

2026 Religious Freedom Annual Review

The United States of America at 250: Life, Religious Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

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Delegate Directory



Phil Adams

Pastor, Park Community Church, Illinois

Phil Adams is a pastor at Park Community Church in Chicago, where he serves in the Rogers Park neighborhood. Originally from Belfast, Northern Ireland, he earned an undergraduate degree in interactive multimedia design before spending several years working in East Asia. In 2015, he moved to Chicago and completed a Master of Divinity in intercultural studies. Following his graduate work, he helped plant a multiethnic church in Chicago's Little India neighborhood. For the past three years, he has served in his current pastoral role, working in one of the city's most religiously and culturally diverse communities. Adams and his wife, Ruth, are raising their four children in this environment, an experience that continues to shape both his ministry and perspective on faith across cultures.



Amy Andrus

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University

Amy Lynn Andrus joined the Center as an associate director in 2021. She previously worked as an attorney advisor for the Department of Justice in the Executive Office for Immigration Review, through the Attorney General's Honors Program. Amy graduated from BYU Law School in 2019, where she was a Clark Scholar and served as lead executive editor of the *BYU Law Review*. She was a W.G. and Helen Johnson Summer Fellow with the ICLRS, externing at the Office of General Counsel for the Pacific Area in Auckland, New Zealand. She also served as a member of the ICLRS Symposium Student Executive Committee and volunteered with the Immigration and Refugee Initiative in Dilley, Texas. Amy earned a master's degree from BYU in international and area studies, with an emphasis in international development. Her thesis focused on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Gospel Literacy EKort in Guatemala in the 1990s. She graduated summa cum laude from BYU with a bachelor's degree in English—Secondary Teaching and a Spanish Teaching minor. Amy previously worked as an editor for BYU's Kennedy Center for International Studies Publications Office, where she wrote and edited books, newsletters, conference proceedings, and the Culturgrams series.



Orit Avishai

Professor of Sociology, Fordham University, New York

Orit Avishai is a professor of sociology at Fordham University and an ethnographer whose work explores the intersections of law, religion, and American democracy. She earned law degrees from Tel Aviv University and Yale Law School, clerked at the Israeli Supreme Court, and practiced law before transitioning to academia. Her research draws on fieldwork with faith communities, civil society organizations, and legal advocates to examine how Americans understand religious freedom and how competing visions of faith shape public life. Her forthcoming book, *Faithful Resistance*, investigates how religious communities navigate the boundaries between religion and civic engagement. Her previous book, published by NYU Press, examined how Orthodox Jews negotiate identity and belonging. Avishai also writes for broader audiences, with work featured in outlets such as The Revealer, The Conversation, and The Forward.



Shima Baughman

Woodruff J. Deem Professor of Law and Distinguished Fellow, the Wheatley Institute

Shima Baradaran Baughman is the Woodruff J. Deem Professor of Law and a Distinguished Fellow at the Wheatley Institute. She is one of the most cited faculty in her field and a nationally recognized expert on bail, prosecutors, and police. Her current scholarship examines forgiveness, prosecutorial discretion, and the role of religious institutions in criminal justice reform, with work featured in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, National Public Radio, The Economist, and the Washington Post. Her articles have appeared in leading law journals including the University of Pennsylvania Law Review, Georgetown Law Journal, Texas Law Review, and the Journal of Empirical Legal Studies. She is author of *The Bail Book: A Comprehensive Look at Bail in America's Criminal Justice System* (Cambridge University Press) and coauthor of *Criminal Law: Case Studies and Controversies* (Aspen) and *Examples & Explanations in Criminal Law*. Baughman began teaching at Brigham Young University Law School, later joined the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, and has held leadership roles in the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools. She previously clerked for Judge Jay S. Bybee, worked at Kirkland & Ellis, and served as a Fulbright Senior Scholar in Malawi advising international organizations and litigating criminal and constitutional cases.



Annika Boone Barkdull

Research Fellow, Brigham Young University Law School, Utah

Annika Boone Barkdull graduated from Harvard Law School, where she served as an Executive Editor of the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy. After clerking for Justice Thomas Lee of the Utah Supreme Court and Judge Ryan Nelson of the U.S. Court of Appeals of the Ninth Circuit, she joined Schaerr | Jaffe LLP in Washington, DC, where her practice focused on First Amendment litigation. Annika's research centers on law &

religion.



Eric S. Baxter

Vice President and Senior Counsel, Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, Washington, D.C.

