

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

WWW.CJCOUNCIL.ORG



Friday, July 11, 2025



Top News

- IRS says churches can now endorse political candidates
- Essential isn't a strong enough word': Loss of foreign workers begins to bite US economy
- In rare move, Catholic leaders issue dueling letters criticizing GOP budget bill
- Newly-elected Seventh-day Adventist Church leader reflects on challenges and faith's healthy living

IRS says churches can now endorse political candidates

In a break with decades of tradition, the Internal Revenue Service says it will allow houses of worship to endorse candidates for political office without losing their tax-exempt status. The surprise announcement came in a court document filed on Monday.

Since 1954, a provision in the tax code called the Johnson Amendment says that churches and other nonprofit organizations could lose their tax-exempt status if they participate in, or intervene in "any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office."

The National Religious Broadcasters and several churches sued the IRS over the rule, arguing that it infringes on their First Amendment rights to the freedom of speech and the free exercise of religion. The IRS rarely enforced the rule. During President Trump's first term, he promised to "get rid of and totally destroy the Johnson Amendment and allow our representatives of faith to speak freely and without fear of retribution."

In Monday's court filing, the IRS didn't go that far. But it did say that when a house of worship "in good faith speaks to its congregation, through its customary channels of communication on matters of faith in connection with religious services



A local resident leaves a church after voting in an election in Cumming, Iowa. (Charlie Neibergall / AP)

Continue Reading: apple.news

Essential isn't a strong enough word': Loss of foreign workers begins to bite US economy

President Donald Trump's crackdown on immigration is starting to ripple across the U.S. economy.

From small farms in California, to meat packing facilities in Nebraska to corporate giants like Disney, businesses are scrambling to replace workers after recent administration actions have taken immigrants, both legal and illegal, out of the labor force, including several hundred thousand people who had been given temporary work permits under President Joe Biden.

That's because foreign-born workers, or their relatives, have become critical in some labor sectors.

"Essential isn't a strong enough word," said Matt Teagarden, head of the Kansas Livestock Association.

"It is some version of an immigrant, maybe not first generation, but second or third generation, that are just critical to that work."

Continue Reading: [apple.news](#)



Dairy cows stand in the corral of a dairy farm west of Bakersfield, California, on April 9, 2025. | Frederic J. Brown/AFP via Getty Images

In rare move, Catholic leaders issue dueling letters criticizing GOP budget bill

In an unusual display of public disagreement among U.S. Catholic hierarchy, bishops signed on to two competing letters to lawmakers on Thursday (June 26) regarding the Republican-led federal budget proposal containing a massive funding expansion for immigration enforcement, with each letter exhibiting different levels of criticism of the bill.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the umbrella organization that typically represents U.S. prelates in political matters, took a firm but mixed approach to the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" in a letter. Building off of a separate statement from late May that expressed a combination of praise and concern about the bill, USCCB leaders began their new letter by stating they are "grateful for provisions that promote the dignity of human life and support parental choice in education" in the budget, such as efforts to curtail public funding for abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood.

