

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Friday, August 29, 2025



Top News

- Trump Suggests Many Americans Would Prefer Autocracy
- Trump sending National Guard to Chicago will be trickier than D.C. deployment
- Majority of Americans Continue to Back Expanded Early Voting, Voting by Mail, Voter ID
- Religion and spirituality among LGBT Americans
- Majorities of adults see decline of union membership as bad for the U.S. and working people

‘Maybe We Like a Dictator’: Trump Suggests Many Americans Would Prefer Autocracy

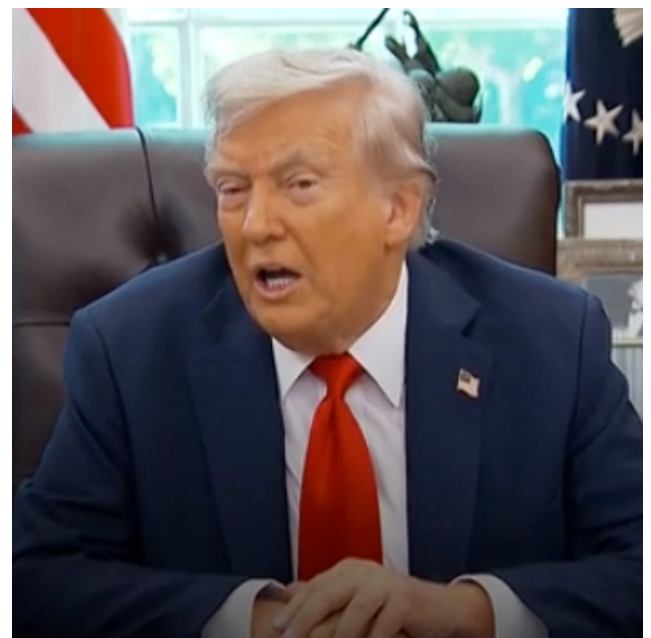
President Donald Trump said Monday that he thinks Americans may like a “dictator,” though he wouldn’t describe himself as one.

“They say: ‘We don’t need him. Freedom, freedom, he’s a dictator, he’s a dictator,’” Trump told reporters at the Oval Office. “A lot of people are saying, ‘Maybe we like a dictator.’ I don’t like a dictator. I’m not a dictator. I’m a man with great common sense and a smart person.”

Trump’s remarks came as he signed a raft of executive orders, including one in which he tasked Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth to lead the training of a specialized National Guard unit dedicated to “ensuring public safety” in Washington, D.C.

The President’s deployment of the National Guard to Washington, D.C., and threats to deploy the National Guard to other Democratic-led cities purportedly to crack down on crime—despite decreasing crime rates—have raised concerns about his authoritarian tendencies and presidential overreach.

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



Trump sending National Guard to Chicago will be trickier than D.C. deployment

President Trump doubled down on his threat to send the National Guard to Chicago, but local leaders are voicing doubts about the legality of the move.

The big picture: Trump says he wants to use the military presence in Chicago to fight crime, homelessness and undocumented immigration, but while the home rule laws in Washington, D.C. make it easier to federalize law enforcement, it's unclear if the law supports this in Illinois.

What they're saying: "We're going to take him to court," Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker said Monday. "There is no law on the books that allows him to put federalized troops on the streets of Chicago."

- "The whole point of the system of state control of local law enforcement and of state militias is as a check against federal abuse of power," Northwestern University law professor Paul Gowder said.
- "This has been true since the founding of the United States, and the only alteration to this system of divided power was after the Civil War."

Between the lines: Usually, the president and a state's governor are in lockstep to mobilize the National Guard. In this case, Pritzker is against it, but Trump could still federalize state troops without the governor's approval.

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



Majority of Americans Continue to Back Expanded Early Voting, Voting by Mail, Voter ID

President Donald Trump's recent pledge to "lead a movement" to end mail-in voting comes as a 58% majority of Americans favor allowing any voter to cast their ballot by mail if they want to.

But Democrats and Republicans continue to hold starkly different views: Today, 83% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents support no-excuse voting by mail, while 68% of Republicans and Republican leaners oppose it.

Several other proposals related to the U.S. electoral system win widespread support across the political spectrum, according to a new Pew Research Center survey of 3,554 adults conducted Aug. 4-10, prior to Trump's announcement.

Among the most-supported proposals:

- Requiring electronic voting machines to print a paper backup of a voter's ballot (84% in favor)
- Requiring all voters to show government-issued photo identification (83%)
- Making early, in-person voting available for at least two weeks prior to the election (80%)
- Making Election Day a federal holiday (74%)

Each of these draws support from majorities in both partisan coalitions.