Eric S. Baxter is vice president and senior counsel at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, where he litigates high-profile religious freedom cases. He argued *Mahmoud v. Taylor* before the U.S. Supreme Court and has secured significant victories in federal courts across the country. His work has been featured in national media, including CNN, Fox News, C-SPAN,

The New York Times, The Washington Post, and the Los Angeles Times. After earning his law degree from Brigham Young University, Baxter clerked in the Eastern District of Michigan and later became a partner at Arent Fox in Washington, D.C. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Russian literature and linguistics from BYU and speaks Russian and Spanish. He and his wife are the parents of seven children and have two grandchildren.



Bill Benac

National Chairman, Religious Freedom Alliance Council

Bill Benac is national chairman of the Religious Freedom Alliance Council and an active board member for several nonprofit organizations, including the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, the Dallas–Fort Worth Alliance for Religious Freedom and Human Dignity, and Founding Forward, which promotes civic and constitutional education for high school students across the United States. He is also cofounder of Pathway India, an

organization that has provided education and rehabilitation services to more than 40,000 disadvantaged youth. Prior to his retirement, Benac held senior executive roles in global corporations, private equity firms, and entrepreneurial ventures. He earned a bachelor's degree and MBA from Brigham Young University and a juris doctor from Pace University. He is a certified management accountant and certified public accountant and is admitted to the Connecticut and New York bar associations.

**Elizabeth (Betsy) Bennion**

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies (ICLRS), J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University

Betsy joined ICLRS in 2025 as Associate Director for Latin America and the Caribbean. Previously, she served as a diplomat for the U.S. State Department in Mexico, Pakistan, Washington, D.C., and at NATO Headquarters in Belgium. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, she had a legal career. She worked on a prosecution team at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, clerked on both the Utah Supreme Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, taught at BYU Law School, and practiced at several large law firms. She also performed research for Human Rights Watch in San Francisco and provided appellate expertise for the Federal Public Defender Office in Salt Lake City. Her degrees include a J.D. from UCLA and M.A. from Stanford University. She grew up in Palo Alto, California, and Geneva, Switzerland. Besides her tours abroad with the U.S. State Department listed above, she has also lived in Brazil, England, Israel, and the Netherlands.

**Robert Burton**

Director (CTLI), Tocqueville Assistant Professor of Civic Thought and Leadership (History and Political Science), Center for Constitutional Studies, Utah Valley University

Robert J. Burton is the Tocqueville Assistant Professor of Civic Thought and Leadership within the Department of History and Political Science and director of the Civic Thought and Leadership Initiative (CTLI) within UVU's Center for Constitutional Studies. Within the fields of political philosophy, American political thought, and constitutional law, his research and teaching focus on civic education, civic virtue, and religion in public life. As director of CTLI, he leads a team dedicated to developing the next generation of citizens and civic leaders through innovative K-12 professional development, academic programming, and civics research. He received his PhD and MA in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame and his BA in English and Politics (summa cum laude) from Southern Virginia University. When not reading, teaching, or writing (his favorite thinkers include Alexis de Tocqueville, Jane Austen, and John Adams) he loves to trail run and adventure with his wife and seven kids.

**Elizabeth A. Clark**

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, Brigham Young University; Program Chair, Religious Freedom Annual Review, Utah

Elizabeth A. Clark is Associate Director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University. She has written over 40 chapters and articles and co-edited several books and journal issues on gender equality and freedom of religion or belief, law and religion in the Russo-Ukrainian War, and law and religion in the United States. Professor Clark has spent more than 26 years working on religious freedom in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as well as issues

of religion and security, comparative law and religion, and international religious liberty. She serves on advisory boards related to freedom of religion or belief for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and has engaged extensively with U.N. and OSCE forums. She has briefed the U.S. State Department, E.U. offices, and other foreign affairs agencies, testified before the U.S. Congress and foreign parliaments, and written amicus briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court. She has also analyzed draft religious legislation for governments and NGOs across more than a dozen countries and received a presidential human rights award from the government of Uzbekistan for her work. Before joining BYU Law School, she practiced appellate litigation at Mayer Brown in Washington, D.C. and clerked for Judge J. Clifford Wallace. She graduated summa cum laude from BYU Law, where she served as Editor-in-Chief of the BYU Law Review.



Ram A. Cnaan

Professor and Program Director, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice, Pennsylvania

Ram A. Cnaan is a professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice and director of the Program for Religion and Social Policy Research. He is the faculty founder of the Goldring Reentry Initiative, which works to reduce recidivism among formerly incarcerated individuals. An internationally recognized scholar, Cnaan specializes in faith-based social services, social innovation, volunteering, and prisoner reentry. He is also a Global Eminent Scholar at Kyung Hee University in South Korea. Cnaan developed the first practice doctorate in social work (DSW), now replicated by dozens of universities in the United States and China, and is currently leading the development of a practice doctorate in nonprofit administration. He lectures widely and teaches in multiple countries, contributing to global conversations on social policy and community engagement.



