REPORT from the Capital

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INSIDE:

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BJC: local government prayer violates consciences, undermines voluntary religion

In Supreme Court brief, BJC urges limit on government involvement in religion

WASHINGTON – Official prayer at local government meetings violates the First Amendment and demeans genuine faith, according to the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty in a brief filed Sept. 23 at the U.S. Supreme Court. The church-state group says the First Amendment's Establishment Clause protects the rights of individuals and faith communities to engage in religious worship as a voluntary expression of individual conscience and prohibits the government from appropriating those rights.

The BJC filed a friend-of-the-court brief in *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, opposing the practice of opening municipal meetings with prayer. The town's "practice of beginning a participatory local government meeting with a communal prayer infringes the liberty of conscience of not just religious minorities, but also of Christians who believe that worship should be voluntary," according to the brief. The Founders and our Baptist forebears understood "that prayer is an expression of voluntary religious devotion, not the business of the government."

While the town argues its practice is constitutional under the Supreme Court's *Marsh v. Chambers* decision (1983), the BJC brief draws a sharp distinction between that precedent and the practice of the town.

The prayer practice upheld in *Marsh* involved a chaplain employed by the Nebraska Legislature to minister to its members, a practice the Court found comparable to the historical tradition in Congress. The practice in Greece differs fundamentally because "[l]ocal board meetings directly affect citizens in a way that legislative meetings do not," according to the brief. "A passive visitor in the gallery of the U.S. Congress is simply in a different position than a citizen preparing to speak before a town board."

"By opening a local government meeting with an exercise of religious devotion, a political assembly is transformed into a religious congregation," said K. Hollyn Hollman, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee. "It is because of – not in spite of – the importance of prayer and religion that we object to this government assumption of religious functions," Hollman said.

The brief was joined by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The case involves the Greece, N.Y. Town Board's prayer practice, which was held unconstitutional by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Since 1999, the board has invited local clergy to offer an opening prayer. Two residents sued the town, claiming the practice violates the Establishment Clause by impermissibly aligning the town with Christianity. According to the 2nd Circuit, a substantial majority of the prayers between 1999 and 2010 "contained uniquely Christian language," amounting to an unconstitutional establishment of religion.

The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *Town of Greece v. Galloway* Nov. 6. The BJC brief is available online at www.BJConline.org.

—BJC staff reports

After appeals courts split on contraceptive mandate, Supreme Court asked to resolve issue

A split among the federal courts of appeals regarding the application of the Affordable Care Act's contraceptive mandate to for-profit businesses with religious objections is likely to accelerate U.S. Supreme Court review of the issue.

Federal officials have asked the High Court to review a ruling by the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that for-profit companies cannot be required to offer employees insurance coverage contrary to business owners' moral objections. In a separate petition, a private business owner is seeking High Court review of a converse ruling by the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Obama administration's contraceptive mandate, finalized in June, requires most employers to provide employee insurance coverage for preventive health services — including birth control, morning-after pills and sterilization — at no cost. While there are exemptions for religious groups and affiliated institutions, there are no carve-outs for for-profit businesses with religious owners. Opponents of the mandate who fall into the latter category say that they will be forced to provide coverage they find morally abhorrent.

On Sept. 19, the administration petitioned the Supreme Court to reverse a lower court decision in a case involving Hobby Lobby, an arts-and-crafts chain owned by evangelical Christians who maintain their religious beliefs prevent them from complying with the government's contraceptive mandate. While Hobby Lobby prevailed on its claim in the 10th Circuit, the 3rd Circuit rejected similar arguments advanced by a family-owned woodworking business. That decision was appealed to the Supreme Court on Sept. 19 as well.

Also in September, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals handed down an opinion agreeing with the 3rd Circuit that for-profit companies must comply with the mandate.

Hobby Lobby's lawsuit has been one of the most high profile of 60-some cases involving the Obama administration's contraceptive mandate. The petitions now pending before the High Court center on interpretation of the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which says the government "shall not substantially burden a person's exercise of religion" unless that burden is the least restrictive means to further a compelling governmental interest. The Court is being asked to determine whether for-profit businesses can "exercise religion" within the meaning of the statute and, if so, whether the mandate amounts to a substantial burden on those rights.