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



Religion and spirituality among LGBT Americans

Americans who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) tend to be less religious than those who are not LGBT. In addition, adults who are lesbian, gay or bisexual have more negative views than other U.S. adults do about religion, though many say religion plays some positive roles in society.

But when it comes to some questions about spirituality – such as whether human beings have a soul or spirit – the gaps between lesbian, gay or bisexual adults and other people tend to be smaller.

This Pew Research Center analysis explores how adults who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender approach religion and spirituality. Our findings hold even after controlling for age and other demographic traits.

Roughly half of U.S. adults who are LGBT (48%) say they identify with a religion, describing themselves as Christian, Jewish, Muslim or an adherent of another religion. By comparison, 73% of non-LGBT Americans identify with a religion, according to a Center survey conducted in summer 2024.

Meanwhile, 52% of LGBT adults are religiously unaffiliated, which is about double the share of non-LGBT Americans who say the same (26%). The religiously unaffiliated category includes people who identify as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” when asked about their religion. LGBT Americans are more likely than non-LGBT adults to identify with each of these subgroups.

LGBT Americans also are far less likely than non-LGBT adults to say religion is very important to them personally (17% vs. 42%). And they are about half as likely as non-LGBT adults to say they attend religious services at least monthly (16% vs. 31%) or pray daily (23% vs. 46%).

Overall, 8% of Americans are LGBT, according to our survey.

A different Center survey – the 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (RLS) – explored spiritual beliefs, practices and experiences among those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. (The RLS did not include a question about transgender identity.)

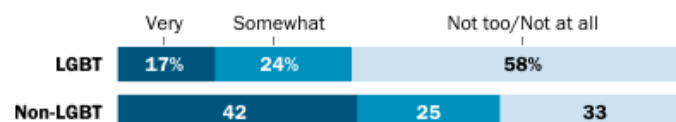
Despite being less religious, large shares of lesbian, gay and bisexual Americans hold spiritual beliefs. For example, 80% say they believe “people have a soul or spirit in addition to their physical body.” And 69% believe “there is something spiritual beyond the natural world, even if we cannot see it.”

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

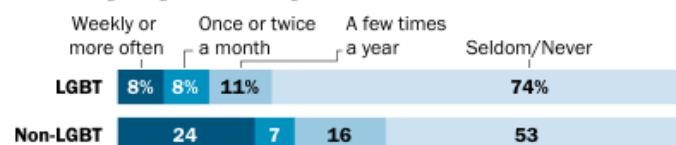


17% of LGBT Americans say religion is very important to them personally

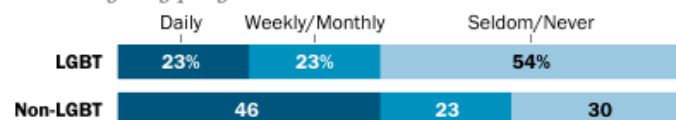
% who say religion is __ important in their lives



% who say they attend religious services ...



% who say they pray ...



Note: Those who did not respond are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 15-Aug. 4, 2024.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

North Dakota Democratic Rep. Collette Brown is seen on May 1, 2025, during a bill signing in Memorial Hall of the state Capitol in Bismarck, N.D. (AP Photo/Jack Dura, File)

Majorities of adults see decline of union membership as bad for the U.S. and working people



Majorities of Americans see the large reduction in the share of workers represented by unions over the past several decades as a bad thing for both the United States and its working people.

- 60% of U.S. adults say the decline has been bad for the country.
- 62% say this has been bad for working people.

The share of U.S. workers who belong to a union has fallen since 1983, when 20.1% were union members. In 2024, 9.9% of U.S. workers were in a union.

Since Pew Research Center first asked these questions in 2021, majorities of adults have consistently said that the decline in union membership has been bad for both working people and the country.

The share of Americans who say this has been bad for the country is up 6 percentage points since last year (from 54%). The increase has come entirely among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents:

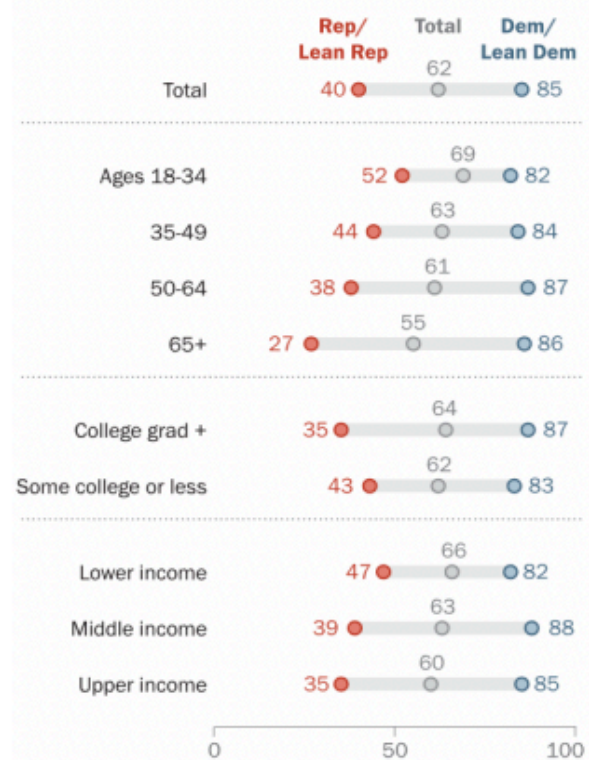
- Today, 82% of Democrats say this decline has been bad for the country, up from 69% who said this a year ago.
- 85% of Democrats also say the decline in union membership has been bad for working people, up from 74% in 2024.

