

MAMDANI'S ANTI-RELIGIOUS MESSAGING

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January 6, 2026

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani wasted no time sending a message to the city's faith communities: on his first day in office, he said they would not be afforded heightened protection at their houses of worship. Indeed, he rescinded an executive order to this effect signed by his predecessor, Eric Adams.*

Most of the news stories on Mamdani's decisions affecting religious liberty focused on his rulings overturning Adams' executive orders on Israel, but too many neglected to cite his policy on houses of worship.

It is true that he has scratched a definition of anti-Semitism that includes opposition to the existence of the state of Israel, a definition accepted by 40 nations, including the European Union and Canada. It is also true that he has given the green light to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, which is designed to cripple Israel's economy. Scurrilous as these two decisions are, his executive order affecting churches, synagogues, mosques and temples hit a wider section of New Yorkers.

Adams did not overreact last month when he directed the New York City Police Department to provide stronger protection for houses of worship. His executive order of December 2, which authorized enhanced protection "of both houses of worship and persons exercising their rights to free assembly and free speech near houses of worship," was occasioned by what happened on November 19.

It was on that evening that a crowd of 200 anti-Jewish protesters assembled outside Manhattan's Park East Synagogue screaming, "Death, death to the IDF" [Israel Defense Forces], "globalize the intifada," and "take the settler out." Others yelled, "We need to make them scared." And what was Mamdani's response? A spokesman slammed the synagogue for abusing "these sacred spaces" by "promot[ing] activities in violation of international law."

This should concern all New Yorkers, not simply Jews. Catholics should be particularly troubled, given all the protests that have taken place *during Mass* at St. Patrick's Cathedral in recent years; the cathedral has also been vandalized.

In August 2025, I wrote an 18-page report, "[The Inauthenticity of Zohran Mamdani](#)." Regarding his position on religious liberty, I noted that "a Lexis-Nexis search reveals he has never addressed this subject." I also mentioned that "He is very protective of Islam, but a search of his remarks objecting to anti-Catholicism, or anti-Christian words or deeds, failed to turn up one comment."

It should be noted that at his inauguration, clergy from the Muslim, Protestant, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh communities were invited on stage, but there was no Catholic priest in attendance. Typically, the archbishop of New York is in attendance, but Cardinal Timothy Dolan was not invited. This speaks volumes about Mamdani's purported interest in "diversity." His idea of "inclusion" apparently stops at the door of Catholics.

Yesterday, the House Appropriations Committee introduced a bill that directs \$5 million in federal funding to protect religious sites and fight hate crimes against people of faith. It is outrageous that New York City has a mayor who finds such a policy morally objectionable.

Contact Mamdani's press office: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov

Be sure to read our "Mamdani Watch" file, regularly updated, that is posted on the front page of our website, www.catholicleague.org

*It was subsequently reported that Mamdani, bowing to pressure, quietly reinstated Adams' executive order on this issue.

MAMDANI LIKES ANTI-RELIGIOUS BIGOTS

 [catholicleague.org/mamdani-likes-anti-religious-bigots](https://www.catholicleague.org/mamdani-likes-anti-religious-bigots)

January 14, 2026

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani likes to hire anti-Jewish and anti-Catholic bigots. This is incontestable: click [here](#) for the proof.

Everyone on the list was either on his transition team or served in an advisory capacity. Some are now working in his administration.

Many hate Israel and are trying to weaken its economy through their BDS efforts (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions). Some have defended Al Queda terrorists while others have organized pro-Hamas demonstrations. Anti-Semitic comments abound. Anti-Catholic remarks have also been voiced, and one hire organized an obscene demonstration during Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral.

None of this is surprising. Mamdani hates Israel and blames it—not Hamas—for the Hamas massacre of Jews in Israel on October 7, 2023. Anyone who harbors that much hostility to Jews obviously wants to surround himself with people just like himself. Moreover, his decision to reward a vile anti-Catholic organizer tells us that he wants people like that working for him, not practicing Catholics.

Spellcheck does not recognize the word Mamdani, offering as a substitute the word "Madman." Looks like it is a lot smarter than the people who voted for him.

Mamdani's Anti-Religion Bigots

Ramzi Kassem

Title: Chief Counsel

Kassem was previously a professor of law at the City University of New York (CUNY). He has a history of being involved with the anti-Israel and pro-Palestine movement. In 2025, he provided legal representation to Mahmoud Khalil, the activist and Columbia student who was detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement after participating in pro-Palestine protests at the university. He is the co-founder of Creating Law Enforcement Accountability and Responsibility (known as CLEAR), a CUNY law school clinic with a history of associating with anti-Israel activists. CLEAR has also provided workshops for pro-Palestine protesting students on how they can avoid arrest. Additionally, Kassem provided the legal defense for an Al Qaeda terrorist who bombed an oil tanker in Yemen.