The government is urging the Supreme Court to decide that for-profit corporations cannot deny their employees certain health coverage to which they are otherwise entitled by federal law based merely on the employers' religious objections.

Attorneys for Hobby Lobby see it differently.

"The United States government is taking the remarkable position that private individuals lose their religious freedom when they make a living," said Kyle Duncan, general counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty and lead lawyer for Hobby Lobby.

The split among the federal courts of appeals virtually ensures the Supreme Court will weigh in on the issue.

If the Supreme Court grants the petitions to hear the cases, it could issue a decision before the end of the Court's term in June 2014.

—Religion News Service and BJC staff reports

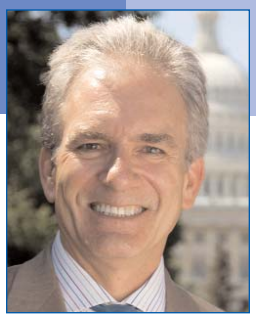
BJC Board meets in D.C., elects new officers

The Baptist Joint Committee Board of Directors (pictured below) elected new officers and approved an increased operating budget during its meeting Oct. 7-8. Composed of representatives of 15 national, state and regional bodies, the board passed a budget increase of 3.5 percent and elected Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, a representative of American Baptist Churches USA, as the chair. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina representative Daniel Glaze was elected vice chair, and Religious Liberty Council representative Tambi Swiney was elected secretary. Gary Walker was voted treasurer and endowment committee chair.

The newly elected officers are (L to R): Tambi Swiney, secretary; Daniel Glaze, vice chair; Curtis Ramsey-Lucas, chair; Gary Walker, treasurer.

REFLECTIONS

Remembering the origins of RFRA



J. Brent Walker
Executive Director

It was a gorgeous, bright and crisp autumn day — November 16, 1993 — when about 200 of us gathered in the White House's Rose Garden to witness history: the signing of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Surrounded by Congressional leaders of both parties and Vice President Al Gore, President Bill Clinton sat at a small desk and signed what is probably the most significant piece of religious liberty legislation of our generation.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, was effusive. "The bill enacted today," he observed, "is the first civil rights bill in the history of America that focuses entirely on religious freedom." Tyrone Pitts, representing the Progressive National Baptist Convention on the BJC Board of Directors, hailed RFRA as "more meaningful to us as people of God than any other legislation." Bob Dugan, with the National Association of Evangelicals, gushed that this "historic act would gladden the heart of Thomas Jefferson who called religious liberty 'the most sacred of all human rights.'"

I remember thinking, what a signal accomplishment! Over three and a half years had passed since the U.S. Supreme Court effectively neutered the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause by giving government the ability to enforce generally applicable laws that would indirectly burden someone's exercise of religion in *Employment Division v. Smith* (1990). During that interregnum, more than fifty cases had been decided denying relief to religious claimants. The damage continued to mount.

I was proud that the BJC's general counsel, Oliver "Buzz" Thomas, led a coalition of religious and civil liberties groups that helped convince Congress to pass the measure and urge a Baptist president and vice president to embrace it. The coalition — 63 members strong — spanned the religious and political spectrum from left to right: evangelicals and mainline Protestants, Jews and Muslims, Roman Catholics and Lutherans, Sikhs and Scientologists, and the ACLU and the Traditional Values Coalition put aside their theological and political disagreements and former weapons of rhetorical warfare to join forces to promote something that transcended their deep differences: religious liberty for all.

Yes, something big, something important had been accomplished. But it was never thought of as some kind of panacea. As had been the case even before 1990, religious freedom claimants would not always win; indeed, they would probably lose more often than not. This is particularly true when one's exercise of religion would prejudice the rights or threaten the well-being of others or when the requested accommodation actually would result in the establishment of religion. But at least there would be a fighting chance — a slightly tilted playing field in favor of religious freedom — and a forum in which government would be called upon to withstand strict judicial scrutiny when it tried to interfere with religious practice.

The ensuing two decades, however, have brought developments that most of us — president and vice president, members of Congress, the coalition, and legal scholars — did not foresee.

