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QUARTERLY

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## America 250: Keeping the Faith for a Nation That Will Endure

By Jonathan Alexandre

If all of human history was counted as an hour on a watch, the story of America occupies barely two and a half minutes, an exceedingly short span. Yet in the 250 years between 1776 and 2026, the United States of America has reshaped the world and emerged as the greatest nation on Earth.

As our nation stands on the edge of celebrating its 250th anniversary, America is like a man standing on his porch after a long day's work asking, "Did I get it all done? And if I did, what did it all amount to? Will it last?" These are questions worth considering. And it would behoove all of us to pause and reflect on our nation's founding and recalibrate to the principles

that laid a solid foundation that has outlasted numerous wars, economic downturns, and times of civil unrest.

Ours is an extraordinary, albeit imperfect, history. From breaking free from British rule as undoubtedly one of history's greatest underdogs to — borrowing words from President Ronald Reagan — achieving the "American vision of creating a new nation of free people, a country that would be a light unto the nations, and a shining city upon a hill," America has risen to heights rarely seen in world history and its influence has reached and touched every corner of the globe.

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## Coastal Family Church Sues Judge for Banning In-Person Worship

Imagine driving to church on a Sunday morning and being met with an empty parking lot and police on location to ensure that you do not attempt to go to church that day.

On January 25, 2026, this exact scene played out for Coastal Family Church in Flagler Beach, Florida. The church was prohibited from holding in-person worship services, including on Resurrection Sunday, due to an unconstitutional court order.

To understand why Coastal Family Church was prohibited from worshipping in its own building, let's back up to last year. The church purchased a unit in the Flagler Square strip mall in July 2025, but Flagler Square - JAX, a fellow property owner in the strip mall, was also interested in the property and lost the opportunity to purchase it. Now, Flagler Square - JAX is alleging that Coastal Family Church violated the condominium covenant and sued the church in August 2025, forcing it to choose between canceling worship services or being held in contempt of court.



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And while the United States has enjoyed prosperity and power unmatched, we must understand that our nation's history is at a pivotal crossroads, and we are at risk of squandering it all. It's up to us to ensure that this Great Republic and its heritage will endure for generations to come.

### **In God We Trust — or Trusted?**

Countries rise and fall because of what they do — *or don't* — trust in.

The psalmist knew this when he wrote, "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God" (Psalm 20:7).

Our Founders agreed with this enduring truth. John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, said, "Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer's mission upon earth? That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity?"

The Founders' courage to forge a new nation unlike any other was underscored by their own personal piety before Almighty God. They *knew* they needed God's help and built a nation undergirded by Christian principles.

When we fast-forward to 2026, we see how far we have fallen from what our Founders intended. As John Adams wrote, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Today, abortion is legal in all 50 states. Politics is so polarized that one party can't define what a woman is. The very freedoms our Founders fought and died for are under attack. Religious "nones," those who say they are atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular," make up the largest cohort in the U.S. at 29%, according to the [2023-24 Religious Landscape Study](#) from Pew Research.

Preserving a republic involves more than building a big fighting force and even bigger buildings. Getting this right begins in our kitchens, on front porches, during car rides, at Little League games, and during bedtime devotions. It means trusting in God, not government, and recognizing that Christianity is what makes our nation great.

Upon exiting the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the story goes that Benjamin Franklin was asked: "Well, Doctor, what have we got, a republic or a monarchy?"

He replied, "A republic, if you can keep it."

These words serve as a sobering reminder that the survival of our republic is contingent on us fighting for its preservation and handing it down to our children.


### **Fight for a Nation that Endures**

This is where it gets personal. I feel the weight of this every time I see my two little girls. They are Americans learning in their infancy about our nation and its citizens. They've got another sibling on the way — another child, another citizen, another American. While my children won't see the next 250 years, they will see enough for it to matter.