Christine Clarke

Title: Chair and commissioner for the City Commission on Human Rights

According to her biography, she previously served as Chief of Litigation and Advocacy at Legal Services NYC, a non-profit that seeks "racial, social, and economic justice for low-income New Yorkers." The organization has provided legal counsel to transgender persons in several anti-discrimination cases. Clarke has also voiced support for transgender issues. Speaking in a Legal Services NYC statement in February 2025, she said that the Trump Administration's decision to remove transgender language from the NYC Stonewall Memorial is seeking to "erase trans people from history." Previously, Clarke served as a staff attorney for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. In this position she, "challenged abortion bans in multiple states, helping keep health center doors open as long as possible."

Catherine Almonte Da Costa

Title: Director of Appointments [resigned after being exposed for anti-Semitism]

Da Costa was appointed to the role of Director of Appointments for Zohran Mamdani's administration before resigning after a day when decade-old social media posts surfaced containing anti-Semitic language and hostility toward law enforcement. In those posts, she referred to "money-hungry Jews" and disparaged

NYPD officers using demeaning terms, prompting public scrutiny of Mamdani's vetting process. Previously, Da Costa served in the de Blasio administration.

Tamika Mallory

Title: Transition Advisor [has not received a post in the administration]

Mallory, 45, has been involved in activism promoting progressive causes for practically all her life. In 2017, she would serve as a national co-chair of the Women's March, which was ostensibly to protest the inauguration of Donald Trump but evolved into promoting a number of anti-Catholic causes particularly abortion and LGBT issues. Much of the Women's March pro-abortion messaging and iconography was inherently anti-Catholic. Throughout the horde of angry women, many protestors held signs "Keep Your Rosaries Off My Ovaries" and "#IStandWithPlannedParenthood." Mallory would go on to serve as the organization's copresident. In this roll, she took credit for being responsible for bringing in the abortion providing behemoth Planned Parenthood as a significant financial supporter of the Women's March. However, Mallory would generate great controversy for her support for Louis Farrakhan and other anti-Semitic statements she made to a Jewish member of the organization's leadership team. Ultimately, Mallory would be kicked out in 2019. More recently, Mallory has been hypercritical of Trump highlighting the extreme violence faced by Christians in Nigeria. She downplays the violence, arguing that "there will exploitation [sic], resource theft, and innocent Nigerians will like be harmed. Trump has a pattern...[of] pushing policies that hurt Black people here and abroad."

Hassaan Chaudhary

Title: Transition Adviser [has not received a post in the administration]

Chaudhary, 31, served on Mamdani's campaign as a Muslim-engagement staffer. He was instrumental in pushing the campaign's line that any criticism of Mamdani was rooted in Islamophobia. In social media posts from roughly 2012, Chaudhary used a derogatory Urdu slur for Jews, praised former Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for calling Israel a "cancer," and posted other hostile language toward Israel and Jewish people.

Alex Vitale

Title: "Community Safety" Advisor [has not received a post in the administration]

Vitale is the Coordinator of the Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College. Vitale's 2017 book *The End of Policing* has been described as the "bestselling bible of the movement to defund the police." Notably in this book, he endorses the creation of "drop-in centers and emergency shelters" for the homeless, but he shows his radically secular stripes by insisting the caregivers must be "nonreligious." In other words, he wants to discriminate against the clergy. While his fawning acolytes in the liberal press champion him as a serious scholar, Vitale's own radical rhetoric reveals his deep hatred for the police and public order, going so far as to call police officers "violence workers."

Jacques Léandre

Title: Legal Affairs Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Léandre is a civil rights attorney who has a history of affiliation with anti-Semitic ideologies. He is a member of the Nation of Islam and, like many of Mamdani's other appointees, has great admiration for the outspoken anti-Semite Louis Farrakhan. In a 2019 Facebook post celebrating Farrakhan's birthday, Léandre said that he wanted to "personally thank [Farrakhan] for inspiring me to aspire to dedicate my life towards the uplift of our community." He also said his praise is "not hate, but simply pure love and truth."

Mysonne Linen

Title: Criminal Legal System Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Mysonne Linen is a former rapper who served 7 years in prison for attempting to rob two cab drivers in the late 1990s. He has a close relationship with anti-Semitic activist Linda Sarsour—he and Sarsour founded the activist group Until Freedom. The organization has been involved with the Black Lives Matter movement and supports defunding the police. In response to the death of George Floyd in 2020, the organization stated that "firing officers isn't enough for us." Linen also has shown his support for Louis Farrakhan, the anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam. In 2016, he met with Farrakhan, calling him "Honorable" and saying that his work "inspired and motivated me."

