

Reporting religion news  
for Christian and general audiences

**Steve Rabey for  
Magazine Training International  
March 12, 2024**

## **Opening reflection: “Truth” & “truth”**

Christians learn and embrace God’s transcendent Truths.

How: Revelation, interpretation, etc.

Christian journalists serve their neighbors by seeking and sharing small-t truths that:

- help people live
- help believers love their neighbors
- help citizens be informed about issues/candidates
- provide necessary accountability for Christian leaders, congregations and organizations.

How: Asking the six Questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

# Professional plans change

## Original vision

- Write mainly for believers
- Report mostly good news
- Focus on CCM, spirituality, theology, pop culture, church, parachurch

## Revised vision

- Write for everyone
- Report whatever news happens
- Research political activism, financial statements, legal documents...

# Who becomes what

## Touch of Love International uses microloans to help thousands of poor entrepreneurs succeed

By Steve Rabey Religion Correspondent Jul 16, 2023 Updated Aug 3, 2023



Touch of Love International founder Elmad Yassa, left, with a business owner in Uganda.

### Popular

- 1 The new life of Colorado's Frozen Dead Guy: A curious tale grows larger
- 2 'Major milestone' toward Colorado ski area's 'dream' expansion
- 3 Monument high school student dies in crash at ski resort
- 4 Prices up for Vail Resorts' Epic Pass
- 5 Dog respiratory illness in decline in Colorado Springs, nationwide

# Publications

The Gazette (Colorado Springs) \$

- 30+ years

Baptist News Global

Ministry Watch

Religion News Service

# We need small-t truth

We live in truth-challenged times.

People experience:

- Lack of accurate information amid “information overload”
- Misinformation
- Disinformation

People and nations need reporters who diligently search and accurately share their findings with the public.

This is a sacred calling that can require sacrifices.

# Fake Facebook Pages Lure Millions of Careless Christians



Steve Rabey • October 4, 2021

The top ranked Christian Facebook pages had generic names (Jesus is my Lord, Purpose of Life, Light of the World, Blessing, and Blessed), and they promoted generic content (Bible verses, inspirational stories, and encouraging lessons).

But these and many other popular Facebook pages were fakes. They were created by Eastern European troll farms that stole content from legitimate pages and reposted it on their own pages.

It was all part of an elaborate effort that used engaging content to attract large and unsuspecting audiences to pages that were also used to distribute partisan political stories designed to influence voters, and divisive stories about hot-button issues like race and sexuality designed to pit American against American.

All but one of the top 20 Christian Facebook pages operating in Oct. 2019 were fakes, according to an internal Facebook report entitled "How Communities Are Exploited on Our Platforms" that was [publicly released](#) by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in September.

Guideposts was the only legitimate page to be found among the 20 most popular Christian Facebook pages.

"This is not normal," said the Facebook report, which was authored by Jeff Allen, a former data scientist for the powerful and profitable social media company. "This is not healthy. We have empowered inauthentic actors to accumulate huge followings for largely unknown purposes."

*Access to MinistryWatch content is free. However, we hope you will support our work with your prayers and financial gifts. To make a donation, [click here](#).*

Christian pages weren't Facebook's only top ranked fakes. The majority of the most popular pages for African American and Native American audiences were also created by troll farms, which are professional groups in Kosovo, Macedonia, and other countries that work in a coordinated manner to provide provocative content and political propaganda.

"These pages were part of a larger network that collectively reached nearly half of all Americans," wrote Karen Hao,

Top Christian American pages on Facebook Oct 2019

| Rank | Christian            | Fake Name? |
|------|----------------------|------------|
| 1    | Jesus is my Lord     | ✓          |
| 2    | Purpose of Life      | ✓          |
| 3    | Light of the World   | ✓          |
| 4    | Blessing             | ✓          |
| 5    | Blessed              | ✓          |
| 6    | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 7    | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 8    | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 9    | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 10   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 11   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 12   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 13   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 14   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 15   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 16   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 17   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 18   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 19   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |
| 20   | Prayer for the World | ✓          |

# Christian and general audiences

## Christian audiences

- Which Christian outlets report news?
- Journalistic freedom and independence?
- Theological, ideological, or political bias?

## General audiences

- From “church page” to “front page news.”
- General population includes Christians (it’s not “secular”).
- Religion is important and powerful. People want to understand it.
- Provide context, translation, explanatory journalism.



## Colorado Springs elects a Nigerian immigrant – and political Independent – as mayor

NEWS STEVE RABBY | MAY 18, 2021



Yemi Mobolade, a Nigerian immigrant, entrepreneur, Christian community leader and "agent of good disruption" made history Tuesday, becoming the first Black man and first non-Republican to be [elected mayor](#) of Colorado Springs, Colo., in more than four decades.