James Lance Conklin

Owner/Attorney, Concklin Immigration Law, LLC

Attorney Lance Conklin has been practicing Immigration Law for more than 25 years. He was first admitted to practice law in California in 1995 and has worked for some of the most prestigious Immigration Law firms in the United States. In addition to his experience in private practice, Lance has worked in the Non-Profit world at World Relief where he supported Immigrant Legal Services for low-income clients, and he has taught Immigration Law to new practitioners. He is also a Navy Veteran and has served as a minister. Lance opened Concklin Immigration Law, LLC (FNA Law Office of J. Lance Conklin) in 2014 where he exclusively practices U.S. immigration law. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from the University of California, Davis, and a J.D. from California Western School of Law in San Diego. He also holds a Master of Divinity degree from Gateway Seminary (FNA Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary) in California. In addition to running a busy practice, Lance is an Adjunct Professor at Trinity Law School in California teaching an Immigration Law course and leading the Immigration Clinic. He also serves as Associate Director for Good Samaritan Advocates at City of Refuge, Baltimore. Lance previously served as Pro Bono Chair for the DC Chapter of American Immigration Lawyers Association from 2016-2024 and now serves on

AILA's National Pro Bono Committee. He also previously served on the board of Maryland Immigrant Rights Coalition, serving as President from 2018 to 2021.



Erin Cranor

University Counsel, Brigham Young University

Erin joined the Office of General Counsel in 2022. She studied human developmental biology at Brigham Young University and received bachelor's and master's degrees in zoology in 1994 and 1995. After a part-time career in development and consulting for youth development nonprofit organizations and public service in K-12 education governance, she returned to BYU on a religious freedom fellowship. She received a J.D., *cum laude*, from the J. Reuben Clark Law School, where she served as co-editor of the BYU Education & Law Journal, and a master of education degree in educational leadership from the David O. McKay School of Education. Prior to joining the Office of General Counsel, Erin practiced in data privacy, international business, and religious freedom with Kirton McConkie. Erin is licensed to practice law in Utah, Nevada, and Idaho.



Robert M. Daines

General Authority Seventy, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Elder Robert M. Daines was sustained as a general authority seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in April 2023. At the time of his call, he was serving as a stake president and now serves in the North America Northeast Area Presidency. He has held numerous church callings, including full-time missionary in the Switzerland Zurich Mission, bishop, high councilor, and seminary teacher. Daines earned a Bachelor of Arts in American studies and a Bachelor of Science in economics from Brigham Young University and a juris doctor from Yale Law School. Professionally, he has worked as an associate at Goldman Sachs and as associate dean and professor of law and business at Stanford University. He has also taught at New York University and Yale University.



Derringer Dick

Strategic research associate, Becket Fund for Religious Liberty

Derringer Dick is a strategic research associate at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, where his research supports litigation involving religious liberty cases in federal and state courts. Since joining Becket in 2015, he has contributed to several major cases, including *Zubik v. Burwell*, *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, *Slockish v. U.S. Federal Highway Administration*, and *Harvest Family Church v. FEMA*. Before joining Becket, he studied journalism and the classical liberal arts at Patrick Henry College, where he graduated cum laude. He later earned a Master of Arts in American studies from the University of Dallas. During his studies, he interned with *WORLD Magazine* and wrote freelance articles and film reviews for *The Weatherford Democrat*. His work combines legal research with communications and writing in support of religious liberty litigation.



Gary B. Doxey

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University

Gary B. Doxey is an associate director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at the J. Reuben Clark Law School at Brigham Young University. He joined the Center in 2005 and serves as regional advisor for Latin America. He also heads the Center's development effort. He has authored several commentaries on draft legislation and a number of amicus briefs in Latin America. He also teaches in the History Department at Brigham Young University. Professor Doxey's career has been divided between academia and public service. Prior to joining the BYU Law School, he was chief of staff and general counsel to Utah governors Mike Leavitt and Olene Walker and served as Deputy Commissioner of Financial Institutions and as Associate General Counsel to the Utah Legislature. He has a Ph.D. in history from Cambridge University and a JD from Brigham Young University.



William C. Duncan

Constitutional Law & Religious Freedom Fellow, Sutherland Institute

Bill Duncan is Sutherland Institute's Constitutional Law & Religious Freedom Fellow. He formerly worked in the Law and Religion Program at the Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law and has taught college courses on religion and law. Bill has submitted briefs on constitutional issues in the U.S. Supreme Court, 10 federal courts of appeals, eight state supreme courts, and other venues, including in important religious liberty cases. He has presented expert testimony in the legislatures of seven states. His 75 scholarly articles have been published in the Rutgers Law Review, Howard Law Journal, Journal of Legislation, Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, Stanford Law and Policy Review and other journals. He has also published in National Review Online, SCOTUS Blog, and the American Spectator.



