

'Obey Christ, No Matter the Cost': Canada Pastor Arrested on New Charges

In an undisclosed location, a congregation of believers gather to worship, though by law, they are not allowed to do so.

In this underground church, the sounds of praises ringing out are muffled by the whir of helicopter blades beating through crisp Canadian air.

Canadian Pastor Tim Stephens was arrested Monday after his underground church met for the second week in a row following the shutdown of its campus for violating province COVID-19 rules.

Stephens had been arrested for these violations in May, though sources reveal Alberta Health Services was required to drop the charges as a formal court order was never served to Stephens.

With a police helicopter and squad cars circling the perimeter of their outdoor service location—though not advancing on the service—the congregation of Fairview Baptist Church continued to worship.

On Monday, June 14, Alberta police arrested Pastor Stephens as his family stood by, watching helplessly.

BREAKING: Pastor Tim Stephens Arrested On New Charges

FULL STORY:

FULL VIDEO COMING SOON at

— Adam Soos ☐ (@ATSoos) June 14, 2021

"It is only when significant risk is identified or continued

non-compliance is noted that AHS resorts to enforcement action," a news release from Calgary Police Service and Alberta Health Services stated.

The release identified the law enforcement's recognition of "people's desire to participate in faith-based gatherings," but said because of the "global pandemic, we all must comply with public health orders in order to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing."

Stephens' wife, Raquel, said in a tweet that he had "refused the bail condition" and "will remain in custody until his next court date June 28."

"We are shaken, but our faith is not," she wrote. "We are sorrowful, but always rejoicing. ... In God's providence, Tim's imprisonment will strengthen us in the faith and embolden us to love and obey Christ, no matter the cost."

She detailed how complying with the bail restrictions would prevent Stephens from "faithfully shepherding the flock that has been entrusted to his care."

She also asked for prayers his release and for her husband to "stand firm," and be "comforted in his chains."

One user shared the contact information for the Calgary Police Commission for supporters to demand Stephens' release.

Please contact the Calgary Police regarding their arrest of Pastor Tim Stephens. #freetimstephens

– Waterboy (@GMRench) June 15, 2021

Others highlighted the discrepancy between the enforcement of COVID-19 violation orders. Large crowds gathered without pushback to attend a vigil which Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Premier Doug Ford also attended.

And countless others issued words of encouragement, prayers and love to Stephens and his family. {eoa}

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