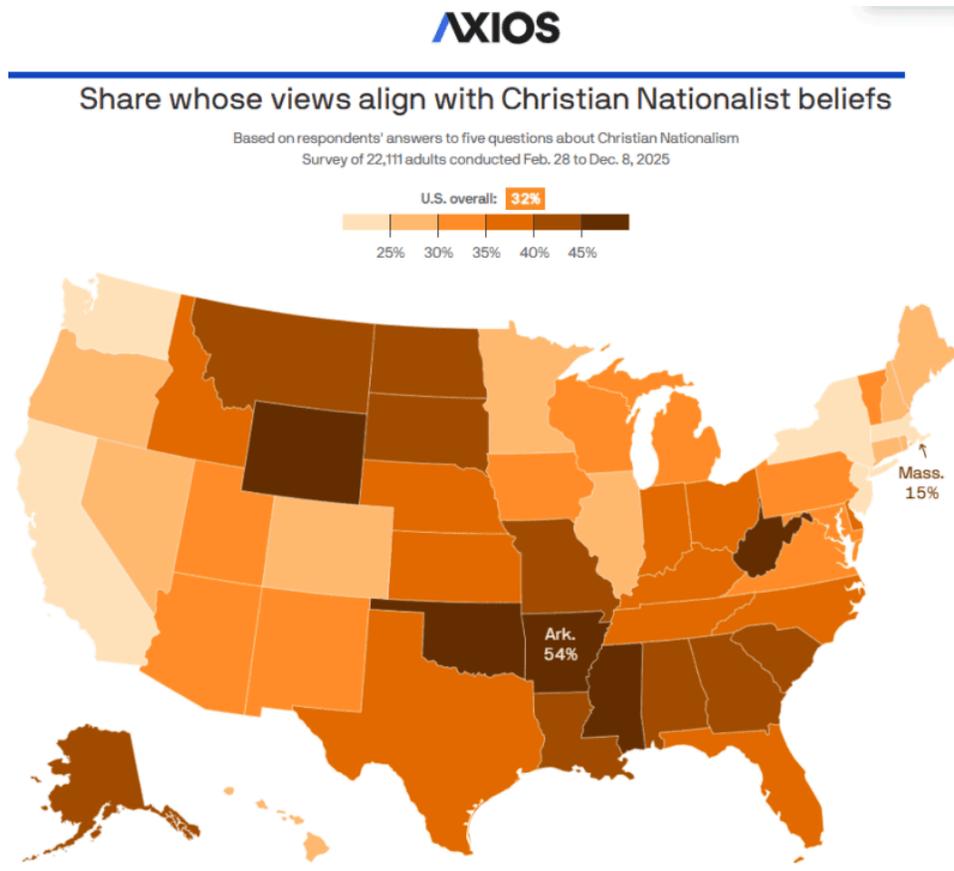


Hi James,

At last, the cold weather is breaking and the promise of warmer days is just around the corner. Which means we'll be outside in full force promoting Church/State Separation. And we will certainly have our work cut out for us, especially as the mid-terms approach in just over 8 months. Last week, **Axios** published a report grading all 50 states on Christian Nationalism. Unsurprisingly, 54% of Arkansans consider themselves "adherents" or "sympathizers" of Christian Nationalism, the highest in the country. Read more about it [here](#). While some see this as a headwind, I see an opportunity to have an outsized impact and make the greatest change in our state. Education and awareness are key, and as our chapter grows, we will continue to be an everyday presence in the NWA community.



Map shows the share who were classified as "adherents" or "sympathizers" based on their responses to five questions

In other news, the **Ozarks Chapter of FFRF** volunteered at the [Northwest Arkansas Women's Shelter](#) on a very cold Saturday in late January. A group of a dozen volunteers worked for 3 hours helping clean & rearrange shelves, sort through clothing and miscellaneous duties. Combined, our group volunteered 36 hours, a huge lift for a small organization with limited resources. Fulfillment comes from seeing the genuine appreciation from staff

and shoppers, and members of Ozarks Chapter of FFRF are happy to contribute time to a wonderful organization that helps so many people.



The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF volunteering at the NWA Women's Shelter Thrift Store on Saturday, January 31, 2026.

As referenced in our January newsletter, our mission in 2026 is to bring together secular citizens in the Ozarks. Over the years, we've witnessed how wide and varied the spectrum of secularism is. But a value underpinning the majority of secular people is support of separation between church & state. And when comparing our nascent organization to larger secular groups, (i.e., [Central Florida Freethought](#), [Washington Area Secular Humanists](#), etc.), we are working to replicate a formula to attract more people. For example (and as mentioned in last month's newsletter), our Ozarks Chapter recently became affiliates with [American Atheists](#) and the [American Humanist Association](#), and we will continue to align ourselves with other organizations who support the core value of church/state separation.