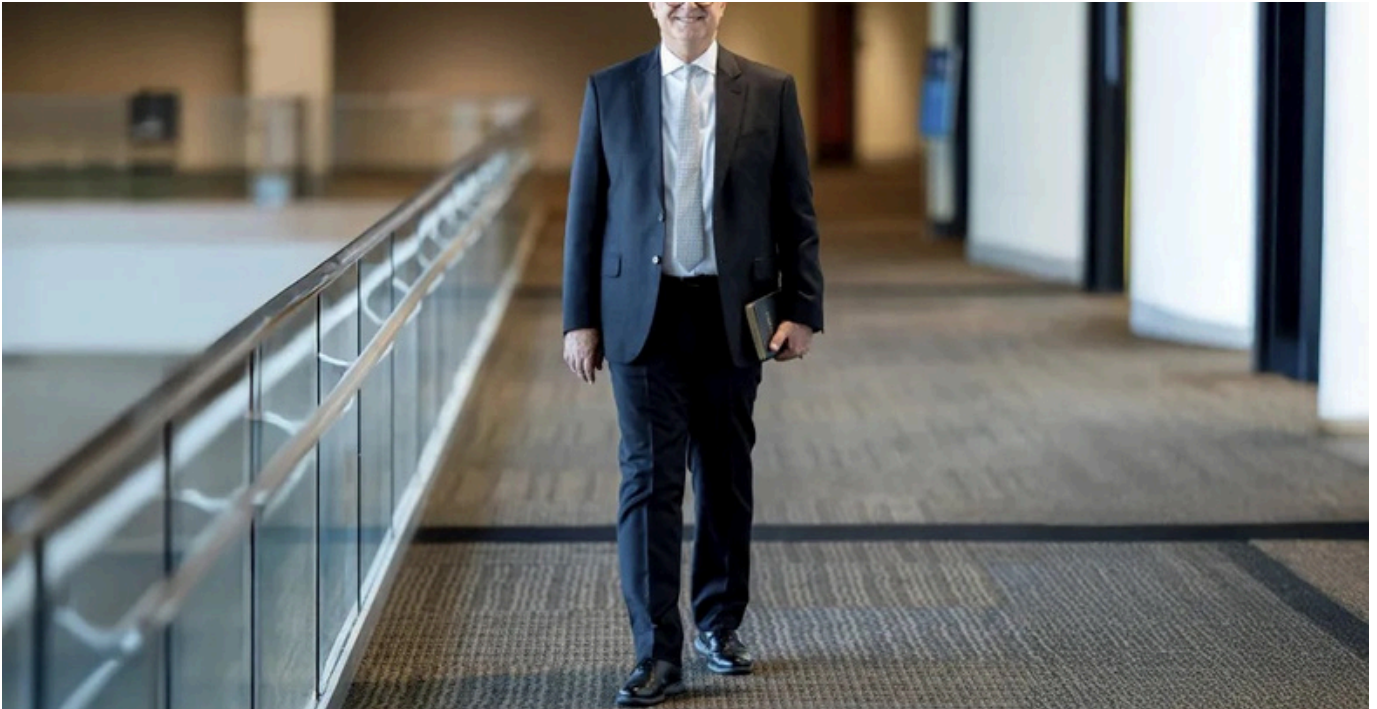
But the letter also included a lengthy critique, urging senators — who are set to vote on the bill as soon as Friday — to "make drastic changes to the provisions that will harm the poor and vulnerable." The letter breaks down the USCCB's opposition to proposed cuts to food assistance programs, health care initiatives such as Medicaid and clean energy incentives.

Continue Reading [religionnews.com](#)



The Capitol is seen in Washington, as Republicans work on legislation to advance President Donald Trump's spending and tax bill, Tuesday, June 10, 2025. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

Newly-elected Seventh-day Adventist Church leader reflects on challenges and faith's healthy living



This photo provided by Dallas Gregory Dunn, shows Erton Köhler, the newly elected president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference, posing for a portrait at a gathering of the denomination's top governing body in St. Louis, Mo., on July 4, 2025. (David Sherwin via AP)

Erton Köhler, a Brazil-born pastor known for his innovative approach to evangelism, is the newly elected president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference — and the first to hail from South America.

Köhler will serve as the spiritual and administrative leader for the global movement, which claims 23 million members in more than 200 countries. He was voted into the position during a recent gathering of the General Conference, the denomination's top governing body, in St. Louis.

The church's sprawling geographic reach poses just one of the hurdles ahead in his duties as president, especially with today's political polarization and national allegiances, Köhler said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"If I can choose one word that represents the challenge of this moment, the word is 'unity,'" he said. "It's not easy to keep that unity because our members, they're citizens, they're living in the local society, they're influenced by that."

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a Protestant denomination that views the Bible as the literal word of God and the primary authority for Adventists. They are known for their beliefs that Christ's second coming is near, and that the Bible requires observing the Sabbath on Saturday, the seventh day of the week.

Just days into his new role, Köhler shared his hopes for the future, including his plans to use technology and social media to reach young people. He also reflected on how the faith's spiritual focus on healthy living resonates with many today and other issues facing the church.

Continue Reading: [religionnews.com](https://www.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



25-28 SEPTEMBER



CJC2025 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Overcoming Oppression

Biblically Dismantling Abuses of Power

SPEAKERS



JOHN C.
YANG



ANDREA
KING



DAVID
PERSON



SHARRON
HENLEY



BISHOP
BURTON



RENEE
SCRUGGS



MICHAEL W.
CAMPBELL



DILYS
BROOKS



PRESTON
FOSTER



LISA CLARK
DILLER



MYRON
EDMONDS



AMIREH
AL-HADDAD



OBERY
HENDRICKS



NICOLE
JORWIC



RYAN
BURGE



RAQUEL
MARTIN



ROMAN
PALOMARES



ERICA
KEITH



DOROTHY
HUSTON

*A complimentary t-shirt and access to the
2025 CJC Convention Archives for those who
register by Thursday, July 31.*



800 Monroe Street SW
Huntsville, Alabama 35801

SCAN QR
CODE TO
REGISTER



FACEBOOK



YOUTUBE



INSTAGRAM

@CJCCOUNCIL

www.cjccouncil.org

REGISTER HERE



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

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES EXPO

CALLING ALL PASTORS
WITH A HEART FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT!

