

Calgary Pastor Who Drove Police Away from His Church Twice Was Arrested



Alberta, Canada: Reverend Artur Pawłowski gained international attention for throwing the police out of his parish on Good Friday. Last week, they returned to his church and he demanded that the police and health authorities who were trying to issue him a warrant, meet with his lawyer. The Polish pastor, who grew up under communist Soviet rule, suspects a growing pattern of governmental control disguised as public health care orders that are enforced by police.

Calgary police say Artur Pawłowski and his brother Dawid Pawłowski were arrested for violating a May 6 court order by Alberta Health Services that requires compliance with public health orders for demonstrations that includes masking, physical distancing and an occupancy limit of 15 in-person attendees for places of worship. Upwards of 50 people reportedly gathered on Saturday. Some neighbors have counter-protested the church with a sign claiming that “Street Church is a Hate Group,” and complaining that congregants are blocking roads, leaving trash and not wearing masks. Pawłowski denies the accusations.

Reverend Artur Pawłowski throwing the police out of his parish on Good Friday before Easter:

Calgary police have arrested two men, identified as organizers of a gathering that was in violation of Alberta’s public

health orders.

Officials say Artur Pawlowski and Dawid Pawlowski were arrested and charged with organizing an illegal in-person gathering, including requesting, inciting or inviting others to attend an illegal public gathering, promoting and attending an illegal public gathering.

Police say the pair acknowledged an injunction, obtained by Alberta Health Services from the Court of Queen's Bench on May 6, but chose to ignore the health guidelines just the same.

The court order installed new restrictions on organizers of protests and demonstrations requiring compliance with public health orders including masking, physical distancing and attendance limits.

It also provides police with enforcement powers, including the power to arrest organizers of these illegal gatherings.

Despite the situation, police want to remind the public that they do have a right to attend a religious gathering and engage in peaceful protest, but the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing and rules must be acknowledged.

"We continue to ask those who may be considering organizing or participating in any outdoor events to ensure they are familiar with public health order requirements and to do their part to prevent further spread of the virus," police wrote in a statement.

Calgary police add the order was served prior to the church service and at no time did any officers enter the building.

Prior to his arrest, Dawid Pawlowski spoke with CTV News and expressed his frustration with public health measures

"They're destroying people's lives, they're telling me when I can worship God, which God I can worship," Pawlowski said.

“This is not about safety, this is about destroying your heritage, this is about destroying Judeo-Christian values because you know how many people were in mosques during Ramadan? Thousands.”

Pawłowski added that his church gatherings were minimal compared to larger groups of Calgarians gathering to shop at big box grocery or department stores.

In a statement issued to CTV News on Friday, Alberta Health Services says it was fully aware of the protest organized by the Pawłowski brothers.

“With COVID-19 cases increasing, including the more easily transmitted and potentially more severe variants, we strongly encourage all Albertans to follow public health orders to help minimize spread to protect others.”

DOVER RESIDENTS UPSET WITH LARGE GATHERINGS

Meanwhile, residents in the southeast Calgary community are upset because of the situation.

Pawłowski’s organization, known as The Cave of Adullam congregation, has been gathering weekly at a daycare and preschool building located on 26 Avenue S.E., to practice their faith.

Despite the Alberta government placing a limit of 15 in-person attendees for places of worship, upwards of 50 people gathered Saturday.

Area resident Chaz Smith says many people attending church services in the area have been leaving behind excessive amounts of trash, blocking roads, climbing onto fences and disturbing the peace.

“It hurts to see this and I don’t understand how you can be alive today and not acknowledge the suffering that COVID has brought,” Smith said.

“I know way too many people my age that have had COVID now and were hospitalized in their 30s, I have a friend right now who has numbness and tingling on half of her face and she had just a mild case, while I have another friend whose hair is falling out.”

Other residents, like Barbara Anderson, agree that those who attend large gatherings are showing little respect for the public health system.

“They come in here, they don’t wear their masks,” she said. “I’ve got a great nephew that I haven’t seen yet and it’s not going to get any better unless they start complying with the law.”

“It is a huge slap in the face and I wish that they would get that, it’s hurting a lot of people, a lot of people are having their businesses closed down because of people like that.”

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