

RESPONSES TO CHURCH INVASION ARE ALARMING

[Bill Donohue](#)

The church invasion that took place at Cities Church on January 18 in St. Paul, Minnesota was a flagrant violation of constitutional law, federal law and common decency. It is the kind of behavior associated with totalitarian regimes, not democratic polities. Yet the outcry from all quarters—government, religious, civic, educational, the media—has been miniscule. To say this is a bad omen is a gross understatement.

The purported cause for action was to register disapproval of David Easterwood, one of the pastors of this Southern Baptist church; he heads the local office of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Those who want to voice their opinion about any member of the clergy associated with any religion have a First Amendment right to do so outside the house of worship. No one has a right to disrupt church services and harass its congregants. To do so violates the “free exercise of religion” provision in the First Amendment, the congressionally passed Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE) of 1994 and the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871.

The FACE Act makes it illegal to injure, intimidate or interfere with those seeking to exercise their religious liberty right at a place of worship. The Klan Act makes it illegal to terrorize people or to deprive them of their constitutional rights through intimidation or force.

Nine of the 20-40 church invaders are being charged with entering the church “in a coordinated takeover-style attack,” and for engaging in “acts of oppression, intimidation,

threats, interference, and physical obstruction.” The indictment, filed in the Federal District Court of Minnesota, alleges that “the pastor and the congregation were forced to terminate the Church’s worship services,” and had to flee out of fear for their safety.

One of the defendants, William Scott Kelly, a.k.a. “DaWokeFarmer,” disrupted the church service by screaming, “This ain’t God’s house. This is the house of the devil.” He got in the face of a mother and her two young children, chiding her for not supporting the church invasion. He said to child congregants, “Do you know your parents are Nazis? They’re going to burn in hell.”

Much has been made of the presence of Don Lemon. The former journalist and failed CNN pundit (he was fired for sexist behavior and remarks, as well as lousy ratings), claims he was a disinterested observer, and not part of the organized protest. “I’m not a protester, I went there as a journalist.” Inside the church, he said, “We’re not part of the activists, but we’re here just reporting on them.”

The indictment says otherwise. Lemon met at a shopping center with all the other defendants to make plans about invading the church. He did not just stumble on the scene of the crime. Instructions were given by Nekima Valdez Levy-Armstrong and another female on how the operation would be conducted once inside the church.

Lemon told his livestream audience that congregants were “frightened,” “scared,” and “crying,” saying their response was understandable given that their experience was “traumatic and uncomfortable.” Perversely, he admitted that this was the purpose of the invasion. He also tried to intimidate the pastor and obstructed congregants from leaving the church. In short, he was an active participant in the church invasion.

The list of politicians, all Democrats, and civil rights

organizations, all left-wing, that have nothing but contempt for the right to worship is astounding. This should be the lead story in every media outlet, yet it is being treated as a side story. To read a sample of these responses, click [here](#).

Notice that none of them even give a nod to the egregious violation of the “free exercise of religion.” They are framing this as purely a free speech issue when it is first and foremost a matter of religious freedom. But religious liberty has never been of any interest to the Left, and many have actively sought to disable it.

In response to this incredible assault on religious liberty, the Catholic League is embarking on a four-prong campaign:

- We are asking the public to support Rep. Buddy Carter’s House Resolution 1026, condemning the church invasion
- We are contacting President Trump’s Religious Freedom Commission asking them to make this issue a priority
- We are contacting the Department of Justice asking them not to back off in their efforts to bring the offenders to justice
- We are asking President Trump to support funding for enhanced police protection of Christian churches

In our correspondence with the Religious Freedom Commission, the Department of Justice and President Trump, we will stress the fact that almost all homicides that have occurred in recent times in houses of worship have been in Christian churches.

In a [study](#) released by two criminologists studying violence against houses of worship in the United States between 2000 and 2024, it was found that “Ninety-seven percent of deadly incidents occurred at Christian churches.” This settles the issue—Christian haters are a major threat that demand immediate attention.

Offer your support of the House Resolution by contacting the

chief of staff to Rep. Buddy Carter (R-GA):
chris.crawford@mail.house.gov