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16				
17	(designated local counsel)			
18	Attorneys for Plaintiffs			
	IN THE UNITED STAT	TES DISTRICT COURT		
19		STRICT OF CALIFORNIA		
20	OAKLAND	DIVISION		
21	FAITH CENTER CHURCH			
22	EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES, a	CASE NO		
23	California nonprofit religious corporation, and HATTIE HOPKINS, an individual,			
		VEDIEUED COMBLAINT FOD		
24	Plaintiffs,	VERIFIED COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE		
25	V.	RELIEF AND DAMAGES		
26	FEDERAL D. GLOVER, member and			
27	Chair of the Contra Costa County Board of			
28	Supervisors, MARK DESAULNIER, member of the Contra Costa County Board			
	* Applications pro hac vice submitted concurre VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 1	ently with this complaint.		

1 2 3 4 5	of Supervisors, JOHN M. GIOIA, member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, MILLIE GREENBERG, member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, GAYLE B. UILKEMA, member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, JOHN SWEETEN, Contra Costa County Administrator, ANNE		
6	CAIN, Contra Costa County Librarian, and PATTY CHAN, Senior Branch Librarian		
7	for the Antioch branch of the Contra Costa County Public Library, LAURA		
8	O'DONAHUE, Administrative Deputy Director for the Antioch branch of the		
9	Contra Costa County Public Library, in		
10	their individual and official capacities,		
11	Defendants.		
12	Come now the plaintiffs, Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries and Hattie Mae		
13	Hopkins (collectively "Faith Center"), by and through counsel, pursuant to the Federal Rules of		
14	Civil Procedure and against the Defendants aver the following:		
15	I.		
16	INTRODUCTION		
17	1. This case is about the Defendants' refusal to allow a religious group to use a		
18	public library meeting room for religious purposes. By written policy, Defendants have		
19	excluded the Plaintiffs solely because of their religious viewpoint and the religious content of		
20	their speech. This is a flagrant violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United		
21	States Constitution. Plaintiffs seek declaratory relief, injunctive relief, nominal damages, costs		
22	and attorneys' fees.		
23	II.		
24	JURISDICTION AND VENUE		
25	2. This action arises under the United States Constitution, particularly the First and		
26	Fourteenth Amendments; and under federal law, particularly 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201, 2202 and 42		
27	U.S.C. §§ 1983 and 1988.		
28			

1	3. This Court has original jurisdiction over these federal claims by operation of 28	
2	U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1343.	
3	4. This Court has authority to issue the requested declaratory relief under 28 U.S.C.	
4	§ 2201.	
5	5. This Court has authority to issue the requested injunctive relief under 28 U.S.C. §	
6	1343(3).	
7	6. This Court is authorized to award the requested damages under 28 U.S.C. §	
8	1343(3).	
9	7. This Court is authorized to award attorneys' fees under 42 U.S.C. § 1988.	
10	8. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391 in the Northern District of California	
11	because this claim arose there, and most of the parties reside within the District.	
12	III.	
13	INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT	
14	9. Pursuant to L.R. 3-2(c)-(d) & 3-5, this case is a civil rights case, in a non-	
15	excepted category, suitable for assignment to the San Francisco or Oakland divisions because the	
16	civil action arose in Contra Costa County.	
17	IV.	
18	IDENTIFICATION OF PLAINTIFFS	
19	10. Plaintiff Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries, a.k.a. Faith Center	
20	Evangelistic Ministries, is a non-profit religious corporation in the State of California and may	
21	sue and be sued in its own name.	
22	11. Plaintiff Hattie Mae Hopkins is the leader and registered agent of Faith Center	
23	Church Evangelistic Ministries and a resident of Sacramento, California.	
24	V.	
25	IDENTIFICATION OF DEFENDANTS	
26	12. Defendant Federal D. Glover is a member and the chair of the Contra Costa	
27	County Board of Supervisors, maintaining an office in Pittsburg, California. Among other	
28	things, this Defendant is responsible for establishing general policies and plans for the operation	
	VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 3	

of Contra Costa County government, including the county library system. This Defendant is sued
 in his official and individual capacities.

