

THIS WEEK IN CONSCIENCE & JUSTICE

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Tuesday, May 20, 2025



Top News

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- **'Wanton destruction': Republicans sneak nonprofit killer into their tax package**
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'No more Nottoway': Historic Louisiana plantation house destroyed in massive fire

Flames ripped through a massive mansion in Louisiana, destroying much of the historic structure that was used as a plantation house when it was completed in 1859, authorities said.

The fire that engulfed the Nottoway Plantation House on Thursday devastated the building along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans, Iberville Parish President Chris Daigle said on social media. Nearly a dozen fire departments from surrounding towns battled the blaze, he said. No injuries were reported.

Before the fire, it was a resort and event venue, and its website described it as "the South's largest remaining antebellum mansion." Daigle called it "a cornerstone of our tourism economy and a site of national significance."

The 53,000-square-foot (4,924-square-meter) home on a former sugar plantation about 65 miles (105 kilometers) northwest of New Orleans had a three-story rotunda adorned with giant white columns and hand-carved Italian marble fireplaces, according to a description on its website.

The mansion's owner, Louisiana attorney Dan Dyess, said in a written statement that the fire had led to a "total loss" after all the time and money he invested in the building.

See more: abcnews.go.com



Nottoway Plantation House

What does 'woke' mean and why are some conservatives using it?

To be "woke" politically in the Black community means that someone is informed, educated and conscious of social injustice and racial inequality, Merriam-Webster Dictionary states.

A historical recording of the protest song "Scottsboro Boys" by Lead Belly in the 1930s -- as captured by Smithsonian Folkways, the non-profit record label of the National Museum -- is often cited as one of the earliest uses of the term. The Scottsboro Boys were nine Black teenagers falsely accused of raping two white women aboard a Southern Railroad freight train in northern Alabama in 1931 in a case that lasted decades, according to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. In the recording of the Lead Belly song several years after the incident, "stay woke" urged Black Americans to be aware of the potential for racist violence in the South.

The term, in one of its contemporary meanings, began to gain more popularity at the start of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2014, according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary. The Ferguson, Missouri, protests that year spotlighted the social injustices and police brutality faced by the Black community following the fatal police shooting of Michael Brown.

See more: abcnews.go.com



Mike Johnson pushes for unity, but dismisses 'radical, woke progressive left' House Speaker Mike Johnson took the stage and immediately addressed last week's assassination attempt on Trump. Octavio Jones/Getty Images



In this May 24, 2021, file photo, activist Maurice Mitchell speaks to those attending a demonstration by various activists who are calling on President Joe Biden to not compromise on election promises regarding climate change, health care, jobs and social justice, in Washington, D.C. Jemal Countess/Getty Images for Green New Deal, FILE

'Wanton destruction': Republicans sneak nonprofit killer into their tax package

House Republicans on Monday quietly revived a proposal that would grant the Trump administration broad authority to crush nonprofits it views as part of the political opposition, from environmental justice organizations to news outlets. Fight for the Future and other advocacy groups called attention to the measure, which was buried in the final pages of the House Ways and Means Committee's draft reconciliation bill, starting on page 380.

A markup hearing for the legislation is scheduled to take place on Tuesday at 2:30 pm ET. The proposal would empower the U.S. Treasury Department to revoke the tax-exempt status of nonprofits deemed material supporters of terrorism, with only a hollow simulacrum of due process for the accused organizations. It is already illegal for nonprofits to provide material support for terrorism.

"The House is about to hand the Trump administration the ability to strip nonprofits of their 501(c)3 status without any reason or recourse. This is a five-alarm fire for nonprofits nationwide," said Lia Holland, campaigns and communications director at Fight for the Future. "If the text of last autumn's H.R. 9495 is passed in the budget, any organization with goals that do not line up with MAGA can be destroyed with a wink from Trump to the Treasury." The measure passed the Republican-controlled House late last year with the support of more than a dozen Democrats, but it never received a vote in the Senate.

See more: msn.com



US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson speaks during a meeting with House Republicans and President-elect Donald Trump at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Washington, DC, U.S., on November 13, 2024. ALLISON ROBBERT/Pool via REUTERS© provided by AlterNet

Episcopal Church refuses to resettle white Afrikaners, ends partnership with US government



Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt (right) speaks as border czar Tom Homan looks on during a White House briefing on Monday. Andrew Thomas/AFP via Getty Images

In a striking move that ends a nearly four-decades-old relationship between the federal government and the Episcopal Church, the denomination announced on Monday (May 12) that it is terminating its partnership with the government to resettle refugees, citing moral opposition to resettling white Afrikaners from South Africa who have been classified as refugees by President Donald Trump's administration.

In a letter sent to members of the church, the Most Rev. Sean W. Rowe — the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church — said that two weeks ago the government “informed Episcopal Migration Ministries that under the terms of our federal grant, we are expected to resettle white Afrikaners from South Africa whom the U.S. government has classified as refugees.”

The request, Rowe said, crossed a moral line for the Episcopal Church, which is part of the global Anglican Communion that boasts among its leaders the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a celebrated and vocal opponent of apartheid in South Africa.