W. Cole Durham Jr.

Founding Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies

W. Cole Durham, Jr. is Susa Young Gates University Professor of Law at Brigham Young University and Founding Director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies. He is the immediate past President of the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies and a leading scholar in comparative constitutional law. He holds degrees from Harvard College and Harvard Law School, where he served on the *Harvard Law Review* and the *Harvard International Law Journal*. He is a founding Editor-in-Chief of the *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion* and has held leadership roles in the American Society of Comparative Law and the American Association of Law Schools. His work focuses on comparative law and the relationship between religion and the state.



Allyson Egbert

Executive Committee Member, International Advisory Council for the International Center for Law and Religion Studies; Board Member, Religious Freedom Alliance Coalition

Allyson Egbert has dedicated her work to advancing religious freedom and cultivating multifaith collaboration at local, national, and international levels. Inspired early by family influences emphasizing human dignity and respect across beliefs, she has built a career focused on peacemaking and civic engagement. She serves on the executive committee of the International advisory Council for the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University and is a board member of the Religious Freedom Alliance Coalition. She also contributes to the National Council of Religious Freedom and the Marriott School national advisory committee and has held leadership roles in interfaith and civic organizations, including the Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada. Egbert previously worked in public service for U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch and at the state level for Senator James Moss. She later co-founded Allymar, a development and investment company supporting marginalized communities. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Brigham Young University, where she served as student body vice president. She and her husband, Martin, are the parents of six children and have one granddaughter.



Juan M. Floyd-Thomas

Associate Professor of African American Religious History, Vanderbilt University Divinity School and Graduate Department of Religion, Tennessee

Juan M. Floyd-Thomas is an associate professor of African American religious history at Vanderbilt University Divinity School and the Graduate Department of Religion. His research focuses on Black religious traditions as a primary lens for understanding American culture and social ethics. He is the author, coauthor, or coeditor of numerous books, including *Critical Race Theology: White Supremacy, American Christianity, and the Ongoing Culture Wars* (2024), *Liberating Black Church History*, and *The Origins of Black Humanism*. He has also coauthored *Black Church Studies: An Introduction* and *The Altars Where We Worship*. His current research examines the history of African American religious communities in Harlem. Floyd-Thomas's work has been featured in major media outlets, including *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, NPR, and *Esquire*. He is cofounder of the Black Religious Scholars Group and currently serves as president of the Society of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion. He holds degrees from Rutgers University, Temple University, and the University of Pennsylvania.



Stacey Michelle Floyd-Thomas

Professor of Ethics and Society, Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Tennessee

Rev. Dr. Stacey Michelle Floyd-Thomas is the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Ethics and Society at Vanderbilt University Divinity School and interim chair of the African American and diaspora studies department at Vanderbilt University. Her research explores the intersections of Christian social ethics, race, gender, and class, with a focus on justice, moral agency, and religious pluralism. She is cofounder and executive director of the Black Religious Scholars Group and a cofounder of the Society for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Religion, and previously served as executive director of the Society of Christian Ethics. Floyd-Thomas has authored or edited numerous books, including *Mining the Motherlode*, *Deeper Shades of Purple*, *U.S. Liberation Theologies*, and *When the Good Life Goes Bad* (2026). In addition to her academic work, she serves as theologian-in-residence at Friendship West Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas, where she contributes to faith-based conversations on social justice and community life.



Howard M. Friedman

Professor of Law Emeritus, University of Toledo, Michigan

Howard M. Friedman is University of Toledo (Ohio) Professor of Law Emeritus. He taught at Toledo's law school for over 30 years, focusing on the areas of constitutional law as well as corporate and securities law. While at the University, he also served in leadership positions in many secular and religious nonprofit organizations. He has published 4 books and over 25 articles and book chapters. He has also taught at the University of North Dakota, Notre Dame University, Case Western Reserve University and St. John's University Law Schools. Since 2005, he has published Religion Clause blog, an award-winning source for current legal developments on religious liberty and church-state separation. The blog can be accessed at <https://relligionclause.blogspot.com>.



