

‘Still the Christians Come’: Canada Protesters Flood Church Perimeter With Praise

The power of “Jesus Loves Me” was put to the test at the perimeter of GraceLife Church in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, Sunday afternoon.

After being shut down for violating COVID-19 restrictions, the Alberta chief medical officer of health ordered fences be erected around the church’s perimeter in an attempt to stop the church from meeting.

Protesters gathered around the fenced area Sunday. But the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms, which represents GraceLife Church in its legal battle to uphold the right to worship, says no one from the GraceLife congregation was in attendance.

“Grace Life Church appreciates the public outpouring of support to fully open churches in Alberta,” the statement reads. “Grace Life Church congregants were not at the protest that occurred on Sunday, April 11, 2021 near the Church’s facility. Grace Life Church recognizes the place for peaceful protest within the context of a democracy.”

“The closing of the Grace Life facility has understandably resulted in significant public outrage and caused even larger crowds to gather in one place,” the statement continues, concluding, “It is time to end these unscientific, unjustified and arbitrary lockdown measures.”

While those in attendance at the protest may not have been a part of the congregation, they did represent the “public outpouring of support” from those who gathered “in one place,”

as the statement references.

Carrying their cross on the snowy Alberta roads, brave Christian soldiers rallied together and erected it outside the church, proving that the church is not confined to a building.

The crowd at GraceLife Church has nearly doubled in size in less than an hour. A new group walked up with music and a large wooden cross #GraceLife #covid19ab #abpoli

– Laura Krause (@LauraKrauseNews) April 11, 2021

A church in Edmonton, Canada wouldn't obey politicians and lock its doors. So they jailed the pastor for 35 days. The church still wouldn't close. So police raided it, turned it into an armed garrison & occupied it. And still the Christians come.

– Ezra Levant (@ezralevant) April 11, 2021

City News Edmonton video journalist Laura Krause shared her coverage of the protest in a series of tweets, detailing how—while the vast majority of the attendees were peaceful and offered their petitions in praise—some in the crowd used division and force to prove their point.

A small group of the hundreds gathered tore down a portion of the fence surrounding the church property. Others rebuked these actions and worked with the police officers to put the fence back up, saying violence is not the answer. “Leave the fence alone,” they chanted.

The forceful act caused the Royal Canadian Mounted Police present to intervene.

After the Christians tore down the fence that the government had built around the Edmonton church, the police sent in 200

heavily-armed riot police. That's the church building you see there. This is China stuff, Iran stuff. But it's happening in Canada.

– Ezra Levant (@ezrlevant) April 11, 2021

Those in attendance, as well as those commenting on the protest via social media, called the RCMP presence “aggressive” and unproportionate to the amount of force needed to supervise the otherwise peaceful demonstration.

RCMP issued a statement to media saying its officers were there to preserve “peace” and “maintain public safety,” using “only the level of intervention necessary.”

“The RCMP uses necessary measures to protect the fundamental freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, to promote the safety of all citizens, to enforce laws and to maintain peace and order,” RCMP said.

“In turn, it must be recognized that while everyone has a right to peaceful freedom of expression; the general public, local residents and businesses also have the right to a safe environment.”

According to media outlets, just hours before the protest, Pastor James Coates led his congregation in a church service at an “undisclosed location” and published their full service online. {eo}

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