



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on December 19, 2017

Thousands Sign Petition to Ban Evangelist Franklin Graham From U.K.

Thousands of U.K. residents have signed on to a Change.org petition seeking to ban evangelist Franklin Graham from entering the United Kingdom for a scheduled September 2018 Christian gospel crusade in Blackpool, in northwest England.

More than 7,000 people have signed the petition so far, joining members of the British parliament in demanding that Graham, the son of iconic American evangelist Billy Graham and head of the [Billy Graham Evangelistic Association](#), be banned from the U.K. because of comments he has made calling homosexuality sinful and Islam a potentially dangerous religious faith. Those leading the petition drive charge that the comments violate U.K. hate speech laws.



Initially launched by the Reverend Nina Parker, a female pastor in Blackpool, the [Change.org petition](#) charges that “Franklin Graham supports a ban on all Muslims from entering the United States while advocating that Muslims already in living in the United States should be interned.”

Additionally, the petition alleges that Graham “has said that Russian President Vladimir Putin ‘is right’ in his crackdown against LGBT rights in his country where gay people are subject to severe human rights abuses. Atrocities and executions of gay people continue to go on in the Russian republic of Chechnya with no intervention from the Russian authorities. Franklin Graham has stated that gay children and gay people are dangerous and should not be allowed into churches or Christian homes.”

The virulently worded petition goes on to charge that, unlike his famous father, “Franklin Graham engages in outspoken bigotry targeting refugees, Muslims, and LGBT people. His father promoted unity and respect in communities, but Franklin Graham’s extreme views promote prejudice and division.”

Noting that religious leaders in Norway and Canada are protesting Graham’s scheduled speaking engagements in their countries, the petition insists that speech “likely to promote prejudice and hatred is grounds for the government to refuse a visa. Help us stop this man getting a visa to come here to spread his hatred.”

Commenting on her motivation for the petition drive, Parker told the online [Huffington Post](#) that allowing Graham into the U.K. for his Christian gospel event “will give oxygen to those who hate, as they will be aware of hatred being expressed by a man of high status in the Church. It will portray a Trump style, hard line, hate filled version of Christianity devoid of understanding of and acceptance of ordinary people. It will destroy the reputation of Christianity in this region as it will be assumed that this man speaks for all. It will bring Christians into disrepute.”



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Gordon Marsden, a member of Parliament who is part of the petition drive, said in an interview in November that “as a Christian, I have my own views on people who claim the authority of God and Jesus and then advocate attitudes which appear to be poles apart from what we’re told about in the Gospel.”

He added that “as a member of Parliament ... I have to be concerned about where extreme fundamentalism and where speech or opinions that might stir up hatred against groups of people goes. I think frankly the evidence is piling up that his visit to the UK, and certainly to Blackpool and Lancashire, would not be a good thing and not probably, in my view, a very a Christian thing.”

In response to the petition drive and efforts to stop the organization’s Blackpool Christian event, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association released a statement emphasizing that the scheduled crusade “will be a positive and encouraging event with music and also a message from Franklin Graham about the hope that can be found through a relationship with Jesus Christ. It will be free and everyone is invited to attend.”

LifeSiteNews.com noted that the efforts to ban Franklin Graham from the U.K. “contrasts sharply with the welcome his father Billy Graham received when he arrived in the UK in 1954. Between 1.5 and 2 million people in total turned out to the mass gatherings of the elder Graham’s ‘London Crusade.’”

Contrasting the effort to ban Graham, supporters of the evangelist and [global Christian humanitarian](#) have launched their own [Change.org petition drive](#), asking individuals to help ensure that the Franklin Graham evangelistic event goes forward as planned in Blackpool.

“Franklin Graham ... is due to come to England to preach,” reads the petition. “He’s following in his fathers footsteps in preaching the whole gospel in a clear way, sticking to biblical truths. Let’s stop the tide opposing him from coming here!”

Photo of Franklin Graham: [Cornstalker](#) via Wikipedia



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