

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

WWW.CJCOUNCIL.ORG



Friday, December 05, 2025



Top News

- University of Oklahoma instructor on leave over essay citing Bible
- Religiousness varies a lot by race among Democrats, relatively little among Republicans
- Ohio Republican lawmakers continue to pass legislation mingling religion with public schools
- African Christian leaders and health nonprofits seek to fill gaps after USAID cuts
- Catholic universities search for tricky balance on Trump anti-DEI push

University of Oklahoma instructor on leave over essay citing Bible

A University of Oklahoma graduate instructor is on administrative leave after a student filed a complaint, saying the grade she received on an essay where she cited the Bible was a violation of her rights.

In her essay, which was in response to an article about how people are perceived based on societal expectations of gender, junior Samantha Fulnecky wrote that traditional gender roles should not be considered stereotypes, according to an earlier Oklahoman, part of the USA TODAY Network, report. She cited the Bible to support her stance that eliminating gender in society would be "detrimental" because that would put people "farther from God's original plan for humans."

Fulnecky eventually filed a formal discrimination complaint with the university, along with a grade appeal. She also contacted Gov. Kevin Stitt.

OU announced on Nov. 30 that the school has placed the graduate instructor on administrative leave.



Continue Reading: apple.news

Religiousness varies a lot by race among Democrats, relatively little among Republicans

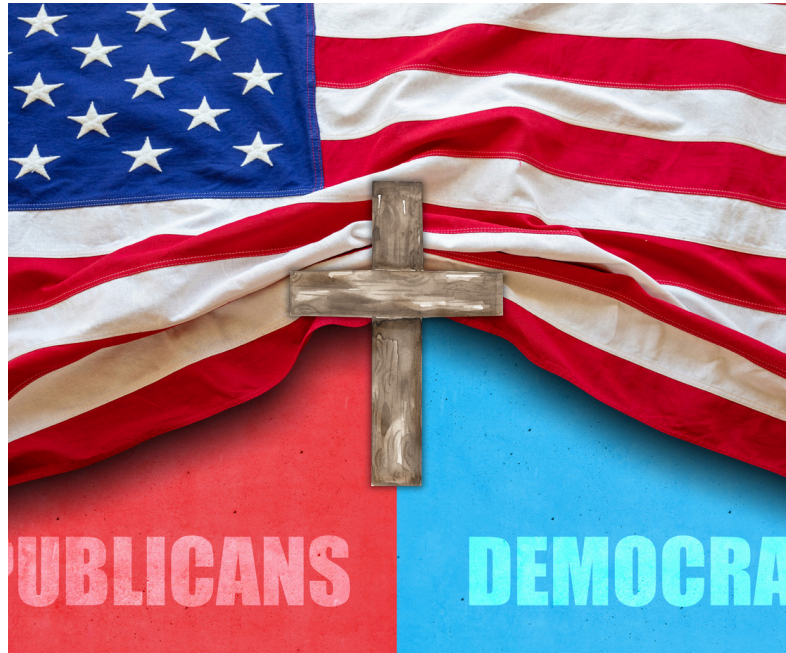
Democrats are less likely than Republicans to believe in God, to pray, to attend religious services, and to say religion is very important to them, according to Pew Research Center surveys.

At the same time, among Democrats, religiousness differs widely by race and ethnicity. On a host of measures, White Democrats – and sometimes Asian Democrats – are a lot less religious than Black and Hispanic Democrats. Among Republicans, there is less variation.

In general, U.S. adults who are Republican or lean toward the GOP are more religious than Democrats and Democratic leaners.

For instance, 52% of Republicans say they pray daily, compared with 35% of Democrats. And 41% of Republicans say they go to religious services monthly or more often, compared with 24% of Democrats.

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



Alice Guo, former mayor of Bamban in the Philippines' Tarlac province, attends a hearing at the Senate in Manila over accusations of human trafficking and links to Chinese organized crime. (Jam Sta Rosa/AFP/Getty Images)

Ohio Republican lawmakers continue to pass legislation mingling religion with public schools

Ohio Republican senators have passed a bill that would allow and put a display of the Ten Commandments in public school classrooms. This is just one of the recent pieces of legislation that would add more Christianity to the education system.

One of the longest battles of all time: how involved should religion be in the government? For some state lawmakers, it hasn't been enough.

"It is inexcusable that more focus has not been shown towards these historic texts," state Sen. Terry Johnson, R-McDermott, said.

The majority of GOP senators passed S.B. 34, which would require public schools to display "historic" texts in classrooms.

