

# Church of England Pastor Welcomes Muslim Prayer Service

A Church of England vicar has come under fire for allowing a Muslim prayer service to be held in his church.

Rev. Canon Giles Goddard joined in the “Inclusive Mosque” event at St John’s church, Waterloo, by reading part of Psalm 139 and giving thanks to “the God that we love, Allah.”

The service included a traditional Islamic call to prayer, and was attended by dozens of Muslims.

## ‘Perfect Sense’

Rev. Goddard defended the move, saying: “We are offering a place for people to pray so it made absolutely perfect sense.”

He claimed: “It is the same God, we share a tradition.”

But evangelical C of E ministers have warned that the service is an affront to Christians around the world who are suffering for their faith.

## ‘Offensive’

Rev. Robin Weekes, minister of Emmanuel Wimbledon, noted, “It is offensive to Christians who believe that there is only one God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“And it is especially offensive to those who are being persecuted around the world for their faith in the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.”

The Rev. Stephen Kuhrt, vicar of Christ Church, New Malden,

said, “the vicar of St John’s Waterloo has done something that is completely illegal, which is to allow an Islamic service to be held in his church and then he has participated as well.”

## **Declaration**

Last month around 60 C of E ministers signed a declaration urging the Bishop of Southwark to lead the diocese—of which St John’s is a part—according to the Bible and Canon Law.

They highlighted the way St John’s offers “thanksgiving” services for civil partnerships and same-sex marriages.

And in a separate private letter, 27 clergy warned the Bishop that if the liberal trends continue, there will be consequences for the diocese.