By contrast, majorities of Republicans and GOP leaners continue to say that the decline in union membership has been good for the country (62%) and for working people (59%).

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

Americans differ by party – and within parties – over the impact of declining union membership on working people

% who say the large reduction in the percentage of workers represented by unions has been *bad* for working people



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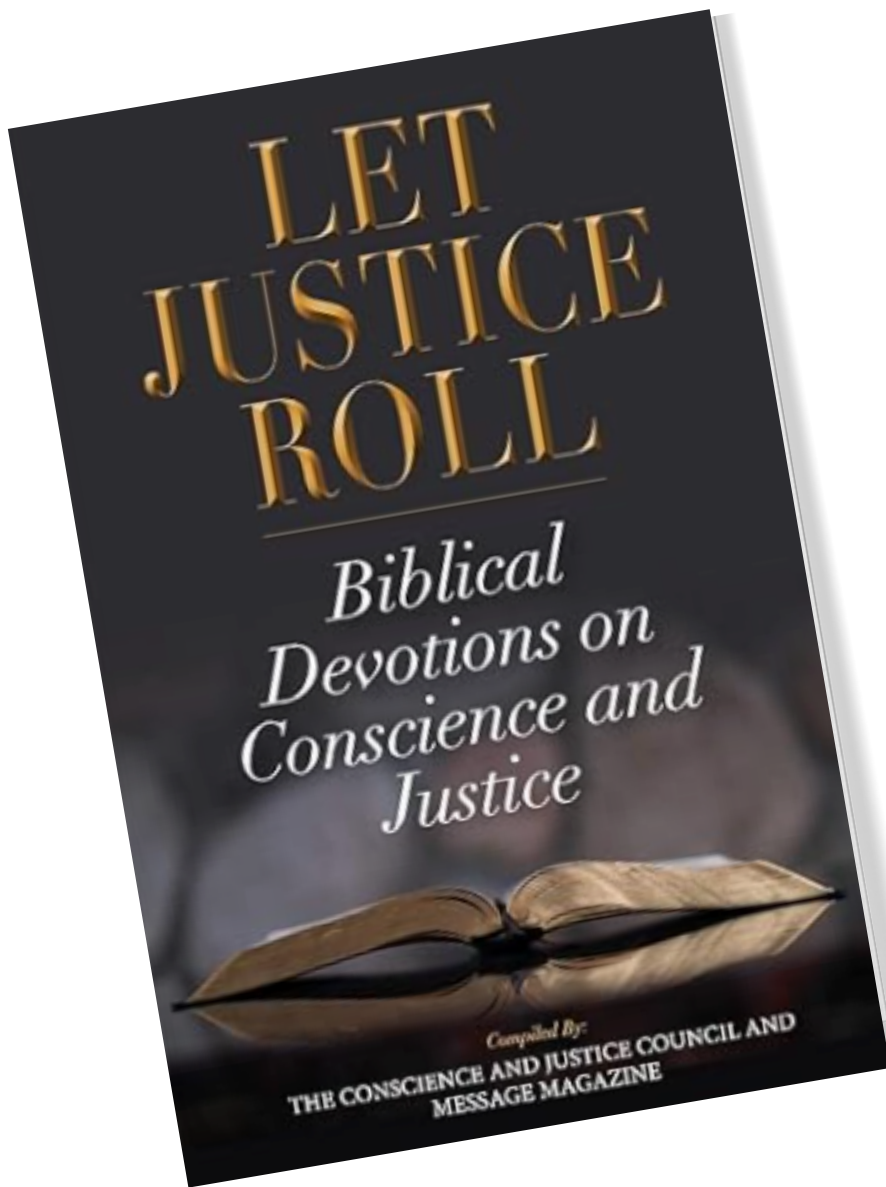
NOTE:

**Must be registered for the
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Convention**

KEY DATES

Submit By: September 14, 2025

Expo: September 28, 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.

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