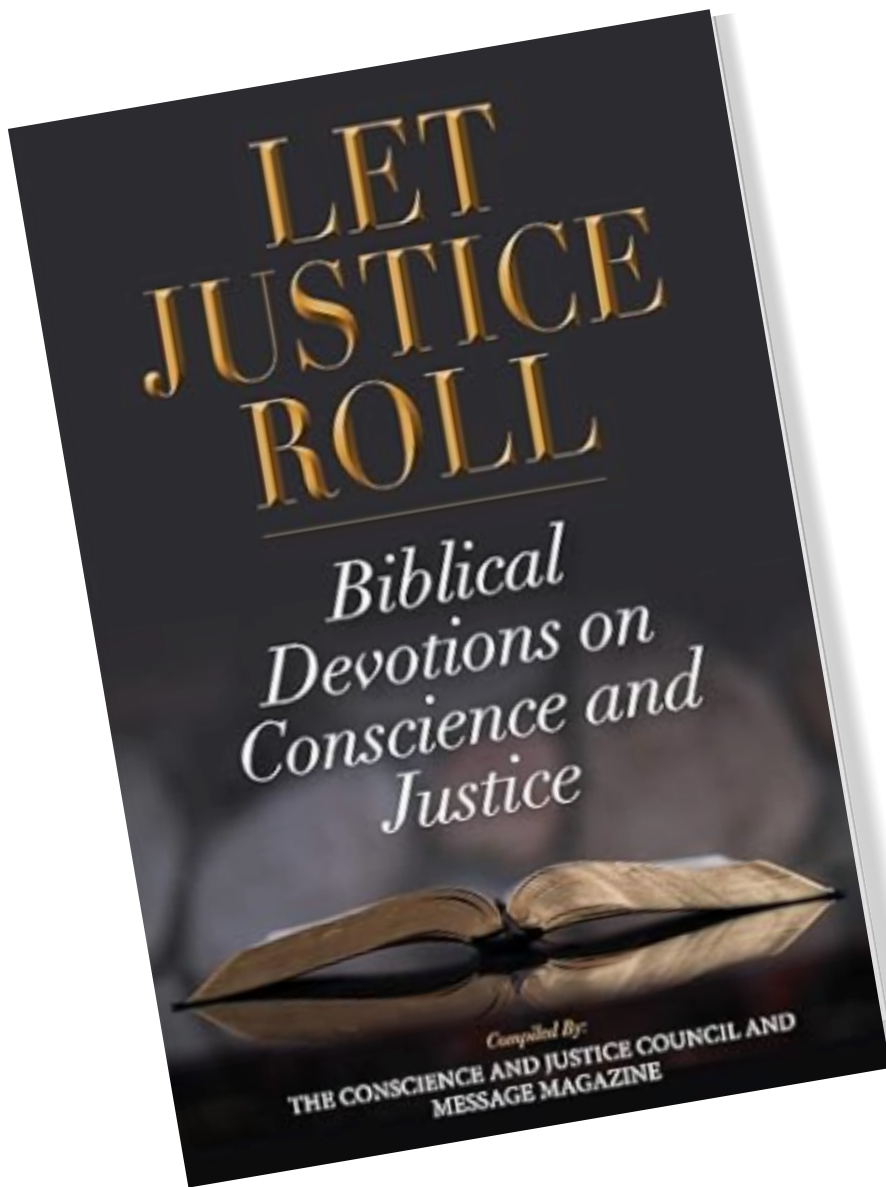


<https://register.adventsourceevents.org/2025CJCConvention>

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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.

The components of conscience and justice ministry include conscience, discipleship, engagement, fellowship, the power of the Holy Spirit, love, and prophecy. This is a must-read book for all followers of Christ and those who seek spiritual growth. Get ready to explore the profound biblical insights in this masterful book.

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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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