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EDITOR: Sheila Elwin
religiousliberty@southernunion.com

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“...the government is intruding on deeply personal matters of religion... [and usurping] God’s authority for themselves...”



Oklahoma Wants Schools Teaching Bible, Louisiana Sued on Commandments

Right as Louisiana has been challenged on ordering the 10 Commandments to be posted in all public schools, Oklahoma's State Schools Superintendent has mandated that Bible classes will be taught in all public schools.

Oklahoma

Oklahoma State Schools Superintendent Ryan Walters issued a directive to all school districts at June's board meeting, stating they must incorporate the Bible "as an instructional support into the curriculum" for grades 5-12. "Adherence to this mandate is compulsory," Walters said in a letter announcing the directive. "Further instructions for monitoring and reporting on this implementation for the 2024/25 school year will be forthcoming. Immediate and strict compliance is expected."

Oklahoma state law does allow for Bible instruction, but makes it a district-by-district decision. However, the superintendent, in response to this reminder, said

that "just because they (a school district) doesn't like it, just because they are offended by it doesn't mean they won't do it. We will enforce the law and they will be held accountable. And in Oklahoma, the Bible will be used in the classroom and taught in its historical context," he said.

At least 12 large school districts, including Norman, Moore, Stillwater, Bixby, Deer Creek, Piedmont, Yukon, Jenks, Broken Arrow, Collinsville, Owasso, and Tulsa, have already stated publicly that they will not alter their curriculum. Walter has threatened to hold "rogue" public school districts accountable if they don't incorporate the Bible in their curriculum.

Louisiana

Meanwhile in Louisiana, a group of parents from nine multi-faith families — Christian, Jewish, Unitarian Universalist, and non-religious — and including

Continued on page 2...

Church, Homeless Fight to Retain Shelters in Colorado, Oregon

Colorado

In Colorado, a federal district court has granted a preliminary injunction in *Church of the Rock, Inc. v. Town of Castle Rock, Colorado*. It prevents the town from interfering with the church's homeless shelter effort. The church uses an RV and a trailer on their property in a temporary shelter ministry.

The church claims RLUIPA (Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act), but Castle Rock believes that the zoning regulations

in question do not "substantially burden the church's exercise of its religious beliefs." The town wants the church to find other ways to help the needy, i.e. hotel rooms or housing in residentially-zoned areas.

Oregon

In Grants Pass, Oregon, a group of homeless people sued the city over laws that prevent them from sleeping on public property. The case was filed in 2018, and in 2023 the U.S. Court of Ap-

peals for the Ninth Circuit ruled against Grants Pass.

The court decided that local laws go against the Eighth Amendment, which prevents "cruel and unusual punishments," because the city didn't have enough shelter beds to house the homeless. However, they had failed to count religious homeless shelters in their assessment. Following a recount, the Supreme Court in 2024 ruled for the city, and said federal judges may not dictate homeless policies.

Schools Challenged, Cont. from page 1

some clergy among them, has filed in a federal district court on behalf of their children. They are challenging the recent statute requiring the Ten Commandments be posted in every lower and higher education public school classroom. They say the new statute violates both the Free Exercise and Establishment clauses.

One father, Jeff Sims, a Presbyterian minister, stated, "By favoring one version of the Ten Commandments and mandating that it be posted in public schools, the government is

intruding on deeply personal matters of religion ... As a pastor and father, I cannot, in good conscience, sit by silently while our political representatives usurp God's authority for themselves and trample our fundamental religious-freedom rights."

More than 40 years ago, the Supreme Court over-

turned a similar state law, holding that the separation of church and state bars public schools from posting the Ten Commandments in classrooms. Louisiana is currently the only state requiring the Ten Commandments to be displayed in public schools.

- Navy SEALs and other Navy personnel have reached a settlement after being denied religious accommodation from an earlier COVID vaccine mandate. It ensures that those refusing the vaccine for religious reasons may now have their records corrected, whether they left or remained in service. The Navy has also agreed to provide training, make a statement, and pay lawyers' fees.
- A high school in Washington, D.C., has been ordered by federal district court to reinstate the Fellowship of Christian Athletes as a recognized student organization for 2024/25. FCA had been suspended because it required its student leaders to affirm its Statement of Faith, which bars any relations outside heterosexual marriage, and so was seen as discriminatory. The court decided that the anti-discrimination policy used in this way, however, was a violation of RFRA.
- Two related auto hauling and logistics companies have agreed to a \$65,000 settlement plus reporting, monitoring, and employee training, following a suit over religious and racial discrimination and retaliation. A Torah observant employee had his Sabbath accommodation revoked, and was harassed for being Israeli.

