

Protest Turns Violent at Messianic Worship Concert in Jerusalem as Far-Right Anti-Christian Activists Attempt to Stop the Event



Jewish protestors blocking the entrance at the “One Voice” Messianic worship event in Israel.

(All Israel News)

June 23, 2023

Dozens of far-right ultra-Orthodox Jews began to riot at the site of a local Christian worship event in Jerusalem on Thursday afternoon to protest the event. One suspect, an activist with the far-right organization Lehava, was arrested for attacking a police officer during clashes with the Israel Police.

A crowd of mostly-young protestors had begun to form at the entrance to the Pavilion, a popular venue in central Jerusalem, prior to the concert. The **demonstration was organized** in an effort to disrupt and stop the event from taking place, which resulted in attendees being harassed with various intimidation tactics, including shouting, whistling and blowing toy trumpets in the ears of the concert attendees as they made their way into the venue.

Eventually, the concert-goers—both local Israeli believers and international Christian tourists—had to be personally escorted by police to the entrance, while protesters did their best to physically block attendees from entering the building.

The group of protesters was reportedly mainly comprised of two far-right Jewish organizations, Lehava (Hebrew for “flame”) and La Familia, both of which are well-known for inciting violence.

Activists from Or L’Achim, an organization that attempts to counter Christian proselytization in Israel, were also reported as trying to **block participants** from attending the concert, as well as making attempts to break into the main hall.

One 82-year-old man was reportedly punched in the back while attempting to shield a 9-year-old from being injured, as the activists pushed and shoved the attendees.

Once inside the Pavilion, the worship concert took place, with an estimated number of 1,000 participants.

When the concert ended, attendees were greeted by older members of the ultra-Orthodox movement, who attempted to hand out their pamphlets.

Jerusalem Deputy Mayor Aryeh King and Lehava founder Bentz Gopstein reportedly **accompanied** the activists, while police officers attempted to prevent Lehava activists from entering the concert,

“The missionary conference was designed to convert Jews from their religion and there is no place for that in Jerusalem. In a democracy, I must come and demonstrate,” Gopstein was reported as **saying**.

In a statement, the Israel Police promised to preserve freedom of expression and the right to protest, “but not illegal public disturbances and rioting.”

The “Peh Echad” worship concert was organized by the Messianic Jewish Alliance of Israel (MJAI) and promoted to the Christian and Messianic community over two months prior and was not

intended as an evangelistic outreach event.

The Pavilion, which is owned by Israeli believers, is a popular venue for worship events in Jerusalem.

King was involved in **protests at the Sunday Pentecost service** at the Western Wall earlier this month, where violent clashes broke out as Christian tourists and local Jewish believers gathered for the “Global Day of Prayer for Jerusalem and the Nations.” King **called** the attendees “terrorists, who were equal to Islamic terrorists.”

‘Peh Echad,’ Hebrew for ‘one voice,’ is a reference from the Book of Romans about unity in worship.

“... that you may with one mind and one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:6). {eoa}

The All Israel News Staff *is a team of journalists in Israel.*

This article originally appeared on ALL ISRAEL NEWS and is reposted with permission.