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Pentecostal church in Sacramento linked to dozens of coronavirus cases



NESSUN COMMENTO

5 APRILE 2020

Members of Bethany Slavic Missionary Church are baptized Sept. 8 in Sacramento County.

(Max Whittaker / For The Times)

By ANITA CHABRIA (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D337a6a2a-6fe821bd-337b1436-ac1f6b0e659a-310acad363bfc5f2%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fpeople%25252Fanita-chabria%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148815504%2526sdata%253DEQACOOxE0Of3gBTPlvBt2qnVWlWrVnJlcmjBiu7JwEI%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444218636&sdata=2bY0gCWrnZFXunll2Rj0TfDm4r56fwrtWbKV%2Fqqqd6M%3D&reserved=0>)

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SEAN GREENE (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D1e3aa820-42a8e3b7-1e3bd63c-ac1f6b0e659a-410b437dab0366e5%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fpeople%25252Fsean-greene%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148825498%2526sdata%253Drfvfk31bSq4whUv9sZI895r%25252Ff1FjwPvJBPCecQchL3ec%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444228634&sdata=KRAHwc0IWPkCv1aHxdX41o5l6Ws8mpfU3SFVI7ZcKFU%3D&reserved=0>), RONG-GONG LIN II (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Da87b51af-f4e91a38-a87a2fb3-ac1f6b0e659a-75f8cbcf326b735a%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fpeople%25252Frong-gong-lin-iii%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148825498%2526sdata%253Dw%25252BNsn3YlIoY%25252B2rkTQ5V%25252FSjYg%25252Fd3cPnv5NfMiJjt360s%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444238630&sdata=SVTAySjZHpo9rb5oYx6rZWATpT1nkzq7QxNFFiQ%2BIwA%3D&reserved=0>)

APRIL 2, 2020
12:39 PM
UPDATED 7:53 PM

SACRAMENTO — A Pentecostal church in a Sacramento suburb is the epicenter of a coronavirus outbreak with more than six dozen confirmed cases, prompting county officials to warn against religious gatherings.

It's outrageous that this is happening," said Dr. Peter Beilenson, the Sacramento County public health director. "Obviously there is freedom of religion, but when it's impacting public health as this is, we have to enforce social distancing."

The church, Bethany Slavic Missionary Church, did not immediately return a call for comment Thursday. But Beilenson said health officials were concerned that church members may still be meeting in private homes to conduct services, despite county orders.

"Whether or not you have community-wide sermons or meetings in people's houses, they are all dangers and they are very detrimental to the public's health," Beilenson said.

Beilenson said 71 of the church's members who live in Sacramento County have tested positive, and more members who live in surrounding counties also have confirmed cases, though he could not immediately say how many.

Information and sermons on the church's website indicate it stopped holding large gatherings March 18. The church is the largest Russian-language Pentecostal church in the area and has a congregation of more than 3,000 people, according to published reports. Its two-story building is normally packed with congregants, many of them older immigrants, during multiple services each week.

According to a sermon from Sunday posted online, the church's senior pastor, Adam Bondaruk, is hospitalized with the virus, as are two other pastors, who were described as "critically ill" by an unidentified pastor in the video.

"We have many different people in our church, they are ill, so we need to pray. We need to intervene," the pastor continued in the video. "God will hear us, and he will heal us."

The church has met with controversy in the past, including for anti-gay rhetoric.

(<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D981322bc-c481692b-98125ca0-ac1f6b0e659a-ce5fb5cfa4d28d67%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.seattletimes.com%25252Fnation-world%25252Fslavic-fundamentalists-new-to-us-rail-at-gays%25252F%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148835493%2526sdata%253D%25252BP4iD2dVEQFrLX9RGAhY1iqhko%25252F591rNiwhrGiPR6lg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%27C01%27Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%27C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%27C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%27C0%27C0%27C637215384444238630&sdata=34HnHYtCB3Y%2Bzk9sqLsmG7PouYbZ6fTn4MEK2%2F8UhaA%3D&reserved=0>) This year, a well on the church's property that was used by congregants was found to be

contaminated with chemicals (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Dffce0f90-a35c4407-ffcf718c-ac1f6b0e659a-fa7228b3c257b821%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fpolitics%25252Fstory%25252F2019-10-08%25252Ffirefighting-foam-leaves-toxic-legacy-california-water%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148835493%2526sdata%253DDZ8LGiCpQm2xECTLDXtyFXS2oT5YwdlcSH806%25252F1fhm0%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%27C01%27Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%27C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%27C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%27C0%27C0%27C637215384444248619&sdata=wETEiZRZrz4Jjz31EuSwWMCg0lVACXCXQI3T8XtUkY%3D&reserved=0>) from a nearby military base. One of the church's officials was convicted of pedophilia