3 13. Defendant Mark DeSaulnier is a member of the Contra Costa County Board of
4 Supervisors, maintaining an office in Concord, California. Among other things, this Defendant
5 is responsible for establishing general policies and plans for the operation of Contra Costa
6 County government, including the county library system. This Defendant is sued in his official
7 and individual capacities.

14. Defendant John M. Gioia is a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, maintaining an office in El Cerrito, California. Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for establishing general policies and plans for the operation of Contra Costa County government, including the county library system. This Defendant is sued in his official and individual capacities.

15. Defendant Millie Greenberg is a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, maintaining an office in Danville, California. Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for establishing general policies and plans for the operation of Contra Costa County government, including the county library system. This Defendant is sued in her official and individual capacities.

16. Defendant Gayle B. Uilkema is a member of the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors, maintaining an office in Lafayette, California. Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for establishing general policies and plans for the operation of Contra Costa County government, including the county library system. This Defendant is sued in her official and individual capacities.

17.Defendant John Sweeten is the Contra Costa County Administrator, maintainingan office in Martinez, California.Among other things, this Defendant is responsible forimplementing Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors policies, including those governing thecounty library system.This Defendant is sued in his official and individual capacities.

18. Defendant Anne Cain is the Contra Costa County Librarian, maintaining an office
 in Pleasant Hill, California. Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for overseeing all
 VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 4

county libraries and enforcement of Contra Costa County policies governing the county library
 system. This Defendant is sued in her official and individual capacities.

19. Defendant Patty Chan is the Senior Branch Librarian of the Antioch Branch of the
Contra Costa County Public Library system, maintaining an office in Antioch, California.
Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for implementing Contra Costa Board of
Supervisors policies governing the country library system, particularly the Antioch Branch. She
is also responsible for overseeing the use of library facilities by outside groups and individuals
like the Plaintiffs. This Defendant is sued in her official and individual capacities.

9 20. Upon information and belief, based upon telephone conferences with Ms.
10 Hopkins, Defendant Laura O'Donahue is the Administrative Deputy Director of the Antioch
11 Branch of the Contra Costa Public Library system, maintaining an office in Antioch California.
12 Among other things, this Defendant is responsible for implementing Contra Costa Board of
13 Supervisors policies governing the country library system, particularly the Antioch Branch. She
14 is also responsible for overseeing the use of library facilities by outside groups and individuals
15 like the plaintiffs. This Defendant is sued in her official and individual capacities.

VI.

STATEMENT OF FACTS

18 Background

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19 21. Plaintiff Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries ("Faith Center") is led by
20 Plaintiff Hattie Mae Hopkins.

21 22. Ms. Hopkins believes that, as a Christian, she is called to share her faith with
22 others.

23 23. Ms. Hopkins believes that there are many individuals who need to hear about the
24 gospel of Jesus Christ, but may never set foot inside a church building.

25 24. Ms. Hopkins holds organized meetings under the auspices of Faith Center, that,
26 pursuant to the foregoing beliefs, are not held inside a traditional church building.

27 25. Faith Center currently holds meetings in Sacramento, California and Woodland,
28 California.

1	26.	Participants at Faith Center's meetings:
2		a. discuss educational, cultural, and community issues from a religious
3		perspective;
4		b. engage in religious speech and religious worship; and
5		c. engage in discussing the Bible and other religious books, teaching, praying,
6		singing, sharing testimonies, sharing meals, and discussing social and political
7		issues.
8	27.	Early in 2004, after praying about it, Ms. Hopkins believed that God was leading
9	her to begin holding Faith Center meetings in Antioch, California.	
10	Antioch Libr	rary
11	28.	The Contra Costa County Library has a branch in Antioch, California.
12	29.	The Antioch Branch of the Library ("Library") has a meeting room that is
13	available for use by outside individuals and organizations.	
14	30.	This meeting room is located on the Library premises and is available during
15	Library business hours on a first-come, first-served basis.	
16	31.	The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors encourages the use of library
17	meeting roor	ns for educational, cultural and community related meetings, programs, and
18	activities.	
19	32.	Upon information and belief, based on written Library policies, Defendants allow
20	a variety of ne	onprofit organizations to use library meeting rooms.
21	33.	Non-profit and civic organizations may use the meeting rooms free of charge for
22	meetings open	n to the general public.
23	34.	An individual or organization seeking to reserve the meeting room need only
24	submit to the	e Library a completed application that discloses the name of the individual or
25	organization,	the date and time requested, and the activity taking place.
26	35.	If the room is not otherwise scheduled for the requested date and time, the
27	application is	to be approved, assuming that the requested time is within regular business hours.
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	VERIFIED CON	MPLAINT - 6