See more: [npr.org](https://www.npr.org)

2024 PRRI Census of American Religion

Religious Demographics in Motion: Updates and Analysis
The 2024 PRRI Census of American Religion is an annual update to the 2023 PRRI Census of American Religion, which provides reliable, comprehensive county-level estimates on religious affiliation and diversity across the United States. View the 2023 PRRI Census of American Religion county-level estimates.

For the 2024 PRRI Census of American Religion, a random sample of 40,000 Americans who are part of Ipsos KnowledgePanel reveals that most trends in American religious affiliation at the national level saw little change between 2023 and 2024. Percentages of non-Christian religious Americans as well as unaffiliated Americans are similar to those in 2023. Around two-thirds of Americans (65%) continue to identify as Christian, including 40% who identify as white Christian and 25% who identify as Christians of color, in 2024. These percentages closely match those in 2023, when 66% of Americans identified as Christian, including 41% as white Christians and 25% as Christians of color.

In 2024, the percentage of white Christian Americans continues a trend of gradual decline from a peak of 47% in 2013. In contrast, religiously unaffiliated Americans have steadily increased since 2013, reaching a new peak of 28% in 2024. The percentage of Christians of color has remained consistent during the same time period. The remaining 6% of Americans belong to a non-Christian religion, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Unitarian Universalism, or another world religion.

See more: [ppri.org](https://www.ppri.org)



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25-28 SEPT.

CJC2025 ANNUAL CONVENTION

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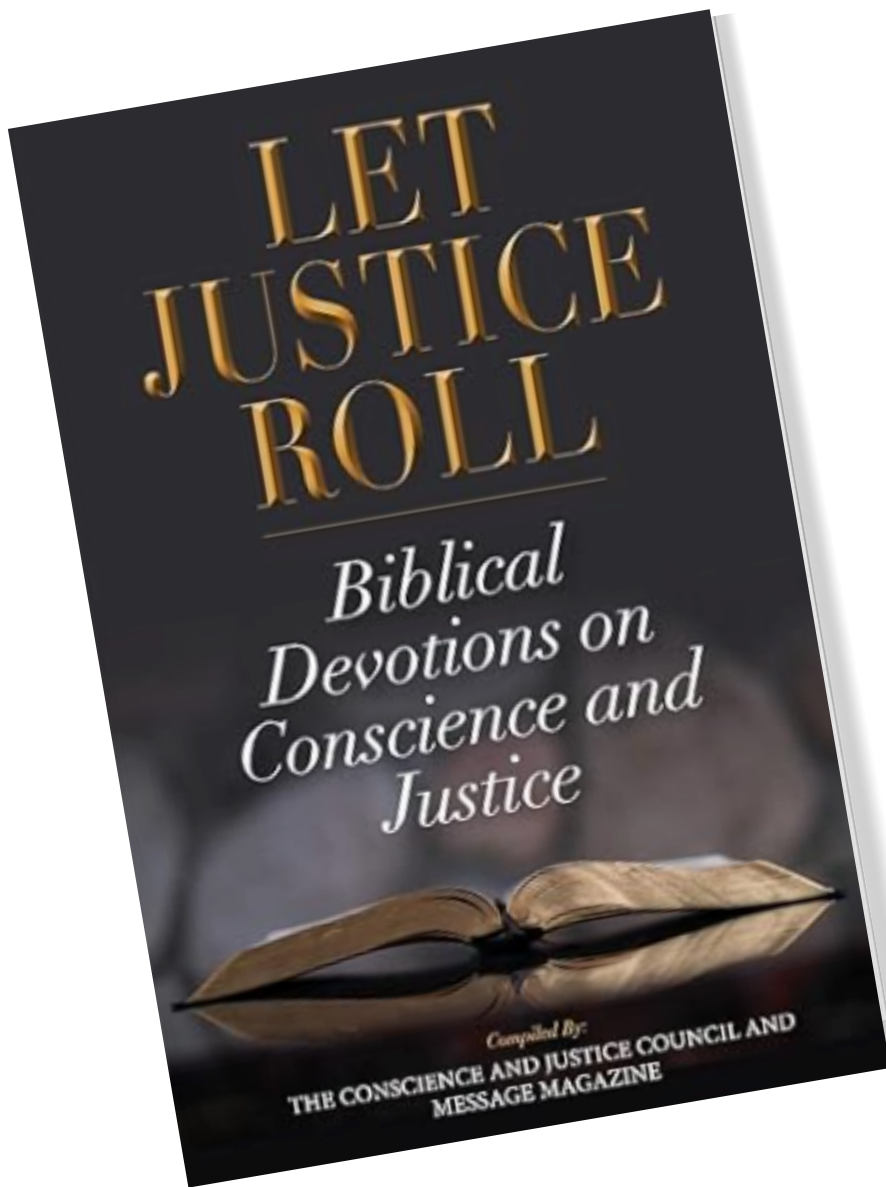
**Must be registered for the
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Convention**

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.

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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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