✕ **SEPTEMBER 28, 2025** ✕
HUNTSVILLE, AL

Present your innovative ministry
initiatives and **WIN a \$10,000**
mentoring scholarship!

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

- Pastors active in community outreach
- Ministries with innovative local programs

THE FORMAT

- 7-minute presentation
- Q&A with judges

JUDGING CRITERIA

- Mission alignment
- Impact
- Innovation
- Sustainability

Apply Here



NOTE:

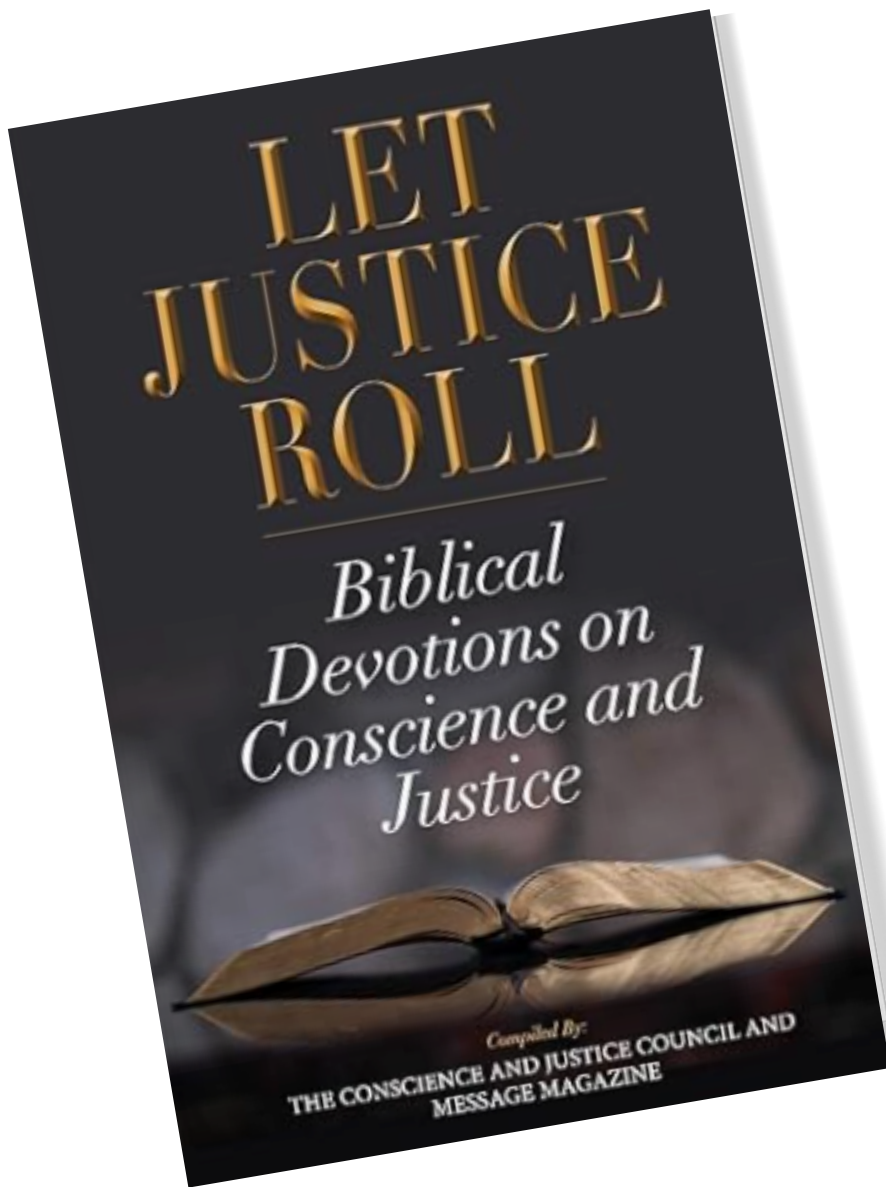
**Must be registered for the
Conscience & Justice Council
Convention**

KEY DATES

Apply By: August 1st, 2025

Submit By: August 31st, 2025

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.

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