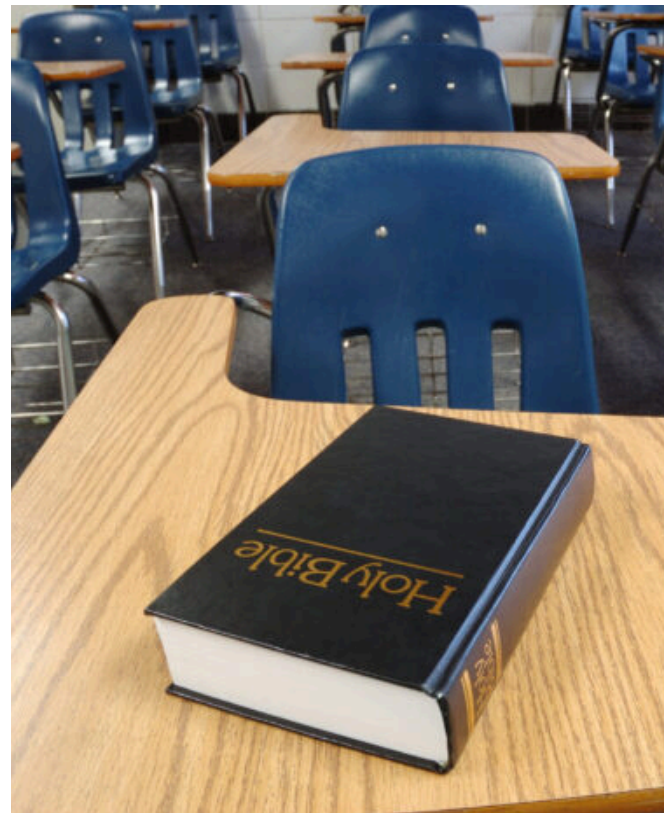
The list includes the Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Articles of Confederation, the mottoes of both the U.S. and Ohio, the Magna Carta, the Mayflower Compact, the Northwest Ordinance, and the Ten Commandments.

"This bill will expose our students to the documents which have, in America, served as the backbone of our legal and moral traditions," Johnson said. Of the nine documents listed, school districts only have to choose four. But Democrats argue it's a mandate.

"Did you notice that little piece in there – if someone gives [documents], if someone donates them, that they need to then display them?" Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio, D-Lakewood, said.

Antonio, a former educator, said it's unconstitutional to put religious texts in public school classrooms.

Continue Reading [ohiocapitaljournal.com](https://www.ohiocapitaljournal.com)



Getty Images.

African Christian leaders and health nonprofits seek to fill gaps after USAID cuts



An Ethiopian woman stands by U.S. Agency for International Development sacks of wheat to be distributed by the Relief Society of Tigray in the town of Agula, in the Tigray region of northern Ethiopia, May 8, 2021. (AP Photo/Ben Curtis, file)

African Christian leaders attending a conference with faith-based health organizations in late November called for countries on the continent to do more to replace U.S. Agency for International Development funds that were cut by the Trump administration earlier this year.

"We don't have to wait until the taps are finally locked in Europe and America," said Catholic Bishop Matthew Kukah of the Diocese of Sokoto, in Nigeria, at the Thursday (Nov. 27) closing press conference for the gathering. While African leaders appreciate foreign support, "it shouldn't be an excuse for us not doing the things we need to do in Africa," the bishop said.

"We need to begin to raise resources in our own countries to fill up the gap," warned the Rev. Francis Mkandawire, general secretary of the Evangelical Association of Malawi, who condemned the idea of "business as usual." "There's fatigue out there and it's affecting us already."

Continue Reading: religionnews.com

Catholic universities search for tricky balance on Trump anti-DEI push

In August, when the University of Notre Dame renamed its Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Sister Thea Bowman, a sainthood candidate and Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration who was the first African American to receive the university's prestigious Laetare Medal, there was no fanfare, not even a press release.

The name change, though welcomed by Bowman's congregation, seemed to have as much to do with attempts by President Donald Trump's administration to eliminate DEI in higher education as it did honoring the mid-20th-century educator, writer and evangelizer.

The FSPA sisters' president, Sister Sue Ernster, celebrated the choice, saying Bowman was "a prophetic voice for racial justice and Gospel joy" and "continues to inspire the Church to be more inclusive, courageous and compassionate." The Bowman Center still offers multicultural student programs and services and still houses the gender relations center, the office of student enrichment, the diversity council and PrismND, the LGBTQ+ student organization.

Continue Reading: religionnews.com



OUR TEAM



Edward Woods III
Chairman,
Conscience & Justice Council
PARL Director, Lake Region



Jerome Hurst
Vice Chairman,
Conscience & Justice Council
PARL Director, Allegheny West



Cryston Josiah
Secretary,
Conscience & Justice Council
PARL Director, Central States



Tony Anobile
Vice President
Church Ministries



Amireh Al-Haddad
PARL Director
Southern Union



Mark Brown
PARL Director,
Southeastern Conference



Jack Doggett
PARL Director,
Allegheny East



Dee Edwards
Pastor,
South England Conference



Everton Ennis
PARL Director,
South Atlantic



Paul Goodridge
PARL Director,
South Central



Olivia Hemmings
Chair, Henry & Sharon Fordham
Department of Religion,
Washington Adventist University



Orlan Johnson
PARL Director,
North American Division



Kerwin Jones
PARL Representative,
At-Large



Andrea Trusty-King
Regional PARL Representative,
Pacific Union



Bettina Kruse
Editor,
Liberty Magazine



Ifeoma Kwesi
Professor, School of Theology,
Oakwood University



Derek Lane
Regional PARL Representative,
North Pacific Union



Allen Martin
PARL Director,
Northeastern



Nicholas Miller
Professor of Church History,
Seventh-day Adventist
Theological Seminary



Jason C. North, Sr.
PARL Director,
Southwest Region



Zdravko Plantak
Professor of Religion and Ethical Studies,
Loma Linda University



Melissa Reid
Executive Director,
North American
Religious Liberty Association



Andre Michael Wang
PARL Director
North Pacific Union

IF YOU
MISSED
IT...

