

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2020

HARBORVIEW FELLOWSHIP <https://harborviewfellowship.org/>

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**HARBORVIEW FELLOWSHIP FILES FEDERAL LAWSUIT SEEKING TO  
DECLARE GOV. INSLEE'S RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS TO  
BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

Harborview Fellowship, a nondenominational Christian church in Gig Harbor, WA has filed a lawsuit in federal court claiming that Gov. Jay Inslee's restrictions on religious gatherings violate the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment protections. The filed complaint can be accessed here: <https://harborviewfellowship.org/press>

The church has abided by Gov. Inslee's orders since March 2020 when the Governor banned large gatherings. But church leaders are dismayed that his guidelines issued on May 27, 2020 discriminate against churches by restricting indoor worship services to 25% of capacity or 50 persons, whichever is less, regardless of the size or capacity of the church facilities. Yet the Governor has lifted capacity restrictions altogether on manufacturing facilities, professional and business offices, and allows restaurants to operate at 50% capacity. Even in Phase 3, when restaurants can operate at 75% and movie theaters at 50% capacity, churches are still held to the 25%/50 limitation.

"We have submitted to the Governor a written request to re-open worship services, funerals, weddings and other gatherings in full compliance with Center for Disease Control standards for safety," explained Pastor Mike Riches, senior pastor at Harborview Fellowship.

Pastor Riches added, "The spiritual needs of people of faith are no less important or urgent than the economic needs of businesses, manufacturers and restaurants. The Governor's current order trivializes the role of churches and other places of worship in providing for society's well-being."

The lawsuit asks the Court to issue an injunction against enforcement of the Governor's orders for churches and religious organizations. Without the Court's injunction, church members and leaders who choose to gather for congregational worship in excess of the 50-person cap, even though fully observing masking, social-distancing, and other safety requirements, are subject to civil and criminal penalties.

(more)

Harborview Fellowship

Senior Pastor: Mike Riches  
Membership: 250  
Weekly Attendance: 250-325  
Affiliation: Non-denominational  
Address: 4819 Hunt St, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

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