The smart money was on Wayne Williams, a Mormon and veteran of the GOP establishment who had held city and state elected offices for two decades. But Mobolade, who never has held elected office, prevailed, getting 57.6% of the vote in a runoff election that observers called "[a seismic shift](#)" and political surprise in this formerly solid-red conservative stronghold that is home to Compassion International, Young Life, Focus on the Family and dozens of other international evangelical ministries.

Williams outspent Mobolade, running ads calling his opponent a dangerous "socialist" with a "radical Left" agenda who would use tax dollars to "engineer equitable outcomes." It didn't work. One GOP activist said Mobolade, who was not affiliated with a political party, successfully won nearly all Democrats, most unaffiliated voters and a surprising number of white evangelical Republicans, including many who had voted twice for Donald Trump.

Mobolade told the [Colorado Springs Gazette](#) his victory shows a popular hunger for a new, nonpartisan form of leadership in a city familiar with Christian culture warriors: "The hunger is for a vision that transcends political party lines. The tiredness and frustration in our city and in our nation is around partisan divide and the fighting that happens. ... People are just ready for a new type of leadership that puts our quality of life ahead of party politics."

### Politics, faith and Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series [election and the Church](#)
- A talk with Tim Alberta [faith journey](#)
- A conversation with Jim
- A conversation with Lee
- A conversation with Ty
- A conversation with Les Wong
- A conversation with Ru
- A conversation with Kai
- A conversation with Wi

# 1) Who? People and organizations

**Personality-driven or organization-driven stories (news and features)**

**Who is central person?**

**AND/OR**

**What is main organization in the story?**

**Sometimes one and the same.**

**What does Christian/general already know / need to know about his/her/its background?**

- **mini-bio or mini-history to orient reader (online info)**

**Get the name right: Person: “Smythe”? Company “Inc.”?**

**WGAD?**

# Colorado Springs ministry helps writers and publishers around the world

By Steve Rabey Religion Correspondent Feb 12, 2023 Updated Mar 1, 2023

FORMATION



Catholic nuns bring awareness with food benefit Westside Cares in Colorado Springs

Members may be much fewer than in past but the work of Catholic nuns remains - and they don't want the masses to forg...



Sharon Mumper's missionary zeal, combined with her journalism degree and significant experience in writing, editing and publishing, led her to pursue a unique mission. While some groups build churches, schools or hospitals, her ministry helps Christian magazines in other countries.

She launched Magazine Training International, or MTI, in Eastern Europe in 1989, helping a formerly underground publication for Christian women called Lydia. Formerly prohibited during Communist rule, the magazine took advantage of new press freedoms to connect with more readers.

More than 2,500 people from dozens of countries have received in-person training at on-site conferences in 21 countries in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa. Online courses and videos have expanded MTI's reach even farther.

Popular

- 1 The new life of Co... Frozen Dead Guy: tale grows larger
- 2 'Major milestone' Colorado ski area' expansion
- 3 Monument high s... student dies in cr... resort
- 4 Prices up for Vail l... Epic Pass
- 5 Dog respiratory il... decline in Colorad...

# Millions with questions turn to Colorado Springs ministry for answers

By Steve Rabey Religion Correspondent Jul 31, 2022 Updated Sep 4, 2023



Shea Houdmann launched [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org), which now receives 13 million online visitors a month.  
courtesy photo

Can Christians lose their salvation? Do animals go to heaven? And what does the Bible teach about female pastors? Homosexuality? Tattoos? Masturbation? Interracial marriage? And white supremacy?

Millions of people who want to know the answers to these and nearly 700,000 other theological questions turn to a website, [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org), that's operated by a Colorado Springs ministry founded in 2002.



## Popular

- 1 Religious and spiritual events happening in the Pikes Peak region this month
- 2 Leap Year's ties to religion history live on; 'science never at odds with faith, says historian
- 3 Softness through strength Retired-surgeon-turned sculptor captures raw beauty of Christian suffi



OLIVET UNIVERSITY

## New Year, New LawsUIT for Olivet University

David Jang's U.S. operations face continuing problems



Steve Rabey • March 4, 2022

World Olivet Assembly, a movement founded by controversial Korean-born leader David Jang that owns Christian colleges and The Christian Post, continues to face legal problems in the U.S.

A group of four students from Jang's Olivet University in California have [sued](#) the school, claiming they were victims of trafficking and visa fraud. Promised scholarships and schooling, they say they were largely confined to campus and forced to provide unpaid manual labor in violation of U.S. law.