We were confident that RFRA would survive a constitutional challenge. But the Supreme Court struck down RFRA as applied to state and local governments in *City of Boerne v. Flores* (1997), even though the law continues to apply with full force to the federal government. (Several state religious liberty laws and the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 provide additional protection.) Lower federal courts interpreted RFRA to require the religious practice in question be mandated by one's religion and central to one's belief system, considerably narrowing RFRA's protections. (Congress later amended RFRA to make clear that religious motivation, not compulsion or centrality, is what's required.) Perhaps most dishearteningly, the grand coalition's good will generated by cooperation has dwindled. The culture wars over the past 20 years made this result almost inevitable. But attempts to extend RFRA beyond its intended application and disagreement over RFRA's interpretation in the area of civil rights and health care has strained much of the good will and vitiated any unanimity of opinion on RFRA's workings in our judicial system.

This display in the BJC's Center for Religious Liberty features a pen used by President Clinton to sign RFRA, along with a photo from the ceremony.

The upcoming RFRA anniversary celebration and symposium (described in the "Hollman Report" on page 6) will provide a welcomed forum for understanding differences, seeking agreements and hopefully launching a new era of civility and cooperation as we try to balance religious liberty with the rights of others and the well-being of society generally.

Christianity and the Founding Fathers: Explo

The 2013 Religious Liberty Essay Scholarship Contest asked high school juniors and seniors to examine religious diversity in America and evaluate the claim that the United States was founded as a "Christian nation." The grand prize winner is Christian Belanger, a 2013 graduate of Strath Haven High School in Wallingford, Pa. As part of his grand prize, Christian won a $2,000 scholarship. His essay is reprinted below.

By
Christian Belanger
2013 Religious Liberty Essay
Scholarship Contest
Grand Prize Winner

In July of 2004, Jerry Falwell, a Baptist pastor and social conservative, succinctly stated that "any student of American history, from the Mayflower Compact to the New England Confederation to the Declaration of Independence" should be able to see that America is, and always has been, a Christian nation. With this proclamation, Falwell espoused conceptions of America's foundations and Founding Fathers to which many Americans would enthusiastically assent. According to this view, America is a nation that predominantly utilizes traditional Christian frameworks with traditionally Christian values in its everyday governance. Unfortunately for proponents of religious government, there is ample proof both within the Constitution and within the writings of individual Founders that, despite being — as Falwell phrased it — "followers of Jesus Christ," few of these men ever intended the United States government to be anything other than a secular entity.

The Constitution refers to itself as "the supreme law of the land" and so it must be the most reliable and important document to refer to when examining the role of religion in the creation of the U.S. (Art. VI, par. 2). If the Founding Fathers had truly intended for America to be a Christian nation, surely the Constitution contains proof of their intentions. The first, most overt reference to religion is found in Article VI, when it is stated "no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States" (par. 3). This clause actually shows a desire, depending upon one's interpretation, for either no religion or various religions — not just Christianity — to coexist within government. It emphatically does not prove the primacy of one religion over another in the minds of the Founders, but rather supports an array of religious diversity. The only other consequential mention of religion comes in the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights, which begins, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The second half of that segment simply permits citizens to freely exercise their religious beliefs. The initial part of the amendment, however, is considerably thornier. According to constitutional scholars, it can be interpreted dually: as accommodationist, sanctioning interaction between religion and government, or separationist, completely severing the two entities (Davis). The debate between the two positions antedates the publication of the Bill of Rights, evidenced by the fact that eight separate drafts of the First Amendment are on record (Davis). Ultimately, though, it matters little which position one takes on the issue, because even with an accommodationist approach, there is no indication that any religion, especially not Christianity, should be preferred over another. In fact, many early accommodationist drafts took extreme pains to specify this, with one written as, "Congress shall make no law establishing one religious sect or society in preference to others ... " ("Bill of Rights"). Though that phrasing clearly allows for a general promotion of religion, it still goes to great lengths to display a nonpreferentialist approach. In the Constitution, then, there is little to be found that supports the use of an overarching Christian ideology to rule the country.