America, please give them a nation that will *still* build, *still* lead, *still* innovate, *still* protect, and *still* achieve. Americans, do what you can at the ballot box, in the boardroom, and in our schools, so that they inherit a culture and a community that reflects truth, integrity, faith, justice, family, and humility.

As Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it on to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

America's Founders understood the fragility of freedom when they set out to establish a nation by the people and for the people. I'll do my part to preserve the freedoms we hold dear. America, do your part to preserve this nation for its next 250 years and beyond.

We would be wise to heed Reagan's words: "Let it be said of this generation of Americans that when we pass the torch of freedom onto the new generation, it was burning as brightly as when it was handed to us. ... And we will have kept faith with God." 

**Jonathan Alexandre, Esq.,** is Vice President of Governmental Affairs and Senior Counsel for Liberty Counsel and Liberty Counsel Action.



## **Passing the Torch of Liberty at Liberty Counsel's 2026 Gala**

David Barton, founding era historian and Founder of WallBuilders, delivered the keynote address at Liberty Counsel's Passing the Torch of Liberty Gala on April 11, 2026. He encouraged attendees to remember America's heritage and embrace the ideals of the American founding to preserve freedom for generations to come.

For the record, the property was successfully rezoned to be a church and is fully compliant with United States and Florida law. No laws were broken, no harm was done, and the church even meets the parking quota requirements.

All of this came to a head on Sunday, January 25, when, in response to this lawsuit, an injunction by the Seventh Judicial Circuit Court forced Coastal Family Church and Pastor Roderick Palmer to close its doors — in violation of Florida law and the First Amendment, which ensures the freedoms of speech, assembly, and religious exercise.

On January 28, Liberty Counsel filed an emergency appeal to reverse the temporary injunction. And on the Friday afternoon of January 30, the Florida Fifth District Court of Appeal granted an emergency motion, allowing the church to proceed with worship in person and open its doors on Sunday. Coastal Family Church had some reprieve, but that was short lived.

On February 13, Coastal Family Church was forced to close again when the Fifth District Court of Appeal denied Liberty Counsel's emergency motion on behalf of the church.

Then on April 2, in response to the judge's unconstitutional order, Liberty Counsel filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of Coastal Family Church in the U.S. Middle District Court of Florida against Judge Sandra Upchurch. Her actions struck at the heart of the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty. Additionally, Liberty Counsel also filed a motion for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction.

For each day that passes, Coastal Family Church has lost its First Amendment rights to speech, assembly, equal protection, and the free exercise of religion.

The American colonists didn't flee religious tyranny to forge a nation where a church could be legally threatened out of worshipping in person. The American Founders didn't draft a Constitution that fails to protect against such abuses. And an American church cannot be forced out of assembling for worship based on a judge's unlawful injunction resulting from the whims of a fellow tenant's lawsuit.

The freedom to worship is not — and never will be — up for debate. **LC**

## Liberty Counsel at Work

**O**n March 17, Liberty Counsel Founder and Chairman Mat Staver argued before the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in *Zinski v. Liberty University* on behalf of Liberty University's right to hire and fire in accordance with its religious beliefs.

When Jonathan Zinski was hired by Liberty University, he signed off on the school's Christian doctrinal statement affirming that human beings are created "male or female from the womb." After his 90-day probation period, he revealed his plan to "identify" as a female named "Ellenor." Liberty University terminated Zinski shortly after his announcement in 2023 for flagrantly violating the school's doctrinal statement.

Zinski retaliated with an American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) lawsuit against Liberty University. Liberty Counsel is defending Liberty University and its right to hire and fire according to its doctrinal statement. The implications of this case go far beyond Liberty University, applying to all Christian institutions.

Stay tuned as Liberty Counsel awaits a decision from the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in this case that has Supreme Court potential. **LC**



Liberty Counsel team members (L-R) Stephen Nast, Jill Schmid, Daniel Schmid, Anita Staver, Mat Staver, Richard Mast stand inside the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals following oral arguments in *Zinski v. Liberty University* on March 17.

