

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, October 10, 2025



Hamas executed her son. Faith sustains her. Can a grieving mother help others heal?

Kravitz Office Supply store is a rainbow-colored world of paper, notebooks and pens. Winnie-the-Pooh backpacks. Felix the Cat water bottles. Stacks of printers. The masking tape Rachel Goldberg-Polin needs is here somewhere. There's a specific type that works best. Only three shops in Jerusalem carry the generic beige rolls that bundle, hold and seal. The ones that don't peel off fabric that's not 100% cotton. And they need to be about an inch wide, enough for the numbers to pop.

The numbers, which she writes in black sharpie, count the days of a brutal war that began Oct. 7, 2023. They count the days since Goldberg-Polin's son, Hersh, was kidnapped by Hamas. They didn't stop when he was executed on day 328.

The store offers single rolls or packs of three. Goldberg-Polin is a one-roll-at-a-time person. There's no buying an extra roll at this local office supply shop in Talpiyot, near where she lives. Or spreading them around the house. Or putting one inside a carry-on just in case. That would be planning for the war to go on, and she's determined to do all she can to make it stop.

For the first 330 days, Goldberg-Polin fought to save her son's life, not knowing he was executed on day 328...

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Top News

- Hamas executed her son. Faith sustains her. Can a grieving mother help others heal?
- Largest US Lutheran denomination installs Yehiel Curry as its first Black presiding bishop
- In Chicago, clergy and faith-based protesters say ICE is threatening their religious freedom
- Young lives cut short on an unimaginable scale: the 18,457 children on Gaza's list of war dead



Goldberg-Polin became one of the most distinctive leaders to emerge out of Israel and for American Jews since Hamas' attack on October 7. Her plight was made...

Largest US Lutheran denomination installs Yehiel Curry as its first Black presiding bishop

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America installed the Rev. Yehiel Curry as its first Black presiding bishop Saturday, a landmark moment for the predominantly white denomination.

"It hasn't really hit me yet," Curry told The Associated Press a week before his installation. "The fact that you're a first."

Curry succeeds the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, who served for 12 years and was the first woman to lead the ELCA.

During Eaton's tenure, Curry watched as the ELCA conference of bishops went from majority men to majority women.

"I think her presence mattered," he said. "And I'm hopeful that if presence matters that we will start to see more and more leaders of color."

A formal ceremony at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis kicked off Curry's six-year term, which began Oct. 1. He was elected at the ELCA Churchwide Assembly on July 30 in Phoenix...



Bishop Yehiel Curry, who was recently elected as the first Black presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), poses for a photo, Friday, Sept. 26, 2025, in Chicago. (AP Photo/Talia Sprague)

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In Chicago, clergy and faith-based protesters say ICE is threatening their religious freedom

Last month, the Rev. David Black stood in front of a Chicago-area U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility and spread his arms wide. Adorned in all black and wearing a clerical collar, the pastor looked up at a group of masked, heavily armed ICE agents on the roof and began to pray.

"I invited them to repentance," Black, a minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), said in an interview. "I basically offered an altar call. I invited them to come and receive that salvation, and be part of the kingdom that is coming."

But when Black began to lower his arms a few seconds later, the agents responded to his spiritual plea by firing pepper balls, or chemical agents that cause eye irritation and respiratory distress, video footage shows. One struck Black in the head, exploding into a puff of white pepper smoke and forcing him to his knees. Fellow demonstrators rushed to his aid, and as the pastor rubbed his face in pain, the agents continued to fire.

"We could hear them laughing," Black said.

It was one of several dramatic and violent scenes that unfolded in recent weeks near an ICE detention facility in Broadview, Illinois. About 12 miles from downtown Chicago, the suburban site has seen scores of demonstrators repeatedly confront ICE agents — sometimes jeering at agents or using acts of civil disobedience to block the entrance to the facility as part of a groundswell of protests against President Donald Trump's ongoing immigration crackdown in the city... Continue Reading [religionnews.com](https://www.religionnews.com)



Young lives cut short on an unimaginable scale: the 18,457 children on Gaza's list of war dead



Rakan Hamdi Yahya Al-Najjar - 10yrs - Israeli airstrike



Omar Ahmed Abdel Naser Shamlakh - 4 mths - Israeli airstrike



Yaqeen Khader Fathi Hammad - 12yrs - Israeli airstrike



Lana Ashraf Yasser Al-Ghusein - 10yrs - Israeli airstrike



Hind Rami Iyad Rajab - 5yrs - Israeli airstrike



Khaled Mohammed Fathi Jabr - 7yrs - Israeli airstrike

Rakan lived in Khan Younis with his parents Alaa and Hamdi, who were both doctors, and nine siblings. Colleagues and friends said the children held Egyptian citizenship and that Alaa and Hamdi had been planning to leave for Egypt and enrol their children at university in Cairo. On the morning of Rakan's death Alaa had left the house to go to work as a paediatrician at the Nasser medical complex. A few hours later an Israeli airstrike struck the family home, killing Rakan and eight of his siblings and severely injuring one of his brothers and his father. Hamdi, his father, died a few days later of his injuries. "My only hope is that those who were killed are not just names on paper," said Alaa's colleague at the Nasser complex, Dr Ahmed al-Farra.