If the Constitution seems to promote secularity, or at least non-specificity, are the other writings of the Founding Fathers any different? Upon inspection, it becomes clear that even among those Founders who advocated for religious spirit in government, few explicitly supported a specifically Christian one. For example, John Adams, in a 1798 address to a Massachusetts militia, argued, "we have no government ... capable of contending in human passions unbridled by morality or religion. Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people" (Adams 228). Two years earlier, however, President Adams had signed the Treaty of

oring America's Purported Religious Origins

Tripoli, which contained the notable addendum that "the Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion" (Mount). Adams was also a devout Unitarian and, therefore, a proud proponent of a religion that did more than most to advocate for religious diversity. While he may have desired greater religious influence in governing, he certainly did not argue ardently for Christianity in particular. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the United States, also wrote about the imperative need for "Christian rulers." Yet Jay actually supported the Supremacy Clause of the Constitution in his letters, and so it can be seen that in spite of his personal preference for Christian leadership, he knew it was beyond his jurisdiction to interfere (Morris). Many of the more religious Founding Fathers, it becomes evident, wanted to encourage a Christian zeitgeist but ultimately deferred to the inherent secular authority of the Constitution.

Other Founding Fathers, meanwhile, were prominent separationists, vociferously arguing against any brand of religion entering government, and they had a sizeable influence in establishing an early precedence for secular government in America. Thomas Jefferson, in particular, excoriated Christianity on several occasions, labeling it "mere Abracadabra of mountebanks calling themselves priests of Jesus" (Jefferson 1816). In a letter to the Danbury Baptist Association, Jefferson famously called for "separation between church and state," and he later reiterated his belief that Christianity should not be a part of common law (Jefferson 1802, 1814). In another example, James Madison wrote a speech entitled "Memorial and Remonstrance" about the pernicious influence of religion in government and how "a just government" did not need it (Madison). In delivering this, Madison articulated a commonly held belief — that government should seek to govern as well as it could without any form of religious guidance, an assertion that makes the claim of America's supposedly Christian origin seem almost hyperbolically absurd.

In the modern day, of the 73 percent of Americans who are Christian, it can reasonably be assumed that a fair number of them will bring their particular moral values into the voting booth ("No Religion on the Rise"). In a democratic society, this may contribute to the smothering of minorities' religious freedoms by the powerful voice of the religious majority. Recently, for example, there were measures passed in over two dozen states banning Sharia law from being considered in lawsuits, though this is considered by many experts to violate the First Amendment (ACLU). In situations such as these, the federal government has the responsibility to intervene and ensure that these religious freedoms are not disregarded. Fortunately, several courts have already struck down the provisions against Sharia law as unconstitutional under the First Amendment and provided a model for how a government should balance the benefits of a democratic society with the basic need for religious equality and freedom ("Oklahoma Sharia ... ").

Ultimately, it is clear that according to the Constitution and the archival writings of the Founding Fathers, America was definitely not founded as a "Christian nation," despite the Christian leanings of many of its Founders. Furthermore, these misinformed and dangerous attempts at mythologizing the genesis — pun intended — of America and its religious influences may contribute, in harmful ways, to the oppression of minority beliefs. In these situations, the burden is on the government to step in and prevent discrimination, creating a precedent for democratic tolerance and diversity, as well as secularity. If this can be done effectively and benignly, America may finally become, as the Founders intended, a nation of religious diversity and freedom.

Visit **www.BJConline.org/contest** for details on the 2014 essay scholarship contest and to read the other winning entries from 2013.

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K. Hollyn Hollman
General Counsel

RFRA at 20: a retrospective

"Our goal is to inspire critical thinking about the importance of protecting religious freedom, not just in the abstract but in the real world where conflicts often arise and where the law can make a difference in protecting rights of conscience."

For more than a year, the BJC has been working with a small steering committee of religious liberty colleagues to plan a symposium commemorating the upcoming 20th anniversary of the passage of the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). Our organizing partners, including the Christian Legal Society, the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, the American Jewish Committee, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty and the Religious Freedom Center of the Newseum Institute, represent past and present religious liberty advocates and some key players in RFRA's genesis.