# Honoring the Life and Legacy of Peggy Nienaber

On April 7, 2026, at 10:28 p.m., our dear friend and colleague, Peggy Nienaber, passed from this earthly life into the arms of Jesus. Peggy served as Senior Vice President of Faith & Liberty, a Christian ministry that brings the gospel of Jesus Christ to all people in the nation's capital through prayer, Bible studies, worship, fellowship, and pastoral care.

Devoted to the ministry and her calling, Peggy served faithfully and fervently on Capitol Hill for at least 40 years — loving the Lord and people. She never met a stranger and was a friend to everyone with a nonpartisan approach to ministry that was both spiritual and supportive.

Through Peggy's leadership, scores of interns, staffers, and members of Congress participated in Bible studies and prayer. She coordinated many events, including the annual laying of flowers in front of the U.S. Supreme Court as a memorial to the millions of unborn babies who lost their lives through abortion. With Peggy at the helm, Faith & Liberty also hosted the annual Congressional Bible Reading, participated in the annual Genesis-to-Revelation Bible Reading Marathon, put on the annual Live Nativity in front of the Supreme Court, and hosted the annual awards recognition of law enforcement and first responders in our nation's capital.

Peggy led the Congressional Women's


Bible Study inside the U.S. Capitol and oversaw many Congressional Bible studies on Capitol Hill. Peggy also served as president of the Capitol Forum Club, and served as the chairwoman of the Religious Freedom Coalition board of directors.



Peggy was actively involved with pro-life, pro-family, and religious freedom issues and was involved in prayer teams that led to the confirmation of four U.S. Supreme Court Justices, along with the election of many members of Congress and the passing of many bills in Congress.

She was recognized as one of the Christian Women of Distinction in the United States of America in 2021 by Congresswoman Lisa McClain and She Leads America and received a Certificate of Congressional Recognition for her tireless work and leadership on Capitol Hill. Peggy also served as an NGO liaison for the United Nations in New York and co-directed the Fox & Friends "True Meaning of Christmas" and Christmas Eve special for five years.

Peggy leaves behind two children, five grandchildren, and her beloved dog, Newman. She was an active member of King's Church in Washington, D.C. Peggy's identical twin, Patty Bills, continues to work with Faith & Liberty.

"I have never met anyone like Peggy Nienaber," said Mat Staver, founder and chairman, Liberty Counsel, and chairman, Faith & Liberty. "She was a bundle of life and energy. Her enthusiasm was infectious and always positive. Peggy was devoted to our Lord Jesus and passionate about serving Him through the ministry of Faith & Liberty. She will be greatly missed. While we grieve her passing from this life, we celebrate knowing that she is in the arms of Jesus. Peggy left a legacy that echoes in the lives of people and resonates throughout the nation's capital. Her legacy will live on through eternity." 

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## Build Your Legacy with Liberty Legacy Builders

Liberty Legacy Builders offers strategic ways to support the mission of Liberty Counsel while securing your own financial future. Whether you choose a Charitable Gift Annuity for guaranteed lifetime income or a Charitable Remainder Trust to manage highly appreciated assets like real estate or stocks, these tools allow you to convert your generosity into a reliable revenue stream. By partnering with us, you can eliminate the burden of administrative fees and protect your income from creditors, ensuring that your assets work for both your family and your values.

Beyond providing for your immediate needs, these giving options offer significant tax advantages that keep more money in your pocket. From receiving immediate tax deductions to avoiding capital gains and satisfying Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) through direct IRA transfers, our legacy programs are designed to be as smart as they are impactful. You can reduce your taxable income and provide a powerful testimony of faith to your heirs, all while ensuring that your remaining estate continues to defend liberty for generations to come.

Ready to start your legacy? Contact our team at (407) 875-1776 or [Legacy@lc.org](mailto:Legacy@lc.org) to schedule a consultation and find the giving plan that's right for you.