
Sweden: Church leaders write to government. Need for “more consistent anti-Covid measures. Why are only 8 people allowed in Uppsala Cathedral?

The leaders of the Christian Churches in Sweden have written to the Minister for Culture, Amanda Lind, calling for a “review of the inconsistent measures affecting religious communities”. “Daily restrictions on worship and other parish activities are painful, but are complied with in a spirit of solidarity to reduce the spread of the virus and protect life and health. But there is a sense of frustration”, the letter reads. “It is bizarre that a gym for the body can let people in according to the square metre rule, while a gym for the soul and the spirit can only admit eight people, regardless of its square metres of space and the air volume it can contain”. If the same criteria used for shops and other premises were applied to churches such as the Uppsala Cathedral, 273 people could be admitted instead of the 8 currently allowed. “We understand that many factors play a role in preventing the spread of the virus: the number of bathrooms, the design of entrances and exits, activities such as singing, the collection, and so on”, the letter reads: “We are aware of this and we are encouraging active responsibility in our communities”. There is, however, “a growing desire to meet again”, and virtual celebrations are “not enough”. We need the “more accurate measures” promised by the government. Since inconsistency “undermines confidence”, and “freedom of religion and the chance to practice it, individually and together, are a right enshrined in the Constitution”.

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