



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 17, 2020

London Police Block Church Service Defying Lockdown

London police prevented congregants from entering a church for a service and baptism Sunday in defiance of Prime Minister Boris Johnson's latest lockdown order.

"About 30 worshippers arrived at The Angel Church's Mount Zion Hall building on Chadwell Street in Clerkenwell on Sunday (November 15) to attend a service and baptism, only to find the door blocked by four police officers and two police vans parked up outside," reported the [Islington Gazette](#).

Johnson's edict, which is in effect through December 2, prohibits indoor church services except for small funerals and individual prayer.

Regan King, pastor of the Angel Church, initially resisted efforts to prevent his service, saying he served a "higher law." Besides, he pointed out, there is "no evidence that churches have been at the core of spreading this virus." A government task force told Johnson the same thing but was ignored, according to the [Independent](#).

Days earlier, King, 28, had vowed to hold the service despite Johnson's diktat. "We have to consider when God's teaching and commands differ from government, consistently the example in the Bible we see ... we must obey God rather than men," he told [Premier Christian News](#).

When asked why the church couldn't endure the Government's rules for just four weeks, Pastor King said he believes there's no guarantee the lockdown will be over when the Government said it would. He cited the many extensions of the first national lockdown, which ended up lasting for 12 weeks.

"I knew people who were mentally well prior to lockdown, who because of it are on the verge of psychosis and are undergoing treatment for it. I cannot in good conscience cut them off, or say just do Zoom when they can't even do Zoom, some of them don't even have the means to do Zoom ... a telephone call, they're sick of. They need meaningful human interaction.

"The spiritual needs of people are as essential as the physical. The supermarkets are open for the body, but what about that food for the soul that's found in Christ alone?"

During the confrontation with police Sunday, King said the government was persecuting the church and "compared himself to John Bunyan, claiming the 17th century preacher had also defied the laws of his time in the name of religion," wrote the *Gazette*. Bunyan was imprisoned for 12 years for refusing to stop preaching the Gospel, during which he penned the famous Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's*



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Progress.

King isn't the only pastor to perceive persecution in the government's actions. Dozens of Christian leaders in the United Kingdom are [seeking judicial review of Johnson's church-closure order](#). One of them, former Honorary Chaplain to the Queen Gavin Ashenden, said the order was just the latest in a long line of attempts by the government over "the last 1,000 years ... to control, restrict and prohibit the actions of Christian worshippers" — power grabs to which Christians must offer "polite but determined opposition."

Ultimately, King acceded to some of the bobbies' demands. "After a brief discussion with police," noted the *Gazette*, "15 people in a support group were permitted to remain inside the church while [King] led the rest in a socially distanced outdoor gathering in Myddleton Square Gardens."

Not everyone was satisfied with the outcome. Duncan Boyd, who attended the outdoor service, told the *Gazette*:

It's supposed to be a free country. We fought the Second World War to defend freedoms, or something like that.

People freely went. No one was compelled to. They all chose to go. There's some slight element of risk from this virus, but God is sovereign over viruses and in a free country, free people take free choices as to the risks they expose themselves to.

For the government to say to people, "because there's a risk you cannot go to church" is illegitimate and wrong. If I have to go to prison for going to church then I will do.

Despite the setback he had endured, King maintained a proper Christian attitude toward his enemies. One woman who attended the service told the *Gazette* that, in keeping with Matthew 5:44, King "encouraged the congregation to pray for the police, the press and anyone who opposed their religious gathering."



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