

California Churches Respond to Newsom's Attempt to Delay Today's Hearing

Monday, Harvest Rock Church and Harvest International Ministry filed a motion to the federal district court of California against Governor Gavin Newsom's attempt to delay today's hearing for a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction regarding his unconstitutional orders.

The Supreme Court has issued this court, and every other, a roadmap that leads to one destination—that restrictions on churches and places of worship in California violate the First Amendment Free Exercise Clause.

The restrictions in California are worse than those enjoined in *Roman Catholic Diocese v. Cuomo*. There, the high court stated: "There can be no question that the challenged restrictions, if enforced, will cause irreparable harm."

Newsom's request to move the hearing to Dec. 18, which includes more Sunday services, would only impose the very irreparable harm that the Supreme Court found in *Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn v. Cuomo* and *Agudath Israel v. Cuomo*.

The high court granted cert, vacated the lower court orders involving the emergency petition of the California churches and directed the district court to reconsider in light of the high court's decision in granting an injunction for churches and synagogues in New York.

However, the restrictions against places of worship in California are more severe than those in New York. Newsom's orders ban all in-person worship for 99.1% of Californians.

Harvest Rock Church has multiple campuses in California, including in Pasadena, Los Angeles, Irvine and Corona. Harvest International Ministries has 162 member churches throughout the state. Irreparable harm is being suffered every day as the churches remain subject to the unconstitutional restrictions, coupled with daily criminal threats, fines and closure.

The Code Enforcement Division for the city of Pasadena and the prosecutor have threatened criminal charges, fines and closure for being open for worship against the governor's and local health orders. The letters threaten up to one year in prison, daily criminal charges and \$1,000 fines against the pastors, staff and parishioners.

Liberty Counsel founder and Chairman Mat Staver said, "Gov. Newsom is trying another tyrannical trick to delay the inevitable ruling by the high court. The Supreme Court has issued its constitutional roadmap for places of worship that leads to the inevitable conclusion: Gov. Gavin Newsom's executive edicts violate the First Amendment."

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