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1	Plaintiffs' ap		
2	36.	In May 2004, Faith Center participant and Area Coordinator Mary Ward obtained	
3	an application to use the Antioch Library meeting room.		
4	37.	Mary Ward is a resident of Antioch, California.	
5	38.	Mary Ward faxed the application to Ms. Hopkins in Sacramento, California.	
6	39.	Ms. Hopkins filled out and signed the application, requesting the meeting room	
7	for two dates: May 29, 2004, and July 31, 2004.		
8	40.	Library personnel informed Ms. Hopkins that she needed to fill out a separate	
9	application for each date requested.		
10	41.	Ms. Hopkins complied by faxing two applications to the Library - one for May	
11	29, 2004, an	d the other for July 31, 2004. True and correct copies of these applications are	
12	attached as Exhibits A & B.		
13	42.	Ms. Hopkins then telephoned the Library in May 2004 and spoke to two separate	
14	Library employees to confirm that Faith Center's dates were on the Library calendar.		
15	43.	Both Library employees confirmed that the dates were on the official Library	
16	calendar.		
17	44.	During one of these confirmation conversations, Ms. Hopkins asked if the room	
18	was soundpro	oof.	
19	45.	The Library employee said no, and expressed concern that noise from high school	
20	students in th	e area would bother Faith Center's meeting.	
21	46.	Ms. Hopkins replied that the noise would not be a bother to Faith Center's	
22	meeting.		
23	47.	Ms. Hopkins asked if the sound from Faith Center's meeting would be a bother to	
24	Library patrons.		
25	48.	The Library employee said no.	
26	May 29, 2004 Meeting		
27	49.	On May 29, 2004, Ms. Hopkins, Ms. Ward, and approximately 12-15 persons	
28	intending to participate in the planned Faith Center meeting arrived at the Library.		

50. The meeting took place as planned and as described in Paragraphs 26.

2 51. Out of consideration for the library's patrons, the meeting participants did not use
3 musical instruments or amplified sound.

4 52. Toward the end of the meeting, Library employees "Jenna" and "Lisa" informed
5 Ms. Hopkins and Ms. Ward that groups were not permitted to use Library meeting rooms for
6 religious activities.

7 53. Ms. Hopkins asked if the reason for the prohibition was because of any excessive
8 noise resulting from the Faith Center meeting.

9 54. The employees said that there was no noise problem with Faith Center – the
10 problem was that Faith Center was conducting religious activities.

55. The employees showed Ms. Hopkins a written policy entitled "Resolution 92/793
- Contra Costa County Library - Policy for Use of Meeting Rooms in Libraries" ("policy"),
which forbade religious groups to use Library facilities. A true and correct copy of that policy is
attached as Exhibit C.

15 56. The policy states that "[1]ibrary meeting rooms shall not be used for religious
16 purposes." See Ex. C.

17 57. The employees further stated to Ms. Hopkins that they didn't have a copy of her18 application.

58. Ms. Hopkins promptly presented a copy of her application.

59. The employees responded that the group should have never gained access and that the Library volunteer who had admitted the group was not fully familiar with Library policies.

60. Ms. Ward stated that a librarian had given permission for the group to use theroom after finding out the group had the room reserved.

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61. Ms. Hopkins expressed her concerns that such a policy might be unconstitutional.

62. The Library employees informed her that her July 31, 2004 reservation would be
removed from the calendar, which would prohibit Faith Center from assembling in the library
meeting room on that date.

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63. Ms. Hopkins recommended that the Library employees consult with legal counsel 2 because Faith Center's permit for July 31, 2004, had already been granted back in May.

64. The employees then stated that they would keep the July 31, 2004 meeting on the calendar, but that they would need to ask a Library manager about that reservation and have the manager call Ms. Hopkins.

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65. In early June 2004, Defendant Laura O'Donahue telephoned Ms. Hopkins.

66. Ms. O'Donahue stated that Faith Center needed to find another location for the July 31, 2004 meeting because she had already removed the date from the Library calendar.