Evidence submitted in a separate wire fraud and racketeering [lawsuit](#) that World Olivet Assembly settled last August sheds light on how Jang's movement moves money between companies it quickly creates and closes down.

The lawsuits were reported by Newsweek, the once venerable newsweekly that was led by disciples of Jang's but is now owned by two former disciples who have turned on Jang and have aggressively covered the movement's many problems.

In addition, World Olivet Assembly has long used its affiliation with the World Evangelical Alliance to mainstream Jang and defend him against charges of heresy. But last June, WEA [severed ties](#) with groups related to Jang, who has allegedly [proclaimed](#) himself a "second coming Christ."

### Ongoing problems at Olivet University

In 2018, an Olivet student named Rebecca Singh called 911 to report that she was being held against her will at the campus in Anza. Agents from Homeland Security Investigations raided the campus in 2021. An investigation is ongoing.

Now Singh and three other students who came to America on student visas arranged by the school have sued Olivet, claiming they were victims of Jang's global trafficking scheme to exploit disciples in the movement's schools and business ventures around the world.



CHURCH

CULTURE

POLITICS

## Doug Wilson Hires Defamation Law Firm

Christ Church leader claims defamations are 'causing real damage'



Steve Rabey • January 15, 2024

Doug Wilson, the incendiary leader of a religious empire in Moscow, Idaho, who routinely [questions the faith of other Christian leaders](#) and groups, has now hired a law firm to defend himself from those who criticize him.

Wilson, whose empire includes Christ Church, a network of 123 churches (The Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches), a network of nearly 500 schools (Association of Classical Christian Schools), Canon Press, and New Saint Andrews College, has hired Clare Locke, a law firm specializing in defamation cases, to protect him from "a steady stream of defamatory accusation and slander" that "are now being circulated by professional media entities."

Clare Locke has been involved in a number of high-profile defamation cases involving Sarah Palin, Matt Lauer, and Project Veritas. It was co-counsel for Dominion Voting Systems in last year's landmark case against Fox News that won a \$787.5 million settlement from the network over false claims of election fraud. The law firm did not respond to a request for comment.

Wilson announced the hiring of Clare Locke in a Jan. 8 [open letter](#) that claimed defamation against him and his organizations is "an issue that has been causing real damage."

"Every single family in every ACCS school, every CREC congregation, every classical homeschool co-op around the world, every little church community that looks to us for help, all of them are at risk of real harm, courtesy of those flinging around links to various falsehoods, lies, and mendacious narratives," Wilson wrote. "Most of them have already experienced damages of some kind."

Wilson's letter pointed to articles and a book by journalist Sarah Stankorb, who has covered Wilson's work for [Slate](#) and [Vice](#) and wrote the [book](#) "Disobedient Women: How a Small Group of Faithful Women Exposed Abuse, Brought Down Powerful Pastors, and Ignited an Evangelical Reckoning."



# Who is making their case to the Supreme Court?

Evangelical  
News  
Group


News Analysis Opinion Curated Storytelling More

DONATE SUBSCRIBE

SEARCH

## Supreme Court considers 'most important First Amendment cases of the internet era'

NEWS STEVE BADEY | MARCH 4, 2024



The U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments last week on a simple but far-reaching question: Do companies like X, Facebook and YouTube have the right to moderate user content on their platforms? The court's decision, expected in June, could change what Americans see on these and other sites.

Social media companies own "the new public square" and they have struggled for years to develop policies and procedures that protect users from disinformation, hate speech, obscenity and more.

These companies' efforts to limit falsehoods about vaccines and the 2020 election — falsehoods promoted mostly by conservatives — and their decisions to deplatform Donald Trump after the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, led many conservatives to complain they were victims of ideological censorship.

A number of religious groups have weighed in on the two cases before the court, which hinge on how one views the tech platforms.

If these platforms are publishers, they are legally entitled to make editorial decisions about which content does and does not appear on their sites. The court previously has ruled against efforts to require newspapers to publish content they don't want to publish.

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Jemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hambo Sr.
- Politics, faith and mission: A conversation with Ty Seidule
- Politics, faith and mission: A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fong Wong

# Who is spreading election disinformation?

## Lawyers admit: There's no evidence for 2000 Mules election fraud claims

NEWS STEVE RABEV | FEBRUARY 29, 2024



The film *2000 Mules* made sensational claims: widespread election fraud had swung the 2020 election for Joe Biden. But lawyers defending the filmmakers have admitted in an Atlanta courtroom they didn't have any evidence for these charges.

The admission came last December but wasn't reported until Wednesday by the [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#) and [Associated Press](#).

*2000 Mules* aired on Christian TV networks, was promoted by conservative evangelical political groups, and was shown in hundreds of churches, even amid widespread skepticism about its wild claims that human "mules" harvested 400,000 fake ballots to steal the 2020 election from Donald Trump.



