

Contact: 805-212-9484
August 7, 2020

Temporary restraining order issued for violation of Public Health Orders

Ventura, CA – On Friday, August 7, 2020, the Ventura County Superior Court granted a temporary restraining order requiring Godspeak Calvary Chapel and Pastor Rob McCoy to adhere to statewide and local public health orders requiring church services to be conducted outdoors with masks and social distancing and/or online.

A further hearing on the matter is scheduled for August 31, 2020 and the temporary restraining order will remain in effect until that time.

Godspeak Calvary Chapel and McCoy, its pastor, have repeatedly held large, indoor worship services which violate current Health Orders issued by the State Public Health Officer and the Health Officer of Ventura County. These orders are aimed to mitigate the further spread of COVID-19 during the current global pandemic.

“Indoor gatherings, including indoor church services, are prohibited by the state at this time due to the increased person to person and community transmission leading to increased COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations. Churches can have their services outdoors and/or host virtual services,” said Public Health Director Rigo Vargas. “COVID-19 continues to spread from person to person and at gatherings. It is very important to follow the State’s guidance, so that the most vulnerable in our community can be spared from the disease. Churches and other community groups play a valuable role in the wellness of our County. We encourage people to stay connected, but to do so safely.”

In counties like Ventura, which are on the State Monitoring List due to concerning rates of disease spread, the health orders prohibit indoor gatherings for a number of businesses, activities, and events to protect the health and safety of residents from contracting COVID-19.

The orders prohibit indoor gatherings for places and events such as gyms and fitness centers, non-essential office buildings, malls, personal care services, hair salons and barbershops, protests, and worship services.

Despite these orders and notifications from Public Health to cease indoor services and to move services outdoors or to host services virtually, Godspeak Calvary Chapel and Pastor McCoy insisted upon holding services indoors, without requiring masks or social distancing.

Pastor McCoy has publicly stated that the church would not cease indoor services absent court intervention. The County and its Health Officer were therefore compelled to seek relief from the court, to protect the life, health and safety of Ventura County residents.

“The best way to gather at this time is virtually or outdoors in accordance with state orders and guidance. The more we can work together to follow these guidelines the quicker we can get back to enjoying activities indoors,” added Vargas.

