

# THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, January 10, 2025



## Top News

- 2025 Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Campaign
- Faith on the Hill – The religious composition of the 119th Congress
- Jimmy the Baptist: Carter redefined 'evangelical,' from campaigns to race and women's rights
- Pentagon agrees to historic legal settlement with gay and lesbian veterans



### Are You Ready for the 2025 Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Campaign?

Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Sabbath—January 11—will kick off the 2025 Liberty Magazine Campaign season, which runs through to the end of March. We've developed a bundle of resources that will help you plan an impactful Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Campaign in your local church. Click <https://www.religiousliberty.info/religious-liberty-campaign-materials> to learn more



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THE LIGHT  
GO OUT**



GIVE YOUR OFFERING ONLINE  
AT [ADVENTISTGIVING.ORG](http://ADVENTISTGIVING.ORG)  
Search for "Liberty" under  
"World Offerings"

**JANUARY 11, 2025**



# Faith on the Hill

## The religious composition of the 119th Congress



When the U.S. Congress convenes for its 119th session on Jan. 3, it will have marginally fewer Christians than it did in the previous session (2023-25), continuing a gradual, 10-year decline. Christians will make up 87% of voting members in the Senate and House of Representatives, combined, in the 2025-27 congressional session. That's down from 88% in the last session and 92% a decade ago.

Overall, there will be 461 Christian members of Congress when the 119th Congress meets, compared with 469 in the previous Congress and 491 during the 2015-17 session. It will be the lowest number of Christians since the start of the 2009-2011 congressional session, the first for which Pew Research Center conducted this analysis.<sup>1</sup> *(This analysis does not include three vacant – or soon to be vacant – seats whose eventual occupants are unknown, including the Ohio Senate seat of Vice President-elect JD Vance.)*

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

### Jimmy the Baptist: Carter redefined 'evangelical,' from campaigns to race and women's rights

PLAINS, Ga. (AP) — Before reaching the 1978 peace deal between Egypt's Anwar Sadat and Israel's Menachem Begin, Jimmy Carter managed months of intense preparation, high-stakes negotiations at Camp David and a field trip to the Gettysburg battlefield to demonstrate the consequences of war.

But looking back on his most celebrated foreign policy achievement, the 39th president said intricate diplomacy ultimately wasn't the deciding factor.

"We finally got an agreement because we all shared faith in the same God," Carter told biographer Jonathan Alter, as he traced his Christianity, Begin's Judaism and Sadat's Islam to their common ancestor in each religion's sacred texts. "We all considered ourselves the sons of Abraham."

Carter, who died Sunday at 100, was widely known as a man of faith, especially after his long post-presidency became defined by images of the Baptist Sunday School teacher building homes for low-income people and fighting diseases across the developing world.

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



Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., Rosalynn Carter, President Jimmy Carter, Coretta Scott King, Christine Parris King, sister of the late Dr. King, and U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young sing during a reception honoring friends of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Social Change in Washington on Oct. 3, 1978. (AP Photo/Barry Thumma, File)

# Pentagon agrees to historic legal settlement with gay and lesbian veterans

The Pentagon has reached a historic legal settlement with more than 35,000 gay and lesbian military veterans who were dismissed because of their sexual orientation, and in many cases denied an honorable discharge and the array of services they had earned, CBS News has learned.

Under the terms of the agreement, veterans whose discharge papers reference their sexual orientation as a reason for their separation from the military can now avoid a cumbersome legal process and be re-issued paperwork that eliminates any reference to their sexuality. If they were denied an honorable discharge, they will also be eligible for an immediate upgrade review, the agreement says.

"When I was discharged because of my sexual orientation, I felt that my country was telling me that my service was not valuable – that I was 'less than' because of who I loved," said Sherrill Farrell, a U.S. Navy veteran who was a plaintiff in the case. "Today, I am once again proud to have served my country by standing up for veterans like myself, and ensuring our honor is recognized."

