

Violence Against Churches Triples in 4 Years; Kingdom Leader Says 'Christians Must Not Live in Fear'

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Hostility against America's churches has tripled in the last four years, but Family Research President Tony Perkins says Christians must not live in fear and should continue to stand upon the truth of God in the face of hatred and violence.

The Family Research Council recently released an 82-page report detailing the criminal acts of vandalism and destruction of church property, which has become symptomatic of a collapse in societal reverence and respect for houses of worship and religion—in this case, churches and Christianity.

Americans apparently have become increasingly comfortable lashing out against church buildings, which points to a larger societal problem of marginalizing core Christian beliefs. Many attacks can be attributed to emotions being stirred by hot-button political issues related to human dignity and sexuality, the report reveals.

"As a former commissioner and chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), I've seen the warning signs of this gathering like clouds across the Atlantic," Perkins says. "As the mainstream culture moves further and further away from a biblical worldview, I've witnessed the hostility to moral truth creep closer to our shores. The West, once the safe haven of free speech and religion, is turning cold to our religious foundations that have helped us thrive.

“While it is good to see the Biden administration acknowledge that these attacks are a problem, they must do more; the Biden Department of Justice has so far largely ignored these growing attacks on churches and that is creating an environment of lawlessness around the country.

“Christians must not live in fear. We must not be intimidated; we must continue to stand upon the truth of God and defending the freedom of all to live out their faith free from the fear that they will be subject to a violent attack.”

The report conveyed several trends including, but not limited to:

- A total of 420 acts of hostility against churches occurred between Jan. 2018 and Sep. 2022 across 45 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.
- There were at least 57 pro-abortion acts of hostility against churches from Jan. 2022 to Sep. 2022.
- FRC documented 342 occurrences of vandalism, 58 arson attacks or attempts, 12 gun-related incidents, 11 bomb threats and 19 other incidences (assault, threats, interruption of worship services, etc.). Twenty incidents (%) fell into more than one category.
- California had the most incidents, with 51. Texas had 33 incidents, New York 31 and Florida 23.
- Violent or destructive incidences that interfere with an individual’s lawful free exercise of religion at their house of worship present a significant nationwide challenge and must be condemned.

Arielle Del Turco, FRC’s Assistant Director of the Center for Religious Liberty and author of the report, said of the report:

“The problem of acts of hostility against churches in the United States is widespread and growing. This is not a trend that should be shrugged off. When churches are targeted for

acts of destruction, arson or threatening messages, it has the potential to be intimidating—and sometimes that's the intention.

“Within the past few years especially, outpourings of political anger have sometimes correlated with vandalism and other acts against churches. When faced with such blatant violence and disrespect against churches (and religion more broadly), our response must be to condemn these acts and reaffirm the right of all people to worship and live out their faith freely—including the freedom to live without fear that they will be the next target of such an attack.”

The attacks show the comprehensive nature of anti-Christian violence. Assaults occurred in 45 states and the nation's capital. Victimized congregations span the theological gamut from evangelical, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, mainline Protestant, non-denominational churches and Seventh-Day Adventist. Assailants targeted churches primarily attended by white, black and Asian (specifically Korean and Taiwanese) Christians, as well as multiethnic congregations.

Other churches around the world are experiencing the same problems. St. Peter's Church in Bramshaw, England, for example, has become the target of what the vicar of that church suspects are satanists.

To read the full report, [click here](#). {eo}

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