

The Church Is Essential: Supreme Court Lifts COVID Restrictions on California Churches

After a tumultuous legal battle, the house of God and the body of Christ in California can return to some semblance of normal meeting. The Supreme Court struck down California's coronavirus public health mandates Monday that prohibit indoor worship services.

"Governor Newsom should have done this a long time ago," said a statement from Harmeet K. Dhillon, the Center for American Liberty's founder. "For over a year, the state of California has targeted the faith community for discriminatory treatment depriving them of their fundamental right to worship."

Huge victory for the First Amendment today. Kudos to Charles LiMandri, Paul Jonna, all the lawyers working w/me @Liberty_Ctr in the 3 cases we worked on that reached SCOTUS in 2021. After a year of extensive & expensive litigation the state has been forced to do the right thing.

– Harmeet K. Dhillon (@pnjaban) April 12, 2021

This ruling follows a big win Friday that allowed home Bible study and worship sessions to take place once again.

Recent Court rulings in favor of faith communities such as Harvest International Ministries with Pastor Che Ahn, influenced this new development, per the AP News report.

The state's COVID website strongly recommends churches follow the 4 tier status in place, though it is is not mandatory.

Starting April 15, the state will also allow indoor concerts, theater performances and other private gatherings.

“We know San Franciscans are eager to resume these types of events, but as with everything we do during this pandemic, we have to continue to prioritize public health as we move forward with reopening,” said a statement from the city’s COVID Command Center.

Worship restrictions were put in place for churches across the country but none as contested as in California. Charisma News followed the harrowing stories of faith communities fighting for their right to worship over the past year. Legal after legal battle was fought, with small wins along the way. Faith leaders have maintained the restrictions are unconstitutional, and the church is just as “essential” as grocery stores, liquor stores and other public businesses.

“While we celebrate the lifting of restrictions today, our work is not done,” Dhillon continued. “We will not relent until we have sufficient precedent from the courts prohibiting this civil liberties crisis from ever happening again.” {eo}

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