



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LARGE GATHERING VIOLATES STATE ORDER, PUTS COMMUNITY AT RISK

Community efforts to control COVID-19 requires all of us to change the way we conduct ourselves, including how to organize faith-based gatherings. State guidance allows outdoor faith gatherings with modifications, which includes ensuring six feet of social distancing between different households. Last night's faith event at the Sundial Bridge did not follow this guidance. Public Health was never contacted by the event organizers. However, after hearing about the event, Public Health did reach out and sent the faith guidance to the organizers and called out the social distancing and other requirements for outdoor services. Turtle Bay and the City of Redding reached out to the organizers also and were assured that the event would involve social distancing and a "small battery powered amplification for acoustic guitar and mic." They did not request nor receive a permit for this event.

While outdoor faith gatherings are allowed, this event did not follow state guidelines for several important reasons that put our community at risk:

- Social distancing of six feet between unrelated persons was not practiced, and there was much physical touching
- The outdoor venue chosen for the event could not accommodate the number of attendees and maintain social distancing
- Wearing of face coverings was not practiced in the absence of social distancing
- A concert was performed by someone who traveled here from outside the area

Due to these violations of disease control principles, attendance at this event places those individuals at risk of COVID-19. If they get infected, they can pass it on to others in our community. **Anyone who attended this gathering should self-quarantine for 14 days, get tested, and monitor for symptoms.**

We truly empathize with all who have had to change the way they worship in the past few months. Very sadly, some of our local cases of COVID-19, including hospitalizations, have resulted from faith gatherings, and it's critical that our faith community leaders continue to offer safe services that follow the state guidelines.

Our students have sacrificed traditional graduations, and people have had to postpone weddings and hold funerals without loved ones present. Our community has had to cancel favorite community events, including the Redding Rodeo, the Shasta District Fair and the Freedom Festival. Local businesses continue to struggle. If Shasta County ends up on the state's watch list, our children won't be allowed to return to school in person, and our businesses and churches will face further restrictions. It is imperative that our community abide by the statewide orders to prevent the spread of disease and to keep Shasta County moving forward.

For more information about local COVID-19 response efforts, visit www.ShastaReady.org.