

# 4 Christians Arrested for Praying Outside Abortion Clinic During Stay-at-Home Order

Four Christians were arrested for praying outside an abortion clinic in Greensboro, North Carolina, on Saturday, March 28. On Monday, police arrested seven more people for the same act.

PJ Media reports that local radio host Steve Noble, who recorded the arrests, says the prayer groups abided by the government's regulations by limiting the gathering.

The video shows one officer commanding the men to return to their vehicles.

"I'm gonna tell you now: You need to return to your vehicles," the officer said. "You've got a choice right now to make, all right? You can choose to comply with what I'm telling you, or you're going to be charged. ... Right now, I am giving you a command to leave this location."

When the men refused to comply, the officer arrested them.

The Washington Examiner reports that the four men on Saturday were protesting, but Noble maintains the men were simply exercising their religious rights to pray.

"They were exercising their First Amendment rights [to] assemble and to exercise their religious beliefs," Noble says. "They believe they are allowed to be there under the exemption clauses of the local county order."

He posted a video on Facebook of the arrest on Monday:

He later posted another video on Facebook of the men who were

arrested, saying they had been released.

Justin Reeder, founder of Love Life, was arrested on both days. Others who were arrested included: Leroy Stokes Jr., Andre Gonzalez, Richard Whittier and John Mcatee.

The North Carolina Value Coalition, a pro-family grassroots network, condemned the arrests of the praying Christians.

"The North Carolina Values condemns the actions of Greensboro police for arresting Christians who peacefully and legally pray and exercise their religious rights on the sidewalks outside an abortion clinic. Not even in communist China would police arrest three men for walking and praying on the street," says Jim Quick, state director of Grassroots & Media at the North Carolina Values Coalition.

"Since Governor Cooper refused to close abortion clinics as part of his administration's order to cease elective medical procedures these men were simply exercising their constitutional rights to pray outside one of the clinics that remain open. Abortion is an elective procedure and Governor Cooper should have closed abortion clinics and urged abortion providers to donate their PPE and other equipment to coronavirus response, just as he did with hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers that perform elective procedures."

Quick emphasized that the stay-at-home order issued by Gov. Roy Cooper sets an exception for religious groups to exercise religious freedom in groups of less than 10 individuals. Both prayer groups met those qualifications, he says.