The film was made by conspiracy theorist and former Christian leader Dinesh D'Souza, a Trump loyalist who was pardoned by Trump after pleading guilty to a felony charge for making illegal campaign contributions. D'Souza claims he relied on evidence from a right-wing group, True the Vote.

D'Souza and True the Vote face numerous lawsuits. The admission that True the Vote has no evidence for its claims comes as the state of Georgia is fighting its election systems against unfounded claims by Trump and his followers.

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Jemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamlin Sr.
- A conversation with Ty Seidule
- A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fong Wong
- A conversation with Russell Moore
- A conversation with Kaitlyn Schless
- A conversation with Winnie Varghese



# Who is spreading election disinformation?

Baptist News Global

News Analysis Opinion Curated Storytelling More

DONATE SUBSCRIBE

SEARCH

## Mike Lindell ordered to pay man who debunked his election falsehoods

NEWS STEVE RABBY | MARCH 2, 2024



A judge has **ordered** MyPillow founder Mike Lindell to pay \$5 million to a man who debunked his alleged "data" proving China helped steal the 2020 election from Donald Trump.

In 2021, Lindell organized a "cyber symposium" gathering for people promoting election falsehoods. He issued the "Prove Mike Wrong Challenge." If anybody could debunk his data, Lindell would pay \$5 million.

Robert Zeidman took him up on the challenge and quickly showed Lindell's data was merely random characters. He requested the \$5 million. As **RNG reported** last fall, Lindell refused.

**Zeidman, a software engineer** who voted for Trump in 2016 and 2020, first sought help from an arbitration panel, which said Lindell should pay up. Lindell refused, saying, "This will end up in court."

It did. Zeidman asked a federal court to uphold the arbitration panel's verdict. Late last month, a judge ordered the financially troubled pillow icon to pay Zeidman the \$5 million, with interest.



Robert Zeidman

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNC interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with James Tidley
- A conversation with Leonard Hamlin Sr.
- Politics, faith and mission: A conversation with Ty Seidule
- Politics, faith and mission: A conversation with Jessica Wei-Pong Wong
- Politics, faith and mission: A conversation with Russell Moore

# Who is spreading election disinformation?

CULTURE

## Eric Metaxas said Vetting Guests not His Job in Defamation Lawsuit Testimony

 Steve Baber · March 30, 2022

Last week, Eric Metaxas spoke about how "Christians Need to Reclaim Truth for God's Kingdom" on prosperity gospel preacher Andrew Wommack's [podcast](#) for his Truth & Liberty Coalition.

But six months earlier, Metaxas [said in a deposition](#) that he did little to confirm the truth of unsubstantiated claims of election fraud made by Joe Oltmann on Metaxas' radio program.

Oltman, a Colorado political activist, had become a sensation following his Nov. 9, 2020, Conservative Daily podcast that spread stories about election fraud. He claimed he had listened in on an Antifa conference call, and that a Dominion Voting Systems employee said the company had worked to ensure Donald Trump was not re-elected.



Eric Metaxas speaks during his show May 26, 2020. Video screenshot

Days later, Oltmann was sharing his stories with Eric Metaxas of the [Eric Metaxas Show](#). It was broadcast nationwide on his Salem Media Group program, the Eric Metaxas Show.

Now Metaxas and other conservative Christian media figures are being probed about their practices in a defamation lawsuit filed by Eric Coomer, an executive with Dominion Voting Systems.

In a deposition for the case, Metaxas said he had done little to verify claims aired in the broadcast that Dominion had rigged elections in the U.S., Mongolia, and Venezuela.

"I'm kind of a fly-by-the-seat-of-my-pants guy," he said in the deposition. "We don't have the budget, bandwidth or time to do anything like that. I don't see that as my job."

"I am usually taking my guest at their word," he testified. "I'm not an adversarial interviewer, and he didn't give me any reason to believe that he's blowing smoke. If I ever thought anyone were blowing smoke, especially on an issue this important, I think I would ask them some hard questions."

Joe Oltmann told Metaxas: "We infiltrated their meetings, we infiltrated their conference calls, we got information about what they were planning to do next."

# Who is spreading election disinformation?

## Hillsdale College attorneys worked to overturn 2020 election results

NEWS STEVE RASEY | JANUARY 22, 2024



The mission of Hillsdale College is to further "learning, character, faith and freedom," but attorneys with the politically influential Christian school took part in efforts to create a slate of fake Michigan electors in an effort to overturn the 2020 election in favor of Donald Trump, according to *The New York Times*.