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Register 

NEWS OF THE WORLD

France's Olympic Hijab Ban Rankles, Belgium Church Must Compensate Woman

France

During the Olympics, while France had to allow female athletes from other countries to wear the hijab, it did not allow its own athletes to follow this religious conviction. The Olympics has a broader policy, and allows Muslim athletes to wear this hair covering.

France's hijab ban at the Olympics is in line with their earlier refusal to accommo-

date Muslim soccer players during the month of Ramadan. The United States and most other countries accommodated their players during this time in March and April.

Some posit that this stance may violate international human rights standards. If nothing else, it alienates Muslims and worsens tensions in the country.

Belgium

The Catholic Church in Belgium is facing a challenge to its policies. Two church leaders, the retired Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels and his current successor, have been court ordered to pay compensation to a 62-year-old woman, Veer Dusauchoit.

Dusauchoit has served for years in her local parish, which no longer has a

priest, helping with communion, funerals, services, and other activities. She applied for a four-year deacon program, but was rejected because the Catholic Church reserves the roles of deacons, priests, and bishops for men only.

The civil court ruled the men were guilty of discrimination against the nationally recognized equality of men and women.

Project 2025, Cont. from page 4

already pointed to proposals in the document that would undermine both the spirit and letter of America's constitutional regime, but let me highlight just one. Tucked away on page 589, in the section focused on reforming the Department of Labor, is a breathtaking proposal to use American laws to support religious doctrine.

The section begins: "God ordained the Sabbath [meaning Sunday] as a day of rest, and until very recently the Judeo-Christian tradition sought to honor that mandate by moral and legal regulation of work on that day." This is followed by a few sentences on why a regular day off is beneficial, and then the proposal that "Congress should encourage communal rest by amending the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

"We...should condemn policy proposals... which attempt to impose a religious orthodoxy or preference."

to require that workers be paid time-and-a-half for hours worked on the 'Sabbath.'"

Here we glimpse a key assumption behind Project 2025: that America is first and foremost for those who embrace, not just Christianity, but the particular type of Christianity that prioritizes Sunday rest.

Not only would using the law in this way strike at the heart of the First Amendment's prohibition against the establishment of religion, it would also send a clear message that anyone outside the dominant Christian tradition belongs to a lesser class of citizens.

Whether right or left ... an elected official's true litmus test for fitness to serve is whether they abide by the restraints and duties imposed on them by the Constitution. It's much the same test for new policy ideas, too.

We can and should condemn policy proposals that disregard our Constitution's limits on governance, or which attempt to impose a religious orthodoxy or preference.

And that's the litmus test that Project 2025 fails. Spectacularly.



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Sabbath Keepers Should Take Note of “Project 2025”

The following is excerpted from Bettina Krause's editorial in Liberty Magazine.

The 2025 Presidential Transition Project has caused quite a stir since it was made public last April. Some on the political left have called Project 2025 an unapologetic blueprint for a conservative coup On the other hand, the writers of the document describe it simply as “the conservative movement’s unified effort to be ready for the next conservative administration to govern

at 12 noon, January 20, 2025.”

In 1906, when *Liberty* magazine was first published, nearly every state in the Union had some form of Sunday “blue law” on the books. These were laws imposing criminal and other penalties for working on Sunday — the sabbath of America’s Protestant majority *Liberty* magazine was launched with the goal of defeating a proposed national Sunday law and extending First Amendment religious freedom protection beyond majority religious

practices.

In the first issue, the editor of *Liberty* argued that America was not a “Christian nation” in the sense that its laws should enforce specific Christian doctrines Because in a world where America is a Christian nation — where laws can have the goal of advancing religious doctrine — penalizing Sabbath-breaking is not such an outrageous idea.

So, back to today and Project 2025. Others have

Continued on page 3...

Could
America as
a “Christian
nation”
enforce
Christian
doctrines in
laws?