



For Immediate Release

News Release

CITY OF AUBURN, NY, BANS CHURCH GLEE CAMP

Attorneys Defend Historic First Presbyterian Church and Its Legacy of Community Service From the City of Auburn, NY's Misguided and Discriminatory Zoning Ordinance

AUBURN, NY, December 22, 2014—Attorney Andrew Leja of Hiscock & Barclay LLP and the Liberty Institute filed a brief in defense of the First Presbyterian Church, a pillar of the community of Auburn, NY, for more than 200 years, against the City of Auburn for banning the church from holding a summer glee camp on its property. First Presbyterian Church is the target of a misguided and discriminatory zoning enforcement action by the City that harms the church's ability to carry out its mission in the community and has a chilling effect on similar faith-based activities on the church grounds.

Attorneys charge that the city officials' decision to order the church to cease and desist from having its summer glee camp is religious discrimination and violates the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA).

"We don't know why the City chose to discriminate against the Glee Camp," said Hiram Sasser, Liberty Institute Director of Litigation. "Cases like this one continue to set valuable precedent for churches across the country, and we look forward to this church once again offering its summer glee camp to the community it has faithfully served for two centuries."

"It is unfortunate that the Church must contend with legal issues during the Christmas season when we would much prefer to focus on the peace and joy Christ brings," said Reverend Eileen Winter of First Presbyterian Church.

The heart and soul of First Presbyterian Church of Auburn, NY is to serve God by serving its community. The church's sponsorship and promotion of artistic and charitable endeavors is an extension of its religious mission, and the Glee Camp is just the latest in a long line of endeavors in its extensive legacy of service to the people of Auburn.