"How a Conservative Christian College Got Mixed Up in the 2020 Election Plot," an [article](#) in the *Times*' Sunday magazine, details efforts by school attorney Robert Norton and others to "deploy fake Trump electors."



Larry P. Aron

The article also says Larry P. Aron, Hillsdale's president, counseled U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, his "longtime friend," to block certification of the vote in the House of Representatives.

Reporter Danny Hakim uses more than 6,600 words to answer the question: "How did a small college in Michigan, self-defined by the idea that the project of American democracy is the realization of millenniums of Western wisdom, get mixed up in a plot to subvert it?"

Hillsdale generates lengthy articles. Last April, Emma Green profiled the school in a 7,000-word [piece](#) for *The New Yorker*:

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Jemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamilton Sr.
- A conversation with Ty Seidule
- A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fong Wong
- A conversation with Russell Moore
- A conversation with Kaitlyn Schiess

# Who else is spreading election disinformation?

**Fox News paid \$787 million** to settle a defamation lawsuit about election falsehoods brought by Dominion Voting Systems.

## Defamation cases against Christian influencers:

- Salem Media of Colorado and [Randy Corporon](#), show hosts;
- Independent writer Michelle Malkin (since retired);
- One America News Network and Christian correspondent Chanel Rion;
- Conservative outlet Newsmax;
- Clay Clark, Thrivetime Show podcast, ReAwaken America Tour.

# Who was spreading election disinformation?



Donate Podcast Monthly Lists News ▾ Shining Lights Donor

RESEARCH CULTURE FEATURED POLITICS

## Jenna Ellis Pleads Guilty for Role in Georgia Election Fraud

Christian attorney expresses remorse for defending Trump's false election claims.



Steve Rabey • October 25, 2023

Jenna Ellis, a Christian attorney and former member of Donald Trump's legal team, pleaded guilty of aiding and abetting the conspiracy to overturn 2020 election results in Georgia.

Ellis's tearful statement in a Georgia courtroom was in stark contrast to her stance in August when she was indicted. Then, she posted a mugshot with a beaming smile alongside Scripture references and the claim that she was facing persecution.

"As an attorney who is also a Christian, I take my responsibilities as a lawyer very seriously and I endeavor to be a person of sound moral and ethical character in all of my dealings," said Ellis on Tuesday.

"I failed to do my due diligence," she said, referring to information provided to her by other lawyers "with many more years of experience."

Two of those fellow Trump lawyers—Sidney Powell and Kenneth Chesebro—have pleaded guilty in Georgia in the past week.

Ellis's plea deal means she will avoid prison time but was sentenced to five years of probation and must pay \$5,000 in restitution, complete 100 hours of community service, write an apology letter to the people of Georgia, stop posting about the case on social media, and testify against Trump and other co-defendants.

### Ellis's lengthy evangelical resume

Ellis had little legal experience before landing prestigious positions with conservative Christian groups that have so far failed to acknowledge her criminal activities.

James Dobson named Ellis director of the Public Policy Center at Dobson Family Institute, the nonprofit he founded after leaving Focus on the Family. Dobson introduced her to Fox News, where she was discovered by Trump.



Access to MinistryWatch content is free. However, we hope you will support our work with your prayers and financial gifts. To make a donation, [click here](#).

## 2) What?

What happened?

Or what will happen? (if an advance story)

Or what didn't happen?

WGAD? Is this happening newsworthy? Relevant? Significant? Consequential?

What's different, faster, bigger, easier, cheaper?

What difference will it make in people's lives?

CHURCH

CULTURE

## Health Share Group Sues New Mexico

Samaritan Ministries claims state oversight of bad actors is "hostile"



Steve Rabey • January 31, 2024

Samaritan Ministries International, one of the nation's oldest and biggest Christian health share ministries, has sued the state of New Mexico, claiming its efforts to punish bad actors is a "hostile" and "longstanding campaign" that violates citizens' constitutional rights and promotes "religious discrimination."

"Animus is evident everywhere," said the complaint, which was filed in December and first reported by the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#).

The state has done nothing to limit Samaritan's work so far, but the nonprofit says its members there now "find themselves squarely in (the state's) crosshairs." Samaritan is pursuing a pre-enforcement challenge to prevent any future legal action by the state, citing a recent Supreme Court [decision](#) protecting a web designer from having to create websites for LGBTQ weddings if asked to do so.

"The New Mexico Office of Superintendent of Insurance has sought to shut down other health care sharing ministries in New Mexico, threatening the constitutional rights of Samaritan's members," said Samaritan in a statement issued by a publicist, who declined to answer questions about the case.