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Beilenson confirmed that church greeters shaking hands with congregants as they entered may have helped spread the coronavirus. In the online sermon, the unidentified pastor said that shortly after New Year's Day, the church had a problem with the "greeting team."

"I know we are entering this valley right now," the pastor said during the taped sermon. "When this thing will be over, and when we [are] going to come here and when we are going to shake hands, I think it's going to be a totally different meaning."

As the coronavirus has spread across Sacramento County, infecting more than 340 people and killing nine, health officials said 1 in 3 confirmed cases in the county are linked to church gatherings.

"Sacramento County is urging all residents, from all faiths and all backgrounds, to stay home," the county said in a statement (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D672e0b1a-3bbc408d-672f7506-ac1f6b0e659a-bbf19fd743cede52%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.saccounty.net%25252Fnews%25252Flatest-news%25252Fpages%25252FCOVID-19UpdateApril1.aspx%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148845490%2526sdata%253DZdfjgETF421FwRLEow4tGOI6qd9gw1yx2vMp11vXFRg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444268620&sdata=%2BRnNWdYKzIR0z16V3e4Tko1DMFSdcpHmrH51Q7gs7OU%3D&reserved=0>) Wednesday.

The disclosure of the mass infection comes as large gatherings across the country have been identified as incidents in which people are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. Such "super-spreading" events

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It can take two to 14 days after someone is infected with the coronavirus for symptoms to appear. Once the illness is apparent and a patient is hospitalized, it can take 17 to 25 days to either recover and be discharged, or to die from the illness, according to a study (https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3De4c58658-b857cdcf-e4c4f844-ac1f6b0e659a-3b47c5de280ab30f%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.cdc.gov%25252Ffeed%25252Farticle%25252F26%25252F6%25252F20-0495_article%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148855479%2526sdata%253DsL5E0rrVkegbfVBsoHLIc%25252B0JxIsUWvYNqJfYt%25252BgFL8%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444268620&sdata=Emj7vHVSLtegHW1VyM5OY40SYjM1YU2HVhNorN%2Bkf%2Bs%3D&reserved=0)

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) of patients in Wuhan, China, the origin of the pandemic.

The first coronavirus case in Sacramento County publicly associated with a house of worship involved a woman older than 70 with underlying health conditions who attended Faith Presbyterian Church in Sacramento. More cases of the virus have since been associated with the church, which has been in operation since 1967 and is in a popular residential neighborhood near schools and shopping.

But that church took a different approach.

The Rev. Jeff Chapman of Faith Presbyterian said Thursday that the church had begun protective measures in late February at the request of a parishioner with an underlying medical condition. The woman asked that the church stop all physical contact during worship events, he said.

“I was hesitant,” Chapman said. “The tendency of a religious leader ... is to gather people. That is their heart.”

But he said the woman persuaded him to stop such things as passing the collection plate and shaking hands. A week later, the church began to see members with symptoms, Chapman said.

“I think again, in retrospect, it may have saved some lives because our folks would have been together ... shaking hands and passing plates, and we didn’t do any of that,” he said.

After discovering the pocket of potential coronavirus patients among the congregation, Chapman said leaders immediately decided to shut down the church on March 12 to prevent the spread of the virus on the advice of a task force made up of three members — an emergency room doctor, a former public health professional and a person who formerly worked at the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

One of the church members who contracted the virus, a substitute teacher who worked at Sutterville Elementary School, died three days later, on March 15. Her death was announced

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<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1?url=https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-03-17/sacramento-substitute-teacher-who-tested-positive-for-coronavirus-dies>) by the Sacramento City Unified School District, which closed campuses the day after the woman died.