Micah Fries

Director, Multi-Faith Neighbor's Network and the Director of Engagement, Glocal.net

Micah Fries is the Director of the Multi-Faith Neighbor's Network and the Director of Engagement at Glocal.net. He has served as a Senior Pastor in Tennessee & Missouri, at LifeWay Christian Resources, and as a frequent speaker in churches and conferences. He holds a Master of Divinity from Midwestern Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts in Theology from The Baptist University of Florida. Micah is currently ABD as a Ph.D. student at Southeastern Seminary. Micah is the co-editor and author of *Islam & North America: Loving our Muslim Neighbors*. He has also co-authored *Leveling the Church* and a commentary volume on Haggai and Zephaniah in the Christ-Centered Commentary Series. He has contributed to *The Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, *Make Disciples of All Nations*, and *That Word Above All Earthly Powers*.



Steven K. Green

Professor of Law, Willamette University, Oregon

Steven K. Green is the Fred H. Paulus Professor of Law and affiliated professor of history and religious studies at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. A nationally recognized expert in First Amendment law and history, he has authored eight books and more than 60 scholarly articles and book chapters. His most recent book, *The Grand Collaboration: Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and the Invention of American Religious Freedom* (2024), examines the intellectual foundations of religious liberty in the United States. Green has also contributed to approximately 30 amicus curiae briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court and is currently serving as an expert witness in multiple legal challenges involving Ten Commandments statutes. He holds a juris doctor from the University of Texas and a doctorate from the University of North Carolina.



Mark David Hall

Professor, Regent University, Virginia

Mark David Hall is a professor in Regent University's Robertson School of Government and director of the Center for Religion, Culture and Democracy's Religious Liberty in the States project. He is a recognized expert on the intersection of religion and American political thought, particularly the role of faith in the founding era. Hall has written, edited, or coedited more than a dozen books, including *Did America Have a Christian Founding? Separating Modern Myth from Historical Truth*. He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Wheaton College and a doctorate in government from the University of Virginia. His findings inform current national conversations about religion, history, and public life.



Ari Hart

Senior Rabbi, Skokie Valley Synagogue, Illinois

Rabbi Ari Hart is the senior rabbi of Skokie Valley Synagogue in Skokie, Illinois, where he leads a vibrant Orthodox Jewish community. He previously served as associate rabbi at the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale and as director of admissions at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah. Hart is also a cofounder of several organizations focused on social justice and interfaith collaboration, including Uri L'Tzedek, the Jewish Muslim Volunteer Alliance, and Or Tzedek, a teen institute for Jewish social justice. An internationally recognized leader in the Jewish community, he has lectured across Europe, Israel, and North America and regularly contributes to publications such as the *Jerusalem Post*, *Haaretz*, and the *Jewish Daily Forward*. He received his rabbinic ordination from Yeshivat Chovevei Torah and pursued advanced studies in Jerusalem.



Byron R. Johnson

Distinguished Professor, Baylor University, Texas

Byron R. Johnson is a distinguished professor of the social sciences at Baylor University and founding director of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion. He also directs the Program on Prosocial Behavior and is a faculty affiliate of the Human Flourishing Program at Harvard University, as well as a visiting distinguished professor at Pepperdine University. Johnson is a leading authority on the scientific study of religion, human flourishing, faith-based organizations, and criminal justice. He has served as principal investigator on major research grants from federal agencies, including the Department of Justice, Department of Defense, and National Institutes of Health. His recent publications include *The Faith Factor and Social Welfare: Rethinking Evidence, Practice, and Policy* (2026) and *The Death of Religion: Nones, Others, and the Flourishing of Faith*.



Richard Katskee

Assistant Clinical Professor of Law and Director of Appellate Litigation Clinic, Duke University School of Law, North Carolina

Richard Katskee is Assistant Clinical Professor of Law at the Duke University School of Law, where he directs the Appellate Litigation Clinic and teaches law and religion. As Vice President and Legal Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Richard litigated cutting-edge cases under the First Amendment's Establishment, Free Exercise, and Free Speech Clauses. In the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, Richard led the development of federal policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and disability in the nation's schools, colleges, and universities. Richard received his J.D. from the Yale Law School, his A.M. in political science from Harvard University, and his A.B. in political science from the University of Michigan. He clerked for Judge Guido Calabresi of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and for Judge Stephen Reinhardt of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.



Paul Kerry

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School; Associate Professor, History Department, Brigham Young University

Dr Paul Kerry is an associate director of the law school's International Center for Law and Religion Studies at BYU, where he is also an associate professor of History. He works in the fields of religion, law, and intellectual history; First Amendment; and international humanitarian projects. He is a contributor to the multi-year project, *Documentary History of Jewish-Christian Relations: From Ancient Times to the Present Day*, which was published by Cambridge University Press in 2024. He served as the senior academic advisor to the UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief (2022-2023) and co-organized the 2023 International Sermon Studies Association conference at Christ Church, Oxford. Professor Kerry is a Fellow of

the Royal Historical Society and an Honorary Fellow of the Woolf Institute, Cambridge, and has held fellowships at Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Princeton, and the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).