Fahd Ahmed

Title: Immigrant Justice Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Fahd Ahmed is a leftist activist who is the executive director of Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM), a group that claims to help advocate for higher wages for immigrants. In reality, DRUM is a George Soros funded activist organization that has organized several pro-Hamas demonstrations throughout the city. DRUM has a history of organizing pro-Palestine demonstrations and shutting down public spaces. In October and November 2023, DRUM organized two different protests in New York's Bryant Park. In both cases they shut down the park. Protesters held pro-Palestine signs at both demonstrations. Similarly, in February 2024 the group participated in a vigil outside of City Hall, demanding that the NYC Council call for a ceasefire. Ahmed has also voiced anti-Jewish sentiments, once claiming that "Zionism is racism."

Kazi Fouzia

Title: Worker Justice Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Fouzia is a left-wing activist who supports pro-Palestinian causes. She works for DRUM serving as its director of organizing. In addition, Fouzia has spoken out in support of the October 7 terror attack on Israel. In an October 8, 2023 Facebook post, she wrote that "Resistance are [sic] Justified when people are occupied" along with an image of an anti-Israel protest. Fouzia has expressed anti-police sentiments as well. Recently, video resurfaced of a presentation she made in 2020 blasting Bangladeshi and other South Asian families for celebrating the service of their family members in the NYPD. In the video she clearly states, "What are you proud for? That your relative would become a killer one day, or brutally beat our people?" She went on to reiterate this point saying, "That's your proud, because your relative will be a killer someday?"

Mohammed Karim Chowdhury

Title: Worker Justice Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Mohammed Karim Chowdhury is a community activist and organizer who serves as the National Secretary for the Alliance of South Asian American Labor. He has a history of posting anti-Israel posts on his X account. He has accused Israel of committing "crimes against humanity," and in October 2025, he retweeted a post on X that said that "Zionists are worse than Haman of ancient times, the Inquisition, and the Nazis."

Rabbi Abby Stein

Title: Health Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Stein is a man pretending to be a woman. He is an outspoken advocate for the free Palestine movement. Most notably, he was removed from the 2024 White House Pride celebration after interrupting first Lady Jill Biden's remarks to demand a ceasefire in the Israeli-Gaza conflict. He also participated in an interfaith meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian during the 2024 U.N. General Assembly. Stein is currently a rabbi with the Congregation Kolot Chayeinu, a progressive Jewish congregation in Park Slope, Brooklyn. He is an advocate for LGBT causes and a promoter of abortion. He founded a project called Sacred Space which is described as a "multifaith project which celebrates women and non-binary people of all faith traditions."

Lumumba Bandele

Title: Community Organizing Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Bandele is an activist who has a history of supporting radical pro-Palestine and Black Liberation policies. In 2020, he served as director of Strategic Partnerships for Movement for Black Lives, a radical left-wing coalition that seeks to abolish prisons and the police. The group also demands "special protections for queer and trans students" and "reparations for the devastating impact of the 'war on drugs' and criminalization of prostitution." Bandele also voiced his support for convicted copkillers. In 2022, he advocated for the release of Mutulu Shakur, a Black Liberation Army (BLA) member who was convicted for his role in the 1981 Brink's robbery. (It was orchestrated by BLA and the left-wing Weather Underground and resulted in the killing of two police officers.) He also praised Assata Shakur, who was convicted of killing a New Jersey State Trooper in 1977 before escaping prison and living as a fugitive in Cuba, describing her as a "modern-day Harriet Tubman." Bandele has also expressed extreme hatred for the state of Israel. He has been involved with the anti-Israel Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement and has expressed pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel sentiments on social media. In an October 2023 post on X, he expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people in response to the October 7 terrorist attack.

Gianpaolo Baiocchi

Title: Community Organizing Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Baiocchi is a professor of sociology at New York University and serves as director of NYU's Urban Democracy Lab. He was previously arrested at an NYU encampment that featured inflammatory rhetoric against Israel.

Youssef Mubaraz

Title: Small Business Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Mubaraz is a member of the Yemeni American Merchants Association. He is a businessman and community development activist in New York's Yemeni American community. In a Facebook post, he dismissed footage of Hamas's October 7 attack as "propaganda."

Alvaro Lopez—NYC Democratic Socialists of America

Title: Inaugural Committee Member [has not received a post in the administration]

Lopez is a Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) electoral organizer. He has been heavily involved in the anti-Israel movement. He has helped organize two pro-Hamas rallies in New York. Online he has described people ripping down posters in support of the Israeli hostages taken during the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas as "heroes." Lopez has written several pieces that have appeared in the hardcore Socialist rag, *Jacobin*. From his writing, it is clear Lopez is a true believer in the most radical positions promoted by the DSA.