Three days later, Sacramento County issued a mandatory stay-at-home order. By the end of the day, Gov. Gavin Newsom had issued a similar directive

(<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https://protect2.fireeye.com/v1?url=https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-03-17/sacramento-substitute-teacher-who-tested-positive-for-coronavirus-dies>

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...9%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148865481%2526sdata%253D4
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...1%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%
...7C0%7C637215384444288608&sdata=sOUBwD4CXML8FexKIE%2Ftc36YU%2FqQ4iyQuceoyNBHfw%3D&reserve
...d=0) for the entire state.

In all, Chapman said, about six people at Faith Presbyterian have tested positive, with no new cases in more than two weeks. Chapman suspected he might have had the virus but tested negative.

“Ironically, or maybe gratefully, we were more proactive than other churches,” he said. “I don’t know what I would have done differently, actually.”

As the virus has spread across the state, many houses of worship have canceled services, prayer circles and classes or moved them online (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Dbc7a4f01-e0e80496-bc7b311d-ac1f6b0e659a-aca327d6778dc24f%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fcalifornia%25252Fstory%25252F2020-03-19%25252Fcoronavirus-church-faith-community-online%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148875473%2526sdata%253D0%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C637215384444308596&sdata=Z0kVVf2NaXu34WFN9Vu4XSRA23vBsNykYqmw%2FHGj%2F%2FQ%3D&reserved=0>).

All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills began canceling services March 8 after its rector, the Rev. Janet Broderick, fell ill (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D49b82aad-152a613a-49b954b1-ac1f6b0e659a-6fa9941d69728ccb%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fcalifornia%25252Fstory%25252F2020-03-11%25252Fpasadena-confirms-first-coronavirus-case-l-a-county-total-hits-29%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148885470%2526sdata%253DDK3M3Wuz0351TxrtEZAwoHDnuR7W2LG3GcSqP522dKfk%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C637215384444308596&sdata=ZAwLBQufERr1lmkOLIMBV2%2BBHDon%2BIVvIFnDxRuJ1VY%3D&reserved=0>).

Broderick, the sister of actor Matthew Broderick, had attended a conference in Kentucky along with more than 500 other Episcopalians from around the country. She later tested positive for COVID-19 and suffered from severe pneumonia.

On March 12, the Ikar synagogue in Los Angeles said it was suspending Shabbat services. A day later, the Orange County Islamic Foundation suspended Friday prayers at the mosque and said no one would be allowed inside apart from employees.

The Diocese of San Jose ordered public Masses at Catholic churches to be suspended (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D14f01d13-48625684-14f1630f-ac1f6b0e659a-29f477eaa603557db%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fcalifornia%25252Fstory%25252F2020-03-12%25252Fikar-synagogue-suspends-shabbat-services-29%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148885470%2526sdata%253DDK3M3Wuz0351TxrtEZAwoHDnuR7W2LG3GcSqP522dKfk%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C637215384444308596&sdata=ZAwLBQufERr1lmkOLIMBV2%2BBHDon%2BIVvIFnDxRuJ1VY%3D&reserved=0>).

3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.dsj.org%25252Fdiocese-suspends-public-masses-3-13-2020%25252F%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148885470%2526sdata%253DxuHks9GNqR6E1kLhS7aRBjwvAAIwEwSydzZaSyp91E%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444318590&sdata=q%2FGv8RpOzJn9At2fsF6dol8q3HRTImNjJpza5jTDFCU%3D&reserved=0) starting March 14; the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Dac6487d6-f0f6cc41-ac65f9ca-ac1f6b0e659a-5cc1865e409deb32%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fangelusnews.com%25252Flocal%25252Ffla-catholics%25252Ffla-archdiocese-suspends-public-masses-citing-coronavirus-concerns%25252F%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148885470%2526sdata%253DWDvYoz8WYobpdWeFKMmXJsvUJ5fceXNybY4gtp8xP5sKg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444328584&sdata=2Q%2FnRjrTGxV7KSp6ptyH5pYOZpiurmJTclQX9JuUXYQ%3D&reserved=0) (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Dac6487d6-f0f6cc41-ac65f9ca-ac1f6b0e659a-5cc1865e409deb32%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fangelusnews.com%25252Flocal%25252Ffla-catholics%25252Ffla-archdiocese-suspends-public-masses-citing-coronavirus-concerns%25252F%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148885470%2526sdata%253DWDvYoz8WYobpdWeFKMmXJsvUJ5fceXNybY4gtp8xP5sKg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444328584&sdata=2Q%2FnRjrTGxV7KSp6ptyH5pYOZpiurmJTclQX9JuUXYQ%3D&reserved=0>) announced the same March 16, the same day counties in the San Francisco Bay Area released a shelter-in-place order.

