

Faith Digest: Bay Psalm Book sold

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Bay Psalm Book auctioned for record price. One of the 11 surviving copies of the *Bay Psalm Book*, the first book printed in English in America, fetched \$14.2 million at Sotheby's auction house in Manhattan. The bid of \$12.5 million, plus fees, exceeded by more than a million dollars the \$11.5 million paid for the previous record-holder, John James Audubon's *Birds of America*, in 2010. "This means the world to us in terms of the continuation and the building up of our ministries in Boston," said Nancy Taylor, senior minister of [Old South Church in Boston](#), the seller of the book. The psalm book's new owner is the private equity fund founder and philanthropist David Rubenstein, who called in his bid from Australia. According to Sotheby's auctioneer David Redden, who gavelled down the sale in two and a half minutes of concerted bidding, Rubenstein, a well-known antiquities buyer and donator, intends to lend the ancient Puritan hymnal to libraries around the country, eventually putting it on long-term loan to one of them. Rubenstein edged out a \$12 million dollar pre-set bid by Steve Green of Oklahoma City, scion of the billionaire family that owns the 500-store Hobby Lobby chain. The Greens had been bidding on the Bay Psalm Book in hopes of including it in [a biblical museum](#) the family plans to build just off the Washington Mall in early 2017.

Televangelist Paul Crouch dead at 79. Paul



Religious broadcaster Paul Crouch, the religious broadcaster who co-founded [Trinity Broadcasting Network](#) and was known for his prosperity gospel messages and lavish lifestyle, died Nov. 30. He was 79. Crouch and his wife, Jan, started the network in a rented facility in Santa Ana, Calif., in 1973. It grew to include a “family of networks” and became the largest and most-watched Christian broadcast company in the country. Crouch was born in St. Joseph, Mo., and earned a degree in theology from Central Bible Institute and Seminary in Springfield, Mo.

Activists end immigration fast. Sapped by three weeks of a water-only diet, three activists for immigration reform ended their fasts Dec. 3 with a morsel of bread blessed by a priest and “passed the fast on” to others who hope to keep attention focused on the issue. The protesters went without food in a bid to pressure Republican House leaders to pass an immigration reform bill. In recent weeks, they attracted high-profile visitors, including President Obama, first lady Michelle Obama and Vice President Joe Biden, to the heated tents where the fasters camped on the National Mall. Now the [“Fast for Families,”](#) organized by a broad coalition of labor, immigrant and Christian groups enters a new phase as the original group of fasters begin to recover from the physical ordeal and a larger group take up the



cause.

An altar is set up in honor of immigrants during the “Fast for Families.” According to “Fast For Families” organizers, more than 3,000 people nationwide have pledged to fast for at least a day in the name of immigration reform. Unlike the fasters who lived in a tent without food for three weeks, most of the new fasters will keep their day jobs and decide for themselves what form the fast will take. It marks a subtle acknowledgment that the movement is shifting into low gear for a long-term fight, political analysts noted. Immigration reform stalled in Congress after the Senate passed a comprehensive immigration reform bill in June. House Speaker John Boehner has refused to put the issue on the House’s schedule this year, and many activists worry action is less likely next year as lawmakers set their sights on the midterm elections.