

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, August 1, 2025



Top News

- Most Americans say Republican and Democratic voters cannot agree on basic facts
- Trump's religious rhetoric clashes with Canada's secular politics
- New Jersey church threatened by eminent domain gets a reprieve – for now
- Exvangelicals: Who They Are, Why They Left, and What They Believe
- The number of Christian-majority countries fell between 2010 and 2020
- Muslim Americans share political attitudes with both the Democratic and Republican parties

Most Americans say Republican and Democratic voters cannot agree on basic facts

Eight-in-ten U.S. adults say that when it comes to important issues facing the country, Republican and Democratic voters not only disagree on plans and policies, but also cannot agree on basic facts.

Another 18% say voters in opposing parties can agree on basic facts, even if they disagree about policies, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in March.

Views are essentially unchanged since we first asked a similar question in 2016. That year, 81% said that most Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton supporters could not agree on basic facts.

One thing Republicans and Democrats can largely agree on, however, is their disagreement: 83% of Democrats and independents who lean Democratic now say voters from the two parties disagree on the basic facts, as do 79% of Republicans and GOP leaners.

These views exist amid wide divides between Trump and Kamala Harris voters over many – but not all – topics, including cultural issues and the role of government. Republicans and Democrats more broadly also often turn to different sources of news and information, and many view those in the other party in a negative light.

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Trump's religious rhetoric clashes with Canada's secular politics

Throughout his new term, starting with his inaugural address, President Donald Trump has said he was “saved by God” to make America great again. In Canada, Prime Minister Mark Carney rarely evokes religion in public; his victory speech in April never used the word God. “Canada forever. Vive le Canada,” he ended.

As Canada and the U.S. now skirmish over Trump’s tariff threats and occasional bullying, the leaders’ rhetoric reflects a striking difference between their nations. Religion plays a far more subdued role in the public sphere in Canada than in its southern neighbor.

Trump posed in front of a vandalized Episcopal parish house gripping a Bible. He invites pastors to the Oval Office to pray with him. His ally, House Speaker Mike Johnson, says the best way to understand his own world view is to read the Bible.

Such high-level religion-themed displays would be unlikely and almost certainly unpopular in Canada, where Carney — like his recent predecessors — generally avoids public discussion of his faith. (He is a Catholic who supports abortion rights.)

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Thurvi Valli and her grandfather, Sitham Valli pray inside Crypt Church at the national shrine of Saint Joseph's Oratory at Mount Royal, in Montreal, Saturday, June 28, 2025. (AP Photo/Luis Andres Henao)

New Jersey church threatened by eminent domain gets a reprieve – for now

For months, the members of Christ Episcopal Church in Toms River, New Jersey, have been at odds with the town’s mayor — first over a proposal to build a homeless shelter on the church’s property, and then over the mayor’s plan to knock the church down to build a park with pickleball courts.

While plans for the shelter were rejected by the Toms River zoning board last month, a proposal to take Christ Church’s property by eminent domain has apparently stalled.

Toms River Mayor Daniel Rodrick told the Asbury Park Press newspaper that a vote on the eminent domain proposal — which had been scheduled for Wednesday (July 30) — is off the agenda for now. A first reading of the proposal had passed back in May, but a second vote is needed for approval.

As of Wednesday morning, the second reading was not on the proposed agenda for the meeting, which is published online.

Rodrick, who opposed the failed shelter, has said in the past he hoped the proposal would lead the church to sell its property. He’s told the newspaper he was surprised the church refused to sell

“I thought they would be willing sellers,” the mayor told the Asbury Park Press, adding that he plans to survey the public to see if the community supports the plan to take the church’s property.



Satellite view of the property of Christ Episcopal Church, bottom left, in Toms River, N.J. (Image courtesy Google Maps)

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Exvangelicals: Who They Are, Why They Left, and What They Believe

In the 2010s, the term “exvangelical” emerged to refer to individuals who have left evangelicalism and who have chosen to join non-evangelical Christian traditions, embrace non-Christian beliefs, or leave religion entirely. The exvangelical community has gained visibility in recent years as former believers increasingly share their stories. While the reasons why exvangelicals left vary, they often cite disappointment with church teachings, particularly the treatment of LGBTQ people.