Samaritan's complaint also claims that New Mexico's "endless promoting" of its own health insurance exchange, BeWellnm, shows an "animus towards the kind of conservative social and economic religious views held by sharing ministries."

Residents of New Mexico, 20% of whom live in rural communities, face numerous healthcare challenges, including high poverty rates, lack of providers, and aging populations.

Samaritan says it has 270,000 members in the U.S., including 900 in New Mexico. The ministry was founded in 1991 and had \$50 million in revenue in 2022. It claims to have facilitated more than \$411 million worth of expense sharing among members in one year.

Religious groups have used various forms of burden sharing for centuries. America currently has more than 100 groups offering to pool member donations to help other members with their care, but the industry is unregulated and operates outside of established insurance guidelines. Health share groups are not legally required to pay members a single penny in benefits.



SEARCH | MINISTRYWATCH

## Baptist Pastor Among Men Arrested in Sex Sting

Police targeted men involved in online prostitution



Steve Bailey • February 16, 2019

A sting operation targeting men involved in online prostitution has [netted a pastor](#), William Martell Kannamey.

Kannamey, who was arrested this week and charged with first-degree prostitution, was senior pastor at [Blue Ridge View Baptist Church](#) in Pickens, South Carolina. He previously served at [Liberty First Baptist Church](#) in Liberty, South Carolina. Neither church would answer questions, and neither has posted information about his arrest.

News reports say the Seneca Police Department started an investigation last summer after community members reported suspicious activities at a local residence.

Using surveillance, search warrants, and digital records, police gathered evidence about people selling sex services and homed in on the location where sex workers were offered to paying customers.

In addition to Kannamey, officials arrested four other men. Four suspects are still being sought.

[Blue Ridge View Baptist Church](#) was founded in 1916, and in 2008 it was recognized by the South Carolina Southern Baptist Convention for leading the state in baptisms.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Why does MinistryWatch report on sex crimes? These stories are tough to read and sometimes even tougher to report, but we think they are vital to our mission to bring transparency, accountability, and credibility to the evangelical church. To read more about why and how we report these stories, read "Why MinistryWatch Reports On Sex Crimes." You can [find that story here](#).

**TO OUR READERS:** Do you have a story idea, or do you want to give us feedback about this or any other story? Please email us: [info@ministrywatch.com](mailto:info@ministrywatch.com)



William Kannamey and other arrested in sting operation / Courtesy of Seneca Police Department

Tags:



## With FlashPoint Live, roster of Pentecostal 'prophets' hits the road for Trump

*The tour's personalities and themes are borrowed from 'FlashPoint,' a Christian current-events program that features Trump and his former officials, members of Congress, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Fox News host Jeanine Pirro.*

February 2, 2024

By Steve Rabey



Listen to this article



Promotional material for the FlashPoint LIVE Rescue America Tour. (Courtesy image)

(RNS) — Among a certain cohort of popular evangelical Christian preachers and other conservative personalities, there are some bedrock truths that come not from human reason, they say, but Almighty God.

Among them: Donald Trump is the U.S. president, and those who persecute him face death. Joe Biden, the antichrist, should be in prison for treason. Christians should rule over unbelievers.

## FlashPoint 'prophets' declare God supports Trump and Christian nationalism

NEWS STEVE RABBY | FEBRUARY 25, 2024



God is on Donald Trump's side in this year's election, said the pro-Trump "prophets" at a recent [FlashPoint Live](#) event.

"The Holy Spirit spoke to me," said Hank Kunneman, who wore a jacket decorated with stars and stripes as he addressed an audience of hundreds at health-and-wealth preacher Andrew Wommack's Charis Bible College outside Colorado Springs.

Kunneman said God had made a promise: "We are going to make America great again."

Throughout the event, members of the audience chanted "USA! USA!" and waved hand-held American flags. Highlights may be viewed [here](#) and [here](#).

"I believe it's God's desire that Trump should be back in," said Lance Wallnau, who prophesied Trump's 2016 victory and says God spoke to him again last year in Jerusalem about 2024.

"I'm not doine it for you. I'm doine it for the



### Politics, faith and mission: Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book *faith journey*
- A conversation with Jemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamli
- A conversation with Ty Seidule
- A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fo Wong

# Colorado Springs seekers find connection at Body Mind Spirit Expo

By Steve Rabey Religion Correspondent Apr 16, 2023 Updated Apr 16, 2023



"Mary 'Innocent Ray'" is a Higher Self Portrait by Sonya Shannon that depicts the subject's spiritual attributes.  
courtesy photos

Julie Loar was a Catholic college student serving families in Mexico when a near-death experience "blew apart" her world and inspired her to explore spiritual traditions that were once alien to her.