Conscience & Justice COUNCIL

LIVE STREAM
@CONSCIENCEANDJUSTICECOUNCIL

THE LEAST OF THESE:
IMPACT OF THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

• CO-HOSTS •

EDWARD WOODS III
PARL DIRECTOR,
LAKE REGION CONFERENCE
CJC CHAIRMAN

PASTOR CRYSTON JOSIAH
PARL DIRECTOR,
CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE
CJC SECRETARY

TIMOTHY GOLDEN
VISITING PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY
WHITMAN COLLEGE

COLETTE NEWER
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, ADVENTIST
COMMUNITY SERVICES, NORTH
AMERICAN DIVISION

DANIELLE PILGRIM
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY
AND COMMUNICATIONS,
DEEP CENTER

JEROME HURST
PARL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
DIRECTOR, ALLEGHENY WEST
CONFERENCE

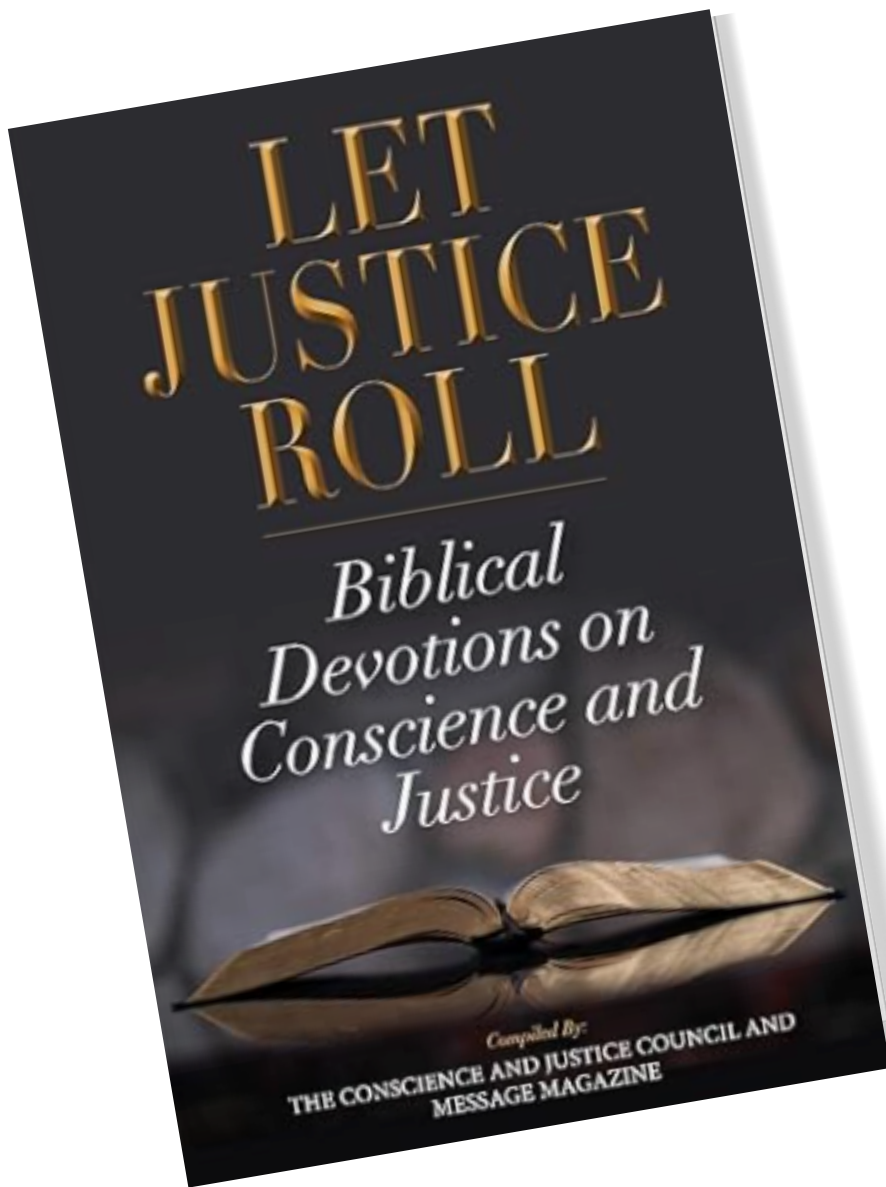
PANELISTS

**FRIDAY
NOV 21** | **8 P.M. EDT
7 P.M. CDT**

<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.

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.

LIKE » FOLLOW » SHARE