RFRA was specifically designed to make it difficult for government to substantially burden the exercise of religion without a compelling reason for doing so. It attempted to provide a workable legislative test for balancing religious liberty needs against other important government interests and to afford religious claimants relief from generally applicable laws in some circumstances. When Congress passed RFRA, by overwhelming majorities in both chambers, it recognized that many times general laws may incidentally and unintentionally harm religion. RFRA was enacted to mitigate such harms and encourage religious accommodations when possible.

Since RFRA was signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1993, the legal landscape of religious liberty has shifted dramatically. Subsequent cases and federal and state laws have affected RFRA's usage, and RFRA is being applied in new contexts that were unforeseen two decades ago. There is no longer broad consensus about RFRA's benefits or even its intended scope. Many groups who once supported RFRA (and the law's state corollaries) have since changed course, fearing that these laws are increasingly being used too expansively in ways that harm other important rights. While RFRA sets a high standard for religious freedom claims, without regard to any particular claim or outcome, its application in the context of civil rights and health care laws has dampened its popularity among some prior advocates. At the same time, others conclude the laws have not done enough to provide meaningful protection for religious liberty and should be strengthened.

The BJC's November 7 symposium, which will be held at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., will use the occasion of the RFRA anniversary as an opportunity to reflect on the state of free exercise of religion in America more generally by examining it in a number of contexts. Our goal is to inspire critical thinking about the importance of protecting religious freedom, not just in the abstract but in the real world where conflicts often arise and where the law can make a difference in protecting rights of conscience.

First, we will revisit the context in which such a remarkable coalition of interests coalesced, secured bipartisan agreement in Congress and passed large-scale federal legislation to protect religious freedom. Religious freedom advocate and former BJC General Counsel Oliver "Buzz" Thomas, who chaired the RFRA coalition, will provide a keynote address followed by a panel of experts who were part of the coalition, represent a variety of religious constituencies and are involved in other policy debates that impact religious freedom.

Second, a segment of the symposium will be devoted to examining the cases working their way through the federal courts that use RFRA to challenge the contraception mandate under the Affordable Care Act. Former law professor Ira "Chip" Lupu, one of the nation's leading religious liberty experts, will moderate a discussion between attorneys from the American Civil Liberties Union and the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, both of whom are deeply involved in these disputes as well as other cases applying RFRA. For the last couple of years, such lawsuits have been the primary vehicle for reviving discussion about the meaning and impact of RFRA.

Third, Professor Doug Laycock of the University of Virginia School of Law, a key drafter of and advocate for RFRA, will provide a keynote address on the free exercise of religion in our diverse society with an eye toward the future. His presentation will be followed by a panel representing a variety of religious and cultural views on religion in America to assess our biggest challenges.

Our hope is that, throughout the day, we can learn from each other and continue the cooperation and respect for differences that are necessary to maximize religious freedom in ways that are mutually beneficial (if not ideal) for all stakeholders.

BJC names communications associate


Edwards

Jordan Edwards, a native of Kansas City, Mo., has joined the Baptist Joint Committee staff as the communications associate.

Edwards earned a degree in film production from the University of Miami (Fla.). He served as an assistant editor on the documentary film *We Live in Public*, which won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance film Festival in 2009. After graduating with a master's degree in journalism from Syracuse University, Edwards spent two years as a features reporter for *The Gazette* in Montgomery County, Md. Throughout his career, Edwards has contributed to *Long Island Press* (Syosset, N.Y.), *The Post-Standard* (Syracuse, N.Y.), *Syracuse New Times* (N.Y.) and *The Pitch* (Kansas City, Mo.).

Seventh-day Adventist Church honors Walker, BJC

The Columbia Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church honored the work of the Baptist Joint Committee and Executive Director J. Brent Walker with the Adrian Westney Religious Liberty Award, recognizing "sustained and conspicuous advocacy of religious freedom."

Columbia Union Executive Secretary Rob Vandeman presented Walker with the award Sept. 28 after Walker preached at Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Md.

"Rarely a day goes by that we don't have some contact with Adventists," Walker said before beginning his sermon, "as we stand together — Baptists, Adventists and others — to extend and defend religious liberty ... for all of God's children."