"I felt like a different person," says Loar, a writer and editor who leads tours to Egypt and works with small groups

## Popular

- 1 Religious and spiritual events happening in the Pikes Peak region this month
- 2 Leap Year's ties to religious history live on; 'science is never at odds with faith,' says historian
- 3 Softness through strength: Retired-surgeon-turned-sculptor captures raw beauty of Christian suffering

**SPENCERS**  
18th ANNUAL FREE  
Garden Success Show  
March 25th & 26th, 10am-4pm  
Spencer Center, 10000 Spencers Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80907  
REGISTER NOW

# Where is the action taking place?

Is location significant?

How much detail does audience need?

- local/national
- event access: need more detail (-> link to website)

## Trump tells Christian broadcasters: 'You cannot let people vote for Democrats'

NEWS STEVE BABY | FEBRUARY 22, 2024



Donald Trump took his campaign to America's Christian broadcasters last night, asking them to protect America from political opponents he described as dangerous, bad, sick people, most of them communists, Marxists and fascists.

"You cannot let people vote for these people," he told attendees at the National Religious Broadcasters International Christian Media Convention Feb. 22 in Nashville. "You cannot let people vote for the Democrats."

"If we're going to save this country, it will be thanks to men and women like you," he said.

Trump painted a dark picture of America overrun by internal enemies who pose a greater threat than external enemies such as Russia and China.

"We can handle them," he said. "The greatest threat is the people within our country that are more dangerous than the outsiders."

"They want to tear down crosses where they can, and cover them up with social justice flags," he warned. "They're very sick people."

"There's nothing more important than to defeat this wicked system," he said.

**"They want to tear down crosses where they can, and cover them up with social justice flags."**

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Iemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamlin Sr
- A conversation with Ty Seidule
- A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fong Wong
- A conversation with Russell Moore
- A conversation with Kaitlyn Schiess
- A conversation with Winnie Varghese

## Residents of Colorado town will highlight Christian nationalism after Wommack's takeover

NEWS STEVE BABY | FEBRUARY 25, 2024



They lived in Woodland Park, Colo., for a decade or two or three before Andrew Wommack's Charis Bible College came to town a decade ago.

"I went to Bible college, so I thought, what could be wrong with that?" said one unnamed resident. "I assumed they would be quiet neighbors."

In 2017, Wommack created his political group, Truth and Liberty Coalition, and in 2021 he publicly announced his plan to use his students and employees to "take over" the mountain city near Colorado Springs.

He exploited scorched-earth political tactics to successfully place his preferred candidates on the city council and gain a 4-1 majority on the school board. Firings, resignations, enrollment declines and chaos ensued.

"We were sitting ducks," said one conservative Christian resident, who requested anonymity due to safety concerns. "This was all brand new to me, this idea of Christians taking over. I had no idea what would happen to our local schools and I've been in utter shock and grief."

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Jemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamlin Sr.
- A conversation with Ty Seidule
- A conversation with Jessica Wai-Fong

## Truth & Liberty Coalition expands culture war to 30 Colorado school boards

*Health and wealth preacher Andrew Wommack teaches that Christians should 'reform nations' and rule over the godless. His Truth & Liberty Coalition has started by pushing its candidates in some 30 school districts across Colorado.*



Andrew Wommack speaks at Charis Bible College in Woodland Park, Colo., in September 2023. (Video screen grab)

November 1, 2023

By Steve Rabey



Listen to this article



DENVER (RNS) — In 2021, Andrew Wommack told his followers to “take over” Woodland Park, a mountain town of 8,000 near Colorado Springs. The televangelist and Charis Bible College founder had been saying for years that “the time has come” for Christians to stop focusing only on their faith and start working to gain political influence.

“We have enough people here in this school we could elect anybody we want,” he said at a meeting of the Citizen’s Academy, an event held at Charis by the Truth & Liberty Coalition, a nonprofit organization also founded by Wommack. “This county ought to

# When did this/will this happen?

New story, or latest update on ongoing story?

When is next chapter in this saga?

Will change be immediate, gradual, long-lasting?

- local/national
- events need more detail (-> link to website)



# Religious and spiritual events happening in the Pikes Peak region this month

By Steve Rabey Religion Correspondent Mar 3, 2024



Singer Amy Grant poses for a 2014 portrait next to her dog Olive at her home in Nashville, Tenn. Grant comes to Pikes Peak Center on Tuesday. She has recorded 20 albums that have sold more than 30 million copies, won six Grammy Awards, been inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame and recognized by the Kennedy Center Honors.

the associated press file

In March, the Pikes Peak region will offer five public performances from popular authors, artists and performers who make religion and spirituality accessible to the masses.