David G. Latimore

Director, Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies, Princeton Theological Seminary

Rev. Dr. David G. Latimore is director of the Betsey Stockton Center for Black Church Studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, where he works to connect academic scholarship with the theological and social justice traditions of the Black Church. He brings more than two decades of pastoral leadership, along with prior experience in investment management and economic development. Latimore holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Harvard University, a Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School, a Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary, and a doctorate in theology from the University of Chicago Divinity School. His research and teaching focus on liberative and historical theology, Black ecclesial experiences, and the influence of economic thought on Christian identity and public witness.



Benjamin P. Marcus

Senior Constitutional Law Fellow, GLBTQ Legal Advocates & Defenders, Washington D.C.

Benjamin P. Marcus is a Senior Constitutional Law Fellow with GLAD Law. He rejoins GLAD Law after clerking for the Honorable Judith W. Rogers of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. As a Senior Fellow, Ben helps strengthen legal strategies to defend the constitutional rights of the LGBTQ+ community. His past research projects have examined the intersections of religious literacy, religious liberty, constitutional interpretation, and education, expressed in book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, and national columns. He is a Fellow for Religious Freedom at the Freedom Forum, and from 2017-2020, he served as the Freedom Forum's Religious Literacy Specialist, where he developed religious literacy programs for schools, businesses, and government organizations. In 2018, he traveled to Albania as a Fulbright Specialist for religion and education. Ben earned a J.D. at Yale Law School, an M.T.S. as a Presidential Scholar at Harvard Divinity School, and an A.B. from Brown University.



Barbara A. McGraw

Professor and Center Director, Saint Mary's College of California

Barbara A. McGraw is professor of social ethics, law, and public life and professor of politics at Saint Mary's College of California, where she is also the founding director of the Center for Engaged Religious Pluralism and its Prison Religion Project. Her work focuses on American identity, religious liberty, and the role of religion in public life. McGraw holds a juris doctor and a doctorate in religion and social ethics from the University of Southern

California. She has authored, coauthored, and edited numerous books and articles on religion, law, and politics, including *Rediscovering America's Sacred Ground* and the *Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Religion and Politics in the U.S.* She is a leading voice in the interdisciplinary dialogue surrounding interfaith leadership and civic engagement.



Shannon Price Minter

Vice President, National Center for LGBTQ Rights

Shannon Price Minter is vice president and legal director of the National Center for LGBTQ Rights, where he has led the organization's legal team for more than three decades. One of the most experienced attorneys in the LGBTQ rights movement, he has litigated landmark cases in state and federal courts, including *Obergefell v. Hodges*, *Pavan v. Smith*, and *Christian Legal Society v. Martinez* before the U.S. Supreme Court. He was appointed by President Barack Obama to the President's Commission on White House Fellowships and has served on the American Bar Association's Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Minter is also an advisor to the Dallas–Fort Worth Alliance for Religious Freedom and a coeditor and author of several works on LGBTQ legal issues, including *Transgender Rights* and *Family Law for LGBTQ People* (2024). He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin and a juris doctor from Cornell Law School.



Mobarakeh Nouri

Speaker, Colorado Refugee Speaker's Bureau

Mobarakeh Nouri was born in Iran but is originally from Afghanistan. At the age of 10, her family sought refuge in Turkey, where she completed her middle school education. In 2016, she began high school at Gaziantep Güzel Sanatlar, earning a first-place academic achievement award during her freshman year. In late 2016, Mobarakeh resettled in Colorado with her mother and two younger sisters. She graduated from Denver South High School in 2020 and obtained her Associate of Science degree at the Community College of Denver in 2023, receiving the prestigious Presidential Award. Currently, Mobarakeh has finished her Bachelor's degree in mining engineering at the Colorado School of Mines. Throughout her life in the United States, Mobarakeh actively engaged with various non-profit organizations and community initiatives, including Building Bridges, KramERICA Gives, Outdoor G.I.R.L.S., and the Village Institute. She has obtained certifications in mental health first aid, CNA, and medical interpreting.



