

California Pastor Rob McCoy Advances Freedom Fight, Sees Explosive Church Growth

Rob McCoy is an unusual figure in that he not only excels in the political arena but is the pastor of Godspeak Calvary Chapel in Ventura, California. For years, he has exhorted Christians to become more involved in the political arena lest they lose their influence—and their rights.

And McCoy stands behind his words. He resigned from the Thousand Oaks City Council last spring because of his decision to hold Communion in his church, following CDC orders but defying California Gov. Gavin Newsom's even more restrictive ones. It seemed that McCoy had lost his political career and given up a place of public influence to stand on principle. But in the intervening time, McCoy has seen God take his church to new levels and his own influence exponentially expand.

Within days of his resignation, the people of the community voted with their feet. Thousands began attending Godspeak; the sanctuary holds about 400 seats. Communion on that first Sunday took more than three hours to serve because of the number of people who showed up to receive. The press descended on the place and painted them as super-spreaders whose reckless decision would kill half the community, the elderly in particular—a prognostication that proved entirely false.

"We wanted to put forward that we're essential," McCoy says. "The governor has no right to silence the church. None at all."

The only outbreak from that meeting was one of insanity by Ventura County leaders, who began to threaten the church with fines and legal action. This caused even more people to flock

to Godspcak, which for months was the only church in the county meeting in person. While thousands rallied to the cause of freedom of religion and freedom of assembly, a county public health official began a strange, cockeyed rampage against basic constitution liberties.

While Godspcak was growing exponentially, a county public health officer—who makes more than \$350,000 a year—started holding press conferences to talk about his plans to forcibly isolate infected people, taking them from their own homes and putting them in unspecified alternative housing. He also cheerfully talked about placing thermometers on normal citizens to track them around town to see where outbreaks happened and instituting other so-called protective measures.

This once-freedom-loving county did not even attempt to defend its residents but rolled over and tried to enforce the state's weird, draconian rules. Officials persisted in harassing churches, businesses and private citizens, threatening fines, closures and even arrests.

By August, the pressures had increased to the point that three of the supervisors voted to use county money to hire an attorney, place a temporary emergency restraining order on the church and McCoy personally and up to 1,000 congregants or visitors, and have the sheriffs enforce the order, possibly locking the church building and arresting McCoy and 1,000 attendees. A politically motivated judge approved the order.

"Mind you, we had been open wide since the LA riots on May 31, when the governor praised BLM Inc.," McCoy told me. "[In those riots] 75% of the businesses that were burned and looted were Jewish-owned and targeted, and the looters did it without masks or social distancing—and the governor praised them. We knew this wasn't about science or medicine. It was about power and politics, so the supervisors tried to exert their force on us, and we violated that restraining order."

McCoy and his congregation showed up to the church that Sunday, knowing they and many others could be arrested, that McCoy personally could lose the church and his house, and people could go to jail. But when they showed up that morning, "it was the most amazing thing," McCoy said. "Christians from all over California and the western states drove to our church and surrounded our church. When I walked in, they said, 'We're here because we're all in agreement. We're going to get citations so that you and your congregants can worship in peace.'"

Despite an all too common lack of support from his fellow pastors, McCoy's influence continued to grow even as the county continued its fight. After a judge reduced the fines against Godspcak, the county sent "spies" who attended services and made notes on what they deemed violations, which led to McCoy's summons to a court hearing in which county health officials perjured themselves because they didn't realize the church had been observing them while they were on church property. Despite the duplicity, McCoy stood firm, telling officials, "I'll see the inside of a jail cell before you're going to see a dime of that money."

Finally, the county dropped its suit entirely, giving up any attempt to reap unjust fines from McCoy or Godspcak church.

I interviewed McCoy for my new book, *God and Cancel Culture*, which will release Sept. 7. McCoy's story is so compelling I wanted to share it with you ahead of that date and also give you, in some ways, a "sneak preview" of the hard-hitting content of this book.

To hear much more from Rob McCoy about his battle for religious freedom and why and how you can join the fight, pre-order *God and Cancel Culture* at this link, and listen to this entire episode of the *Strang Report* here. Subscribe to the *Strang Report* on Apple podcasts or your favorite podcast platform for more news and information that inspires in the

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