

# What's at Stake?

## *Equal Access Rights for Churches*

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The United States is home to more than 300,000 Christian churches, and roughly 4,000 new churches are planted each year. But churches, especially new ones, often do not have the resources to purchase their own property. The only practical alternative for many is to rent public meeting space, like a community center, school building, or library meeting room for church services. Across the country, public facilities like these are generally made available for community use. And the U.S. Supreme Court has held that once they are opened, the government may not discriminate against a group that wants to use the facility simply because the group is religious.

Nevertheless, many public entities would like to keep churches out of their facilities, so they continue to maintain policies that prohibit certain types of religious speech, ban churches entirely, or charge them substantially higher rental rates than non-religious community groups. Pressure from leftist, secularist groups have caused some public entities to mistakenly believe that they are required to discriminate against churches because of the so-called “separation of church and state.”

### What's at Stake for Churches?

- Whether churches will continue to be discriminated against in public facilities that are available to all other community groups because of unconstitutional policies.
- Whether churches will continue to be targeted with burdensome and discriminatory rental fee rates that are substantially higher than those for all other community groups.
- Whether public entities will continue to fight in court to keep churches out of their facilities and set precedent that could leave thousands of churches around the country vulnerable to losing their existing meeting places.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

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**PRAY** – Lift up ADF attorneys and the churches who are challenging the unconstitutional policies that discriminate against churches and other ministry organizations.

**SPEAK UP** – Contact ADF if you or your church has been denied the ability to meet in a public facility because the content of your gathering was considered “religious.”

**LEARN MORE** – Join the conversation online at [Facebook.com/AllianceDefenseFund](https://www.facebook.com/AllianceDefenseFund) to learn more about the campaign to protect churches' equal access rights.

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