Charles Randall Paul

Founder & President, The Foundation for Religious Diplomacy

Charles Randall Paul holds a BS in social-psychology from Brigham Young University and an MBA from Harvard University. After a decade of work as an award winning commercial real estate developer, he received a Ph.D. from the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago, writing a dissertation on methods for respectfully contesting irresolvable ideological

conflicts. He has published various papers and a book on American religious conflicts. Paul is founder and president of the Foundation for Religious Diplomacy, which seeks to build trust and goodwill among religious critics and rivals. He has produced a documentary film on religious rivalry in America and organized “Heart & Mind Conversations” across Europe, Russia, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and China. He is also creator of “The Way of Openness,” an approach to constructive engagement, and co-founder of The World Table PBC, a company developing safer systems for public dialogue online. He has served as a lay pastor for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and currently serves on the boards of several business and professional organizations.



C. Shane Reese

President, Brigham Young University, Utah

C. Shane Reese began his tenure as the 14th president of Brigham Young University on 1 May 2023. Prior to his appointment, he served as BYU academic vice president from 2019 to 2023 and dean of the BYU College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences from 2017 to 2019. He also serves as a member of the Department of Statistics faculty and is an elected fellow of the American Statistical Association. President Reese’s research has centered on Bayesian hierarchical models and Bayesian optimal experimental designs. He has created statistical models addressing a range of issues, from predicting the power of solar storms to determining the safest method for destroying chemical weapons to assessing climate impact on glaciers in high mountain Asia and Antarctica. His work has also been used by the US Olympic volleyball team as well as the NFL’s Philadelphia Eagles. President Reese earned a doctoral degree in statistics from Texas A&M University and master’s and bachelor’s degrees in statistics from BYU.



Melissa Rogers

Distinguished Scholar in Faith, Law, and Public Policy, Wake Forest University School of Divinity, North Carolina

Melissa Rogers is the distinguished scholar in faith, law, and public policy at Wake Forest University School of Divinity and a nonresident senior fellow in the Governance Studies program at the Brookings Institution. Her work focuses on religious liberty in the United States, the intersection of religion and public policy, and partnerships between government and faith-based organizations. She has served in senior leadership roles in the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships under Presidents Barack Obama and Joe Biden, where she directed national initiatives engaging faith communities in public service. Rogers previously led the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and served as general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. She is the author of *Faith in American Public Life* and coauthor of *Religious Freedom and the Supreme Court*. She holds a juris doctor from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and a Bachelor of Arts from Baylor University.



Sulaiman Salaam

Imam, Al Haqq Islamic Center, Missouri

Imam Sulaiman Salaam has served as imam of the Al Haqq Islamic Center in Kansas City, Missouri, for more than 20 years. A student of the late Imam W. D. Mohammed, he has been actively engaged in interfaith work throughout his ministry. In 1998, he traveled to the Vatican as part of a delegation participating in interfaith dialogue with Catholic leaders, and he later returned to Rome as a representative of the American Muslim community. Salaam has served on councils focused on Muslim and Jewish relations in Kansas City and has collaborated with numerous interfaith organizations. He has also spoken at churches throughout the region and served as a chaplain for the Kansas City Council, working alongside clergy from diverse religious traditions.



Gene Schaerr

Managing Partner, Schaerr Jaffe LLP; General Counsel, Project for Privacy and Surveillance Accountability; Adjunct Professor of Law, Brigham Young University

Gene Schaerr is managing partner of Schaerr Jaffe LLP and general counsel for the Project for Privacy and Surveillance Accountability, where he focuses on constitutional law, civil liberties, and government accountability in surveillance programs. He has argued more than two dozen cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as cases in every federal circuit and multiple state and federal courts. His work includes litigation under the Freedom of Information Act aimed at increasing transparency in federal surveillance practices. Earlier in his career, Schaerr served as associate counsel to the president in the White House, where he advised on constitutional and administrative law issues. He previously clerked for Chief Justice Warren Burger and Justice Antonin Scalia on the U.S. Supreme Court and for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. He teaches courses on Supreme Court litigation, constitutional law, and appellate advocacy at the Brigham Young University law school. Schaerr earned a juris doctor from Yale Law School, where he served as editor-in-chief of *The Yale Journal on Regulation*. He also holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Brigham Young University and master's degrees in economics and philosophy from Yale University.



Brett G. Scharffs

Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, and Rex E. Lee Chair and Professor of Law, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University

Brett G. Scharffs is Rex E. Lee Chair and Professor of Law at the J. Reuben Clark Law School and Director of the International Center for Law and Religion Studies. He previously served as Associate Director of the Center, Regional Advisor for Asia, and Associate Dean at the Law School. His teaching and scholarship focus on law and religion, legal reasoning and rhetoric, philosophy of law, and legislation and regulation. Professor Scharffs earned degrees from Georgetown

University and Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, and received his J.D. from Yale Law School, where he was Senior Editor of the Yale Law Journal. He clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit, worked at the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal in The Hague, and practiced at Sullivan & Cromwell. Over a 20-year academic career, Scharffs has written more than 100 articles and book chapters and delivered over 300 scholarly presentations in 30 countries. He co-authored the influential casebook *Law and Religion: National, International, and Comparative Perspectives*, which has been translated into multiple languages. He has also held leadership roles in the Association of American Law Schools and serves on several academic editorial and advisory boards.