While many churches are shifting to digital worship, some around the nation have defied orders to close.

On Sunday, the Life Tabernacle Church in a suburb of Baton Rouge, La., [defied](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Db32d49fa-efbf026d-b32c37e6-ac1f6b0e659a-92838b8d61eb96b1%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fcalifornia%25252Fstory%25252F2020-04-02%25252FLouisiana%25252520church%25252520defies%25252520COVID-19%25252520order%25252C%25252520holds%25252520Sunday%25252520services%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148895459%2526sdata%253DvYo28WYobpdWeFKMmXJsvUJ5fceXNybY4gtp8xP5sKg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444338579&sdata=bMqFhodqpQgSnSH1SiT1i%2FTXXDDwjObOeNMpZBaTvXY%3D&reserved=0) (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3Db32d49fa-efbf026d-b32c37e6-ac1f6b0e659a-92838b8d61eb96b1%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fcalifornia%25252Fstory%25252F2020-04-02%25252FLouisiana%25252520church%25252520defies%25252520COVID-19%25252520order%25252C%25252520holds%25252520Sunday%25252520services%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148895459%2526sdata%253DvYo28WYobpdWeFKMmXJsvUJ5fceXNybY4gtp8xP5sKg%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444338579&sdata=bMqFhodqpQgSnSH1SiT1i%2FTXXDDwjObOeNMpZBaTvXY%3D&reserved=0>) the governor's order to stay home and continued to use its fleet of two dozen buses to bring hundreds of congregants to services three times a week.

"We're not going to be intimidated," the Rev. Tony Spell said.

And this week, sheriff's deputies [handcuffed](https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D77b80349-2b2a48de-77b97d55-ac1f6b0e659a-823b372dd27e9df0%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fworld-nation%25252Fstory%25252F2020-03-31%25252Fcoronavirus-megachurches-meeting-pastors%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148895459%2526sdata%253DDCaLpbBIWwKbzFWpHS1ddBRC3kiZGoDuLzBV9zfYHWNE%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444338579&sdata=o9LnBlqlZYPdMIpDfEvc%2Br1zu%2Bon822uj552IKIMPb8%3D&reserved=0) (<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fprotect2.fireeye.com%2Fv1%2Furl%3Fk%3D77b80349-2b2a48de-77b97d55-ac1f6b0e659a-823b372dd27e9df0%26q%3D1%26e%3Df2d0e81f-3f87-4147-8bbe-3c7834e5534a%26u%3Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fnam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com%252F%253Furl%253Dhttps%25252F%25252Fwww.latimes.com%25252Fworld-nation%25252Fstory%25252F2020-03-31%25252Fcoronavirus-megachurches-meeting-pastors%2526data%253D02%25257C01%25257Cnrm%252540lists.ku.edu%25257C0e657fa812d649e3eeb308d7d7f5d479%25257C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%25257C0%25257C0%25257C637215323148895459%2526sdata%253DDCaLpbBIWwKbzFWpHS1ddBRC3kiZGoDuLzBV9zfYHWNE%25253D%2526reserved%253D0&data=02%7C01%7Cnrm%40lists.ku.edu%7C4e51e2e5046d4e9892f408d7d80419ad%7C3c176536afe643f5b96636feabbe3c1a%7C0%7C0%7C637215384444338579&sdata=o9LnBlqlZYPdMIpDfEvc%2Br1zu%2Bon822uj552IKIMPb8%3D&reserved=0>) a

Tampa, Fla., minister for violating local stay-at-home orders by gathering hundreds to worship. Police said the minister, the Rev. Rodney Howard-Browne of the River at Tampa Bay, showed “reckless disregard for human life” by potentially exposing his congregants to the coronavirus.

Howard-Browne, out on bail, has complained of “religious bigotry,” and the church maintained it had the right to assemble in worship even in an emergency.

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