This Spotlight examines who identifies as exvangelical, the factors that contributed to their disaffiliation from evangelicalism, and their current views on a range of cultural issues.

PRRI’s 2023 Religious Change survey asked Americans about their current religious affiliation and the religion in which they were raised. In addition, Christians were asked follow-up questions about whether they identify with or were raised as born-again or evangelical Christians. Based on these questions, we can identify those who grew up as evangelicals but no longer identify as such.



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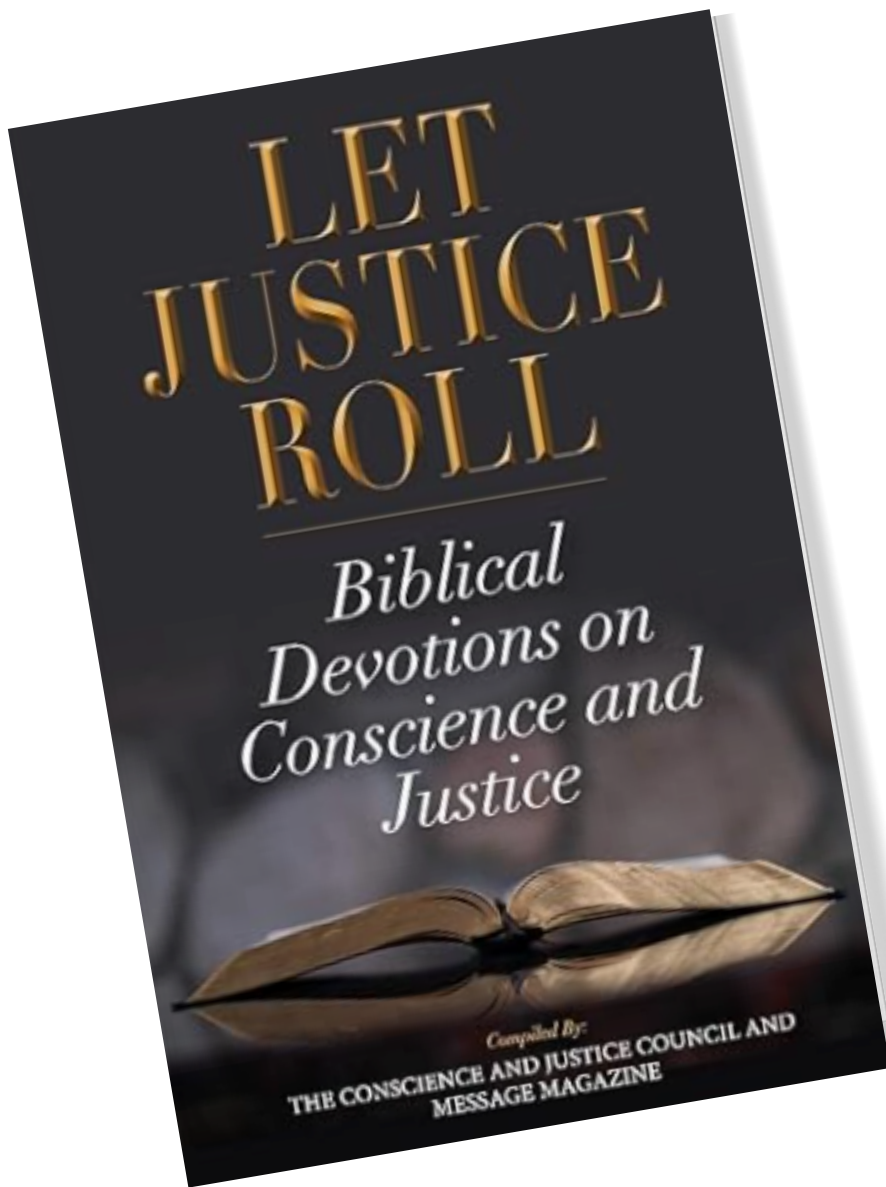
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KEY DATES

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Expo: September 28th, 2025



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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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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