Walter E. Carson, the Columbia Union's vice president and general counsel, said the award was in "recognition of Baptist leadership in the advocacy of religious freedom in the United States of America," in a statement.


Walker receives the Adrian Westney Religious Liberty Award from Columbia Union Executive Secretary Rob Vandeman Sept. 28 during a service at Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church.

"I am delighted that the BJC merited this recognition from a valued coalition partner who understands the importance of religious liberty for all," Walker said.

Organized in 1907, the Columbia Union represents nearly 700 churches throughout the Mid-Atlantic. Its headquarters are in Columbia, Md.

—Jordan Edwards

Abercrombie & Fitch to change 'look policy,' allow hijabs

Abercrombie & Fitch will change its "look policy" and allow employees to wear hijabs after a three-year legal battle with two Muslim women was settled out of court.

The settlement requires Abercrombie to report religious accommodation requests and discrimination complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for three years, and it includes $71,000 in compensation for the two women. The settlement also averted a Sept. 30 trial.

Abercrombie fired Umme-Hani Khan, a stockroom worker in its San Mateo, Calif., store, in 2010 for refusing to work without her religious headscarf. Khan, who had worked at the store for four months without incident, filed a religious discrimination complaint with the EEOC, which sued the retailer in 2011.

In its defense, Abercrombie countered that the headscarves violated its "look policy," which was an important part of its marketing strategy. Abercrombie also defended its "look policy" as "commercial free speech."

The EEOC also sued Abercrombie in 2010, alleging its Milpitas, Calif., store did not hire Halla Banafa, a Muslim woman who interviewed there in 2008, because of her headscarf.

In September, U.S. District Court Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers agreed with Khan and ordered Abercrombie to revise the policy, while in April, U.S. District Court Judge Edward Davila dismissed several of Abercrombie's defenses in the Banafa case. Khan received $48,000 in compensation, and Banafa received $23,000.

"People shouldn't have to choose between their faith and their paycheck," said Khan. "I'm happy that the judge saw that I was wronged."

Abercrombie has also been on the losing side of a third EEOC lawsuit, brought on behalf of another Muslim woman, Samantha Elauf of Tulsa, Okla., who alleged she was not hired because of her headscarf, but has appealed the case to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver.

—Omar Sacirbey, Religion News Service

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REPORT from the Capital

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Why we Give

'I am happy to simply be a very small part of this big and important work.'

For Pauletta Reeves, it was her son, Stephen, who first sparked her interest in the Baptist Joint Committee. After he interned for the BJC and later served as staff attorney, Pauletta and her late husband, Kelly, began donating regularly.

Pauletta strongly believes in having a sound Christian voice that stands firm with the Constitution, working toward religious liberty for all in our very diverse country. The BJC's coalition work and community of support are also important to her. "I love that there are many bodies from the nation, state and region who work with the BJC, as well as thousands of churches," she said.

Reeves

As someone who believes deeply in the BJC's mission, Pauletta feels that the best thing she could do to support the BJC's work is to give. But remembering to give on a regular basis was a challenge. Monthly giving was an excellent option. "I simply decided to set up a giving plan, though it isn't much, to donate regularly," she said.

In addition to monthly giving, Pauletta decided to take her commitment a step further and include the BJC in her estate plan. "I also decided that it would be important to contribute what I could in my will. For me, it is an extension of what I want to do and what I want to be a part of. It is also my feeling that my late husband would be pleased with the decision," she said.

Being a good steward of what she's been given in this life is important to Pauletta. "I am happy to simply be a very small part of this big and important work," she said.

Show your commitment to religious freedom by becoming a monthly or planned giving donor today. Visit BJConline.org/donate to set up a monthly gift. To learn more about making a planned gift to the BJC, please contact Taryn Deaton, director of development, at tdeaton@BJConline.org or 202-544-4226. If you have already included the BJC in your estate plans, please let us know today.

The BJC's mission is to defend and extend God-given religious liberty for all, furthering the Baptist heritage that champions the principle that religion must be freely exercised, neither advanced nor inhibited by government.