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Judge Blocks Brooke Rollins Today: Christian Emails to 100,000 USDA Staff Ruled Unconstitutional

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"The second arrived on 5 April 2026, just before Easter, with a"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

On Thursday 19 November 2026, Judge Trina Thompson of San Francisco issued a preliminary injunction barring Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins from sending proselytising emails to staff at the United States Department of Agriculture. The judge found that two holiday emails Rollins sent to all of the department's roughly 100,000 employees likely violated the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. It was a ruling about one woman's inbox - and about where a Cabinet secretary's personal faith ends and the government's voice begins.

The Cabinet secretary who emailed 100,000 workers that Jesus is "our Savior" has just been told by a federal judge: your faith is yours - but your inbox is the government's. That single line captures the tension at the heart of the case. Rollins is a Christian who speaks openly about her faith, while Thompson is a judge who says that faith, sent from a secretary's official account to every worker under her, stops being private the moment it lands in a subordinate's inbox.

The two emails at the centre of the case could hardly be more different in tone from the dry language of a court order: the first went out on 23 December 2025, two days before Christmas, and carried a video in which Rollins called Jesus "our Savior." The second arrived on 5 April 2026, just before Easter, with a "Christ is Risen" illustration and a retelling of the resurrection. Both came from Rollins' official account, and both reached every USDA employee.

Thompson's 21-page ruling took special issue with one small word, repeated across the emails: "we." Rollins wrote of "us" and "our" in a way that suggested Christianity was the shared faith of all USDA workers. The judge said that language, coming from the woman at the top of the department, carried "coercive pressure" - a message that the boss's faith was also, in some sense, the office's faith.

The lawsuit was filed in May 2026 by six USDA employees and the National Federation of Federal Employees, the union that represents 19,000 USDA workers. They were represented by Americans United, Democracy Forward and Bryan Schwartz Law. Their argument was simple: nobody should have to open a work email and be preached at by their own Cabinet secretary.

One detail in the case made that argument harder to dismiss. At least one employee tried to opt out and was told it was not possible - when she asked to be removed from the list, the answer was no. For the judge, that fact turned a holiday greeting into something closer to a captive audience: workers who could not walk away from the message even if they wanted to.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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