There are several existing secular organizations in Northwest Arkansas that may also align with an individual's values. For example:

- **NWA Freethought** - defined as a "*group where free thoughts are embraced. Discussion is encouraged. And most importantly friends/support happen*", this group meets every Wednesday night at the Embassy Suites in Rogers, AR. Furthermore, they recently started up a casual "Final Friday" event, which is held the last Friday of every month at the Moxy Hotel in Fayetteville (tonight, February 27th!). They can be reached on their [Facebook](#) page or [Meetup](#) group.
- **Recovering From Religion (NWA)** - a group that provides "*ongoing, personal support for individuals who are examining, changing, or choosing to let go of their religious beliefs.*" They meet every week, and can be contacted via their [Meetup](#) group.
- **Atheist Community of Northwest Arkansas** - a group of "*local atheists, agnostics, freethinkers, skeptics, and non-theists supporting secular growth, the Bill of Rights and the separation of church and state in Northwest Arkansas.*" While this group does not have regular meetups, their [Facebook](#) page is active and can connect you with other likeminded people in the community.

ACTION OPPORTUNITY

One of our affiliate partners reached out to the OzarksChapter of FFRF to speak with humanists in the area who would consider taking a public stand in court in support of shared humanist values. They are especially hoping to find people who root their lives in humanist values and fit into one or more of these categories:

1. Are pregnant or planning a family and are facing uncertainty about your future.
2. Have a need for essential reproductive healthcare that you can no longer access in Arkansas.
3. Are living with an illness and struggling to get the appropriate medical care you deserve.
4. Are a transgender person facing discrimination and attacks on your ability to live authentically.
5. Feel that another fundamental right to bodily autonomy is being violated in any other way

If you or someone you know fits into any of the above categories, hit us up! And if anyone knows anybody harmed by the "[Return to the Land](#)" in Lawrence County, AR, and they are interested to know their legal options, let us know and we can connect you with the right people.



The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF is looking to raise awareness via a billboard. Help us brainstorm an idea!

Looking ahead to the warmer months, our chapter will be sponsoring a billboard (or billboards) to remind the public Separation Between Church and State is a Constitutional principle that needs to be protected. We're reaching out to our audience to help brainstorm billboard ideas! We'd love to see what ideas you have for a billboard! AI photo generators are awesome and can come up with some pretty crafty ideas! If you have an idea you'd like to submit, please email them to ozarksFFRF@gmail.com no later than March 14th!

Here is our Calendar of events for the next couple of months!

March 7th (Saturday) - 2:00pm to 5:00pm (Tulsa, OK)

- [Ozarks FFRF Field Trip!](#) - Join **Seth Andrews**, **Erika "Gutsick Gibbon,"** and **Forrest Valkai** for three short presentations and roughly two hours of lively audience interaction at a freethought event right in the buckle of the Bible Belt. Event is being held at OU Schusterman Learning Center - Perkins Auditorium in Tulsa, OK. Tickets are \$35 per person. Happy hour to follow with the [Atheist Community of Tulsa](#) (ACT)

March 15th (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am

- **Secular Sunday Meeting @ Onyx Coffee Springdale** (100 E Emma Ave, Springdale, AR 72764) - Come join us for our monthly business and social meeting.

March 29th (Sunday) - 7:30am to 10:00am

- **Adopt-A-Highway Road Cleanup** - Our first road cleanup of 2026 will start at **Onyx Coffee** (101 E Walnut Ave, Rogers, AR 72756) at **7:30am**. We will carpool from downtown Rogers at 8:00am. The 1 mile section of road takes approximately 90 minutes to clean, and we anticipate returning to Rogers by 10:00am. Orange vests and trash bags will be provided by Benton County. For those able to join us, we recommend wearing long pants, gloves and hat (sunscreen and bug spray, if needed). We have plenty of "grabber tools" to borrow of these can be purchased online separately. Please come support the Ozarks Chapter of FFRF by doing good in our local community!

April 11th (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm

- **Bentonville Farmers Market** - our first Farmers Market event of 2026 takes place in Bentonville. The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF will be set up in the designated "Free Speech" area (location TBD). Come join us for an hour or two as we engage the community.

April 19th (Sunday) - 10:00am to 11:00am

- **Secular Sunday Meeting @ Onyx Coffee Lab** inside **The Momentary** (507 SE E St, Bentonville, AR 72712) - join us as for our monthly get together as we talk business and get together for a quick tour of the museum after our meeting. Take note of the new location!

April 25th (Saturday) - 7:30am to 12:30pm

- **Fayetteville Farmers Market** - The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF returns to the Fayetteville Farmers Market for the first time in 2026! Come meet likeminded freethinkers and spend time chatting with fellow citizens of the Ozarks.

June 27th (Saturday) - 11:00am to 6:00pm

- [NWA Pride Festival 2026](#) (W. Dickson Street) - Just announced!! The Ozarks Chapter of FFRF will be tabling & walking in the NWA Pride Festival on West Dickson Street for the third consecutive year. Save the Date!

More good stuff to come! The 2026 Speaker Series is shaping up and we'll have additional events on the calendar as the Spring & Summer months get closer. In the meantime, please make sure to exercise your right and get out there to **VOTE BY MARCH 3rd!! MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

Check out **OzarksFFRF.org** for more information. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Respectfully,

Chris Sweeny

Chapter Leader - Ozarks Chapter of Freedom From Religion Foundation

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

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www.ozarksffrf.org