

Parishioners want N.Y. church reopened

by UPI

RIVERHEAD, N.Y.-- Members of the Bethesda Wesleyan Church in Greenlawn, N.Y., say they want an Evangelical Christian denomination to reopen their religious facility.

Church members gathered in front of the Greenlawn church Sunday to offer prayers that Wesleyan Church International will decide to allow them to resume their religious practices in the chapel, Newsday said.

"We want the church to be opened," founding church member Marie Armand said. "We don't want to be outside. Nobody understands this."

"It is the Lord above who is responsible for what will happen to this church and to each of us," the Rev. Francois Pierre offered at Sunday's gathering.

Wesleyan Church International, which claims more than 400,000 members worldwide, used a Suffolk Supreme Court order to officially close the chapel two weeks ago.

The international organization alleges it legally controls the Greenlawn Church following a judge's ruling last August that awarded it ownership of the church, Newsday said.

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