1 of 2

## Popular

- 1 Religious and spiritual events happening in the Pikes Peak region this month
- 2 Leap Year's ties to religion live on; science never at odds with faith says historian
- 3 Softness through strength: Retired-surgeon-turns sculptor captures raw beauty of Christian suffering

**SPENCERS**  
28th ANNUAL FREE  
Garden Success Show  
March 8th & 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th  
www.spencers.com  
800-746-7466  
REGISTER NOW

# Why did this action happen?

Why now?

What's the social/historical context for this story?

How could this impact readers' lives?

What's the reason a ministry ceased, or a pastor/CEO resigned?

## Focus on the Family embraces Tucker Carlson as he embraces Putin

NEWS STEVE RABBY | FEBRUARY 22, 2024



Tucker Carlson's critics say he's a blowhard who promotes racism, white supremacy, Replacement Theory, vaccine disinformation and "testicle tanning." He says the people who attacked the U.S. Capitol on January 6 were "sightseers."

Now, his recent interview with Vladimir Putin has led some to call him one of Russia's "useful idiots."

But to his loyal fans at Focus on the Family and its allied organizations, Carlson is inspiring, smart, passionate, brave, bold, pro-life, pro-family, pro-Christianity and "the leading voice in American politics." They say Carlson exhibits the courage — if not the evangelistic calling — of [Billy Graham](#).

Carlson lost his job hosting the most popular show on Fox News last spring after the network paid \$787.5 million to settle a defamation suit with Dominion Voting Systems. Carlson and other Fox hosts falsely attacked the company as part of the network's ongoing coverage supporting Donald Trump's false claims of a stolen 2020 election.

### Politics, faith and mission: by Greg Garrett



- A BNG interview series on the 2024 election and the Church
- A talk with Tim Alberta on his book and faith journey
- A conversation with Iemar Tisby
- A conversation with Leonard Hamlin Sr.

# How did this happen?

What are the reasons/causes?

Who will do the work going forward?

In religion reporting, **how** includes funding:

- How much does it cost to do this?
- How is this paid for?
- Who paid?

Follow the \$

- Audited financial statement (not simple “annual report”)
- Required government reports (U.S: IRS, 990)

**COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL, INC. AND AFFILIATES**  
**Consolidated Statements of Activities**  
Fiscal years ended June 30, 2023 and 2022  
(Amounts in thousands)

|  | 2023                          |                            |                   |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
|  | Without donor<br>restrictions | With donor<br>restrictions | Total             |
| Revenue, gains, and other support:                             |                               |                            |                   |
| Contributions  | \$ 712,281                    | \$ 187,295                 | \$ 899,576        |
| Contributions from Global Partner Alliance                     | 199,200                       | 61,646                     | 260,846           |
| Investment income and other income                             | 17,407                        | 820                        | 18,227            |
| Net realized and unrealized gain on foreign exchange contracts | 11,933                        | —                          | 11,933            |
| Net assets released from restrictions                          | 248,943                       | (248,943)                  | —                 |
| Total revenue, gains, and other support                        | <u>1,189,764</u>              | <u>818</u>                 | <u>1,190,582</u>  |
| Expenses:  |                               |                            |                   |
| Program activities:  |                               |                            |                   |
| Child development programs                                     | 964,906                       | —                          | 964,906           |
| Supporting activities:   |                               |                            |                   |
| Fundraising  | 147,043                       | —                          | 147,043           |
| Management and general   | 84,287                        | —                          | 84,287            |
| Total supporting activities                                    | <u>231,330</u>                | <u>—</u>                   | <u>231,330</u>    |
| Total expenses   | <u>1,196,236</u>              | <u>—</u>                   | <u>1,196,236</u>  |
| Change in net assets   | (6,472)                       | 818                        | (5,654)           |
| Net assets, beginning of year                                  | 364,108                       | 45,078                     | 409,186           |
| Net assets, end of year  | <u>\$ 357,636</u>             | <u>\$ 45,896</u>           | <u>\$ 403,532</u> |

# Colorado Springs area Bible ministry's revenue soars more than 300% after years of decline

By Steve Rubey Religion Correspondent Dec 31, 2023



Biblica was founded as the New York Bible Society. The ministry changed its name to International Bible Society in 1988 when it relocated to a 50,000-square-foot office near New Life Church in Colorado Springs. The name changed to Biblica in 2007. Its offices are now in Palmer Lake.

Debbie Kelley, The Tribune

## Popular

- 1 Religious and spiritual events happening in the Pikes Peak region this month
- 2 Leap Year's ties to religious history live on; 'science is never at odds with faith,' says historian
- 3 Softness through strength: Retired-surgeon-turned-sculptor captures raw beauty of Christian suffering



Q&A