Colleen A. Sheehan

Academic Council Member, Jack Miller Center; Professor in the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership, Arizona State University

Colleen A. Sheehan is a professor in the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership at Arizona State University and an academic council member of the Jack Miller Center. Her work focuses on American political thought, especially James Madison and the founding era. She previously taught for more than three decades at Villanova University before joining Arizona State University. She has also served in public office in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and on the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. She is the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including the Earhart Fellowship, Bradley Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, fellowships from Princeton University's James Madison Program, the Claremont Institute's Henry Salvatori Prize, and Villanova University's Martin Manley Teacher of the Year Award. Her published works include *James Madison and the Spirit of Republican Self-Government* and *The Mind of James Madison: The Legacy of Classical Republicanism*, along with edited volumes such as *Friends of the Constitution* and *The Cambridge Companion to The Federalist*. She has published in leading journals including *The American Political Science Review*, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, and *The Review of Politics*, as well as in the *Wall Street Journal*. She holds degrees from Arizona State University and the University of Toronto.



Hannah Clayson Smith

Associate Director, International Center for Law and Religion Studies, J. Reuben Clark Law School, Brigham Young University

Hannah Smith is Associate Director at the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at Brigham Young University Law School with responsibility for Africa, Asia, and the United States. She received her BA from Princeton University and her JD from BYU Law School (Order of the Coif), where she served as the Law Review's Executive Editor. Smith was awarded BYU's Alumni Achievement Award, the Women-in-Law Leadership Award, and the James Madison Award. She worked for U.S. Supreme Court Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito and as Becket Law's Senior Counsel where she secured four landmark Supreme Court victories. Smith has testified before the U.S. Congress, appeared on national media, and is a sought-after speaker. She serves on the Board of Directors for the African Consortium for Law

and Religion Studies, the Religious Freedom Institute, and as Board Secretary for the International Religious Freedom Summit, as well as chair on the JRCLS's Religious Freedom Committee, and a member with her husband John on the ICLRS International Advisory Council.



Emily de Schweinitz Taylor

Certified Mediator, Developmental Psychologist, Conflict Coach, and Executive Trainer

Emily de Schweinitz Taylor is a certified mediator, developmental psychologist, author, and mother of five. After completing her Ph.D. at Brigham Young University, she served Utah Valley University as ombuds and assistant director of conflict resolution. She is currently conducting postdoctoral research with Baylor University and the COST Project in Europe, focusing on psychology, health, and conflict resolution. Dr. Taylor teaches courses including mediation and history of psychology as an adjunct professor at BYU. She also hosts Conflict Coach with Dr. Emily Taylor, a conflict coaching podcast on BYU Radio. She serves on the board of the Utah Council on Conflict Resolution, is vice-chair of the Schweinitz Family Organization in Germany, and volunteers with Braver Angels, which promotes political depolarization. Her educational background includes master's degrees from the University of Chicago and the University of Denver. She previously served as assistant director of BYU Law's Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution and is the author of *Conflict Fluent: Mastering the Five Conflict Approaches* and *Raising Mediators: How Smart Parents Use Mediation to Transform Sibling Conflict and Empower Their Children*.



Byron Thomas

Senior Pastor, Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church, Georgia

Rev. Dr. Byron Thomas is senior pastor of Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church on the campus of Emory University. He previously served as senior pastor of three congregations in Atlanta and as district superintendent of the Southwest District of the North Georgia Annual Conference. He currently serves on the Connectional Table, which helps guide the vision and mission of the United Methodist Church. Thomas has also held leadership roles in organizations focused on children, interfaith collaboration, and Black Methodist renewal. In addition to his ministry work, he enjoys traveling and spending time with his family. He and his wife, DuWanna, are the parents of two adult sons.



Olivia Whiteley

Director of Strategy, Reliable Refuge

Olivia Whiteley is a practiced architect of bipartisan compromise with policy expertise in the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. Olivia has worked to rebuild America's consensus on refugees from the bottom-up, designing and passing bipartisan state-level legislation to expand refugee and immigrant access to the workforce, education, and well-being. As the Director of Strategy for Reliable Refuge, she manages federal advocacy and drives the

organization's ten-year strategic plan for building a refugee program that Americans--and refugees--can rely on. Olivia holds a Bachelors in American Studies from Brigham Young University and a Masters from the University of Southern California.