9 67 Ms. O'Donahue further stated that their policy was a long-standing policy, 10 approved by Library directors and the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors.

68. Ms. Hopkins recommended that Ms. O'Donahue check with legal counsel because such a policy was unconstitutional and noted that she had made the same recommendation to Jenna and Lisa.

14 69. Ms. O'Donahue reiterated that Faith Center could not use the Library meeting 15 room.

16 70. Later in June 2004, Ms. Hopkins contacted legal counsel who prepared a letter 17 with legal analysis and authorities for Ms. Hopkins to send to Ms. O'Donahue.

18 71. On July 5, 2004, Ms. Hopkins forwarded counsel's letter along with one of her 19 own, asking Ms. O'Donahue to please expedite a response from Library legal counsel. A true 20 and correct copy of Ms. Hopkins' letter is attached as Exhibit D.

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72. Ms. Hopkins received no response from the Library to her letter.

22 73. Ms. Hopkins called Ms. O'Donahue on or about July 23, 2004, to find out if Faith 23 Center's reservation would be reinstated on the Library calendar.

24 74. Ms. O'Donahue stated that she had asked legal counsel to take a general look at 25 the Library facilities use policies, but that "it might take quite some time" to hear back from 26 counsel.

27 75. Ms. O'Donahue stated that Faith Center would definitely not be allowed to use the Antioch Library meeting room for their July 31, 2004 meeting. 28

1 76 Ms. Hopkins requested to speak to someone in authority, but Ms. Donahue said 2 no one was available at that time.

3 On or about July 24, 2004, Administrative Operations Officer Susan Caldwell 77. telephoned Ms. Hopkins and admitted that they had forwarded Ms. Hopkins' letter to their legal 5 counsel on or about July 24, 2004.

6 78. Ms. Caldwell added that Faith Center would definitely not be allowed to use the 7 room for their July 31, 2004 meeting.

8 79. Ms. Hopkins desires to reserve the meeting room for future Faith Center 9 meetings.

10 80. Ms. Hopkins desires to hold those meetings approximately one Saturday every 11 other month, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

12 81. Ms. Hopkins cannot hold those meetings in the Antioch Library meeting room 13 under the current policy.

VII.

STATEMENTS OF LAW

16 82. Each and all of the acts alleged herein were done by Defendants under the color and pretense of state law, statutes, ordinances, regulations, customs, usages, and policies of 17 Contra Costa County and the State of California. 18

19 83. Plaintiffs' speech, association, religious worship and religious expression are fully 20 protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

21 84. Granting religious groups equal access to government facilities under neutral 22 criteria does not violate the Establishment Clause.

23 85 Unless and until the enforcement of the Defendants' religiously discriminatory policy is enjoined, the Plaintiffs will suffer and continue to suffer irreparable harm to their 24 25 federal constitutional rights.

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VIII.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION - VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

86. The allegations contained in all preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by reference.

87. Religious speech and worship are protected by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

88. The Defendants created a designated public forum by allowing individuals and organizations to reserve the Library facilities for a wide variety of free speech activities.

89. Within a designated public forum, express discrimination against religious speech is presumptively unconstitutional.

90. Within a designated public forum, the government may not discriminate on the basis of the content of the speaker's speech absent a compelling governmental interest.

91. Regardless of the type of forum (traditional, designated or limited, or nonpublic fora), the government may not discriminate based upon the viewpoint expressed by the speaker.

92. The Defendants discriminated against Plaintiffs because of the religious speech and religious viewpoint that would be expressed at Plaintiffs' meetings.

93. The Defendants have no compelling government interest to justify their discriminatory treatment of the Plaintiffs.

94. The Defendants' actions therefore violate the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as incorporated and applied to the states under the Fourteenth Amendment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray that the Court grant the relief set forth hereinafter in the prayer for relief.

IX.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION - VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO FREE EXERCISE **OF RELIGION UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION**

95. The allegations contained in all preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by reference

96. The Plaintiffs' desire to meet for worship and fellowship with others outside of a traditional church building is motivated by their sincerely held religious beliefs.

97. Plaintiffs sought to, and continue to seek to, discuss educational, cultural, and community issues from a religious perspective.