Beth Miller—Jewish Voice for Peace

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Miller is the political director of Jewish Voice for Peace, a pro-Hamas organization which has received considerable funding from George Soros. Miller has frequently expressed support for terrorists, spread incitement, and celebrated violence. She previously was a member of Students for Justice in Palestine, another radical anti-Israel organization.

Ceyenne Doroshow—G.L.I.T.S.

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Doroshow is a man falsely claiming to be a woman. In 2024, he helped organize a protest funeral that would defile St. Patrick's Cathedral. During the funeral of Cecilia Gentili, a man who falsely claimed to be a woman, many of those in attendance dressed as hookers, danced in the aisles, sang "Ave Cecilia" when "Ave Maria" was sung, and shouted, "St. Cecilia, Mother Of All Whores." Additionally, Doroshow helped lead the protest against efforts to crack down on prostitution in Jackson Heights.

Ms. Rachel—Educator and YouTuber

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Ms. Rachel (real name Rachel Anne Accurso) is a YouTube content creator who is most well known for making a series of educational videos for children.

Ms. Rachel also is known to promote pro-Palestinian and anti-Semitic messaging in her content. According to pro-Israel advocacy group StopAntisemitism, after the October 7 attack on Israel, Ms. Rachel "quickly began incorporating Hamas-propagated images and stories into her content." Her posting has been so prominent that the group named Ms. Rachel a finalist for its 2025 "Antisemite of the Year" award.

She pushes LGBT propaganda online. In June 2024, she wished her fans a Happy Pride Month on her Instagram page. She has also voiced support for the transgender community. Ms. Rachel hired Jules Hoffman, a singer who identifies as transgender and non-binary, to appear on her popular YouTube series "Songs for Littles." She even extended an invitation to have transgender activist Dylan Mulvaney appear on one of her shows. Ms. Rachel has attempted to use Christianity to justify support for the LGBTQ+ community. She once stated that support for gay and transgender people is "a perfect example of what Christianity should be."

Naseem Haffar

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Haffar is a former financial executive. His personal X account shows a wide history of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic posts. Among these include: calling for the

stoppage of U.S. funds to Israel, referring to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as a "war criminal," claiming that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, and accusing Israel of committing apartheid against Palestinians. Haffar currently serves as the Chairman of the Board of the Arab-American Family Support Center (AAFSC), an organization that provides support to immigrants and refugees in New York. AAFSC has spoken out against ICE, saying in October 2025 that the agency's decision to raid NYC's Chinatown was an "assault on the dignity and safety of all New Yorkers." The group is also in favor of sanctuary cities.

Patrick Gaspard—Senior Fellow at Center for American Progress

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Gaspard has been an informal yet crucial advisor to Mamdani during the campaign and transition, drawing on his experience as a former aide to Barack Obama and Bill de Blasio. Gaspard is a longtime fixture in progressive politics. He served as president and CEO of the Center for American Progress (CAP) from 2021 to 2024 before transitioning to senior fellow. Although Gaspard identifies as a Catholic, CAP is a liberal think tank that has consistently pushed agendas that conflict with Catholic teachings, including staunch support for abortion rights and LGBT issues. Gaspard has decried "Christian nationalism" as undermining "the founding value of religious freedom and the critical constitutional separation of church and state" urging "faith leaders to help speak out against it." He is critical of Israel's actions in Gaza, saying Israel's incursion was "one of the worst trappings of human rights in this century." He previously served as the president of Soros' Open Society Foundation.

Phylisa Wisdom—New York Jewish Agenda

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Wisdom has been involved in Mamdani's Jewish outreach efforts. She has stated that there is a broad spectrum of Jewish voices that have differing opinions on both Mamdani and the Israeli government. She has encouraged Mamdani to continue reaching out to the Jewish community, noting that Jews felt more reassured in voting for him. This provides Mamdani cover against criticisms from groups like the ADL. Wisdom is a progressive activist and the Executive Director of New York Jewish Agenda. NYJA advocates for "liberal Zionist" positions, including an end to Israel's occupation and the establishment of a Palestinian state, which some see as undermining Israel's security. NYJA supports Proposition 1 to enshrine

abortion protections in New York's constitution, aligning with views that frame reproductive rights as consistent with Jewish values. Her selective emphasis on Palestinian issues and solidarity with Israeli protesters against their government highlight a leftist bent that prioritizes progressive alliances over support for Israel.

Sherry Padilla—Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM)

Title: Inaugural Committee [has not received a post in the administration]

Padilla is an organizer at Desis Rising Up & Moving (DRUM). Padilla has participated in "Know Your Rights" sessions where the speakers give tips on how to avoid ICE. She also has criticized NYPD accountability failures, aligning with anti-police movements that seek to dismantle law enforcement structures. Her activism promotes far-left causes, including resistance to xenophobic policies. Her organization's support for Palestinian resistance raises concerns about hostility toward Jewish interests.