



News Release
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Federal Court Rejects Attack on Multi-Faith Invocations

Judge dismisses case attempting to cancel chaplain-led ceremonial invocation prior to court

Montgomery County, TX—Today, a Federal judge dismissed an out of state atheist organization’s lawsuit against Montgomery County, Texas that stems from a complaint against First Liberty Institute client, Judge Wayne Mack, a Justice of the Peace for the county, for allowing multi-faith, chaplain-led invocations at the start of his court sessions.

“Judge Mack is grateful that this portion of the litigation has come to an end,” said Hiram Sasser, General Counsel to First Liberty. “We don’t know what FFRF plans to do next, but the best thing to do would be to just leave everyone in Montgomery County alone. In the meantime, we will continue to defend Judge Mack’s and his multi-faith chaplain program.”

Freedom From Religion Foundation (“FFRF”) dropped its lawsuit against Judge Mack in January of this year after First Liberty filed a motion to dismiss. Today, a federal judge dismissed its lawsuit against the county because FFRF lacks standing.

Mack, who also serves as the County Coroner for Montgomery County, created a volunteer chaplaincy program to aid members of the community while he conducts independent death investigations. In his role as Justice of the Peace, Judge Mack allows the multi-faith, volunteer chaplains to open his courtroom ceremonies with a brief invocation and the pledge of allegiance in order to honor their service. Judge Mack is not in the courtroom during the invocations. The chaplaincy program includes leaders from multiple faiths, including Christian, Sunni Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu religious leaders. In January, a federal district court judge allowed the suit against Montgomery County to continue even after plaintiffs dropped Judge Mack from the lawsuit.

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About First Liberty Institute

[First Liberty Institute](http://www.firstliberty.org) is the largest legal organization in the nation dedicated exclusively to defending religious freedom for all Americans.

To arrange an interview, contact Lacey McNeil at media@firstliberty.org or by calling 972-941-4453.