98. The Defendants' policy expressly excludes "religious purposes" from the Library meeting rooms.

99. The Defendants' policy expressly bars access to public facilities based upon the religious or non-religious nature of the applicant and the applicant's speech.

100. Defendants' policy substantially burdens Plaintiffs' sincerely-held religious beliefs.

101. The Defendants have no compelling reason that would justify discrimination based upon the Plaintiffs' religious expression and nature.

102. The Defendants' policy therefore violates the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as incorporated and applied to the states under the Fourteenth Amendment.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray that the Court grant the relief set forth hereinafter in the prayer for relief.

X.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION - VIOLATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE **UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION**

103. The allegations contained in all preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by reference.

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3 105. The Defendants' policy requires that government officials scrutinize private 4 speech and determine whether private speech or a private purpose is "religious," thus 5 impermissibly entangling government with religion. 6 106. The Defendants' policy demonstrates impermissible hostility towards religion. 7 107. Defendants have no compelling interest that would justify their hostility towards 8 religion. 9 108. The Defendants' policy therefore violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as incorporated and applied to the states under the 10 11 Fourteenth Amendment. 12 WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray that the Court grant the relief set forth 13 hereinafter in the prayer for relief. 14 XI. FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION - VIOLATION OF THE EQUAL PROTECTION 15 **CLAUSE UNDER THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION** 16 109. The allegations contained in all preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by 17 reference 18 110. The Equal Protection Clause requires that the government treat similarly-situated 19 persons equally. 20 111. The Defendants allowed similarly-situated organizations to use the Library 21 facilities and engage in a wide variety of speech and expression in the reserved facilities. 22 112. Based on their policy excluding "religious purposes," Defendants have refused to 23 allow Plaintiffs the same access to Library facilities. 24 113. Defendants have no compelling interest to justify their exclusion of the Plaintiffs. 25 The Defendants' policy therefore violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 114. 26 Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. 27 28 VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 13

The Defendants' policy expressly prohibits "religious purposes" for exclusion

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from Library facilities.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs respectfully pray that the Court grant the relief set forth hereinafter in the prayer for relief.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs request the following relief:

A. That this Court preserve the relative position of the parties by preliminarily enjoining the Defendants from ceasing their practice of allowing use of the Library meeting rooms by nonprofit organizations;

B. That this Court preliminarily and permanently enjoin the Defendants from enforcing their policy that expressly discriminates on the basis of religion;

C. That this Court enter declaratory judgment stating that the Defendants' policy is
facially unconstitutional and violates the Plaintiffs' rights as guaranteed under the First and
Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution;

D. If the policy is not declared facially unconstitutional, that this Court enter a declaratory judgment stating that the policy is unconstitutional as applied to the Plaintiffs and violates the Plaintiffs' rights guaranteed under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution;

E. That this Court award Plaintiffs nominal damages arising from the acts of the
Defendants as an important vindication of the constitutional rights at stake;

F. That this Court award Plaintiffs their costs and expenses of this action, including
reasonable attorneys' fees, in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 1988 and other applicable law;

G. That this Court grant such other and further relief as the Court deems equitable, just,
and proper;

H. That this Court adjudge, decree and declare the rights and other legal relations of the
parties to the subject matter here in controversy, in order that such declarations shall have the
force and effect of final judgment; and

I. That this Court retain jurisdiction of this matter as necessary to enforce the Court's
orders.

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VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 14

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1	Respectfully submitted on this, the 30th day of July, 2004,		
2	Attorneys for Plaintiffs,		
3	By:		
4	Terry L. Thompson		
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8	FRCP 7.1 CORPORATE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT		
9	This Corporate Disclosure Statement is filed on behalf of Faith Center Church		
10	Evangelistic Ministries in compliance with Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 7.1.		
11	Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries is a California non-profit religious		
12	corporation; it has no parent corporation and has not issued, nor will it issue, publicly held stock.		
13	Thus, no other corporation holds any stock in Faith Center Church Evangelistic Ministries.		
14	A supplemental disclosure statement will be filed upon any change in the information		
15	provided herein.		
16	Respectfully submitted on this, the 30th day of July, 2004.		
17			
18	By:		
19	Terry L. Thompson		
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	VERIFIED COMPLAINT - 15		