Omar lived in an apartment in a big pink house in Sheikh Eljeen in south-west Gaza. Three families occupied the house, which consisted of two floors containing four apartments. He was the youngest of 10 victims across three generations of the same family that was killed in an Israeli airstrike. "The whole family was buried under the rubble," Waf'a Shamlakh, Omar's UK-based cousin, told the Independent. "They only found two whole bodies. The others were in parts or unrecognisable." Of Omar and his two-year-old brother Abdel, who was also killed, Shamlakh said: "They were just starting their lives, they still had dreams."

Yaqeen, Gaza's youngest influencer, offered practical survival tips for daily life under bombardment on social media, such as advice on how to cook with improvised methods when there was no gas. She played an active role in the Ouena collective, a Gaza-based non-profit organisation dedicated to humanitarian relief. In one of her final posts, she wrote: "Today was a day of joy for Gaza's orphans - we were giving them new clothes to bring a little happiness." She was killed after a series of heavy Israeli airstrikes hit the house where she lived with her family in Deir al-Bala in central Gaza. Her body, torn apart by the bombing, was recovered from beneath the rubble....

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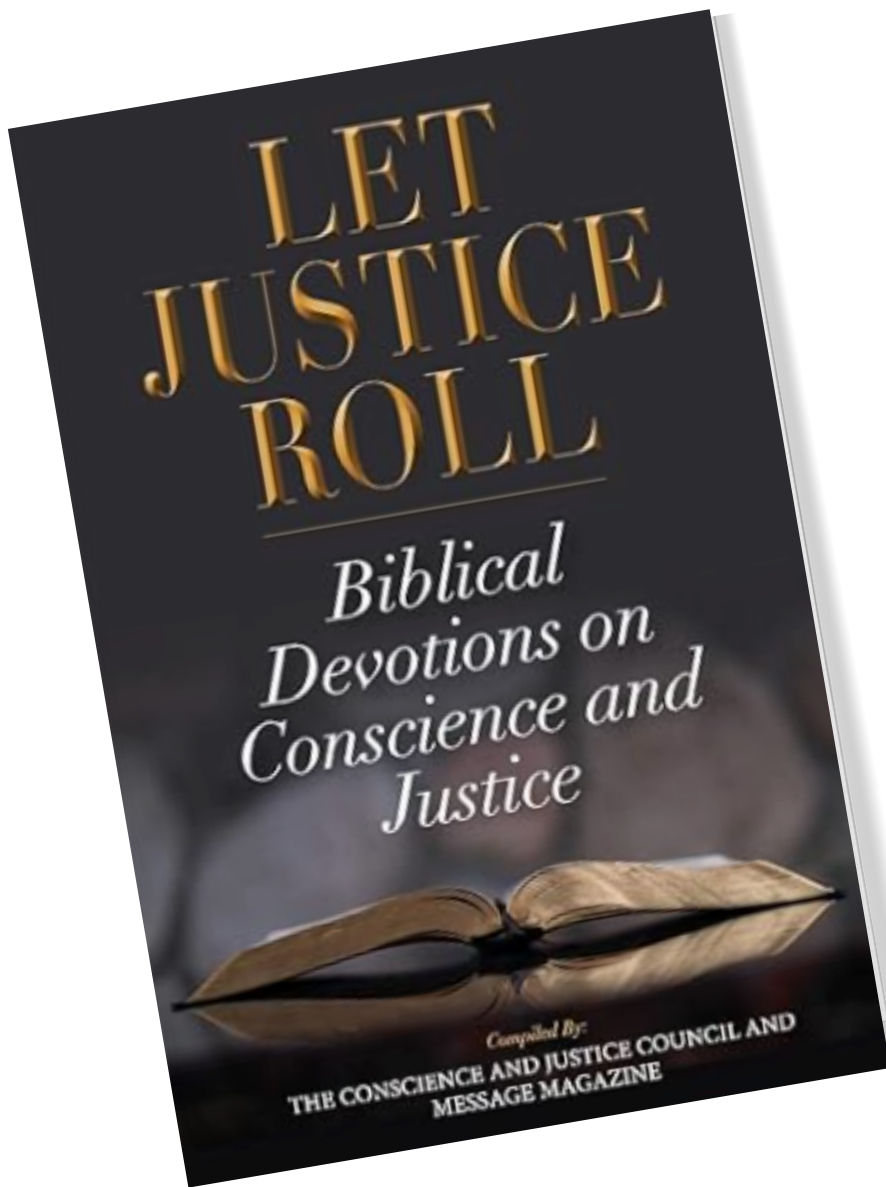
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OCTOBER 3RD**
8:00 PM EDT
7:00 PM CDT

**IF YOU
MISSED IT**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnDjWGEal4Y>

WATCH VIDEO





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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