The settlement, which still must receive approval from a federal judge, would resolve the claims from a group of LGBTQ+ veterans who were kicked out of the military years ago because of their sexual orientation. The veterans filed a federal civil rights suit in August 2023 over the Defense Department's failure to grant them honorable discharges or remove biased language specifying their sexuality from their service records following the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" in 2011.

The class action lawsuit, which was brought in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, claims the Pentagon's failure to correct this "ongoing discrimination" represents a violation of constitutional rights.

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





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**25-28 SEPT.**

# **CJC 2025** **ANNUAL CONVENTION**

**OVERCOMING SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION**

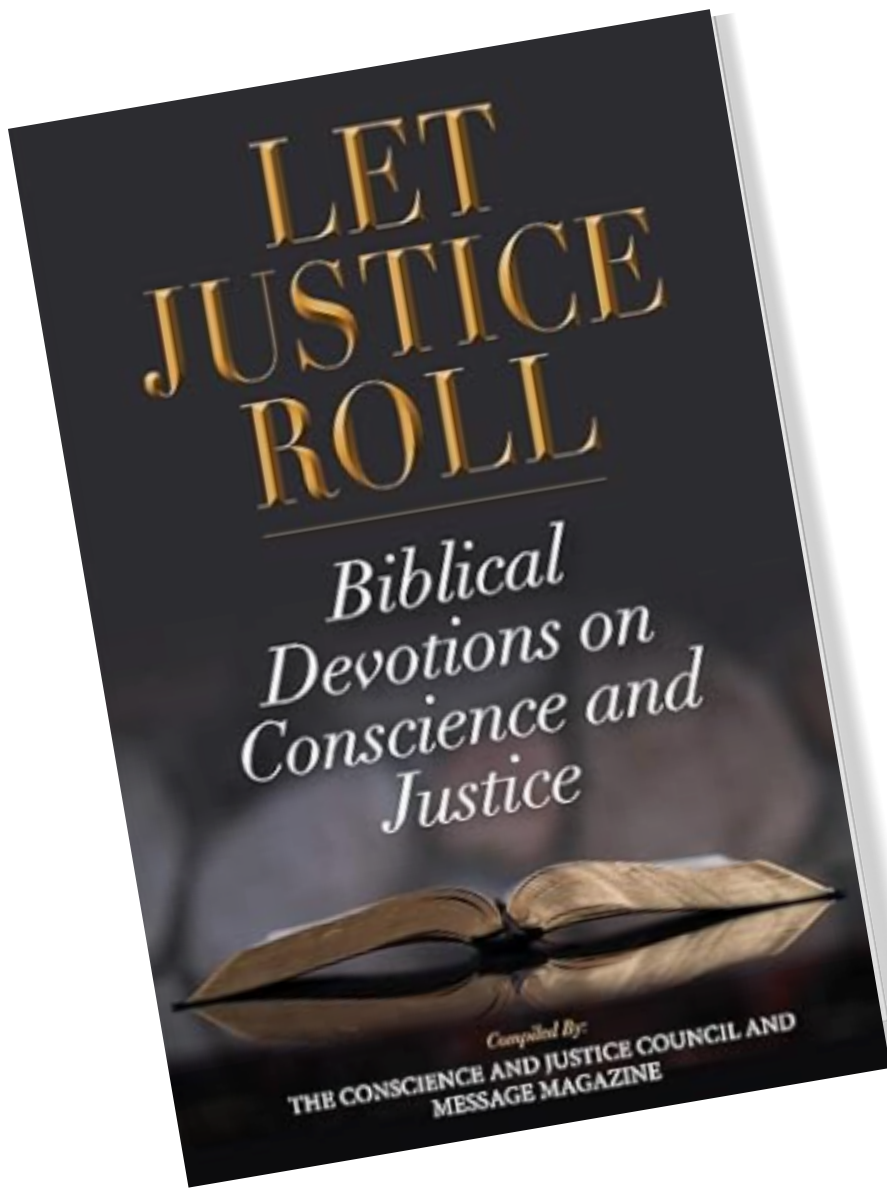
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## Let Justice Roll: Biblical Devotions on Conscience and Justice

"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.

Order your copy [HERE](#)



## 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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