



## Under police protection raiders seized the church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the village of Staraya Zhadova



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Supporters of the "Orthodox Church of Ukraine" seized the Church of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel in the village of Staraya Zhadova in Chernivtsi region of Ukraine.

According **to** the website "Orthodox Life" with reference to the press service of the Chernovtsy-Bukovyna diocese of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the raid on the church took place in the afternoon of the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2023. The seizure took place under the protection of men with covered faces brought in by bus, as well as by the police officers who "stood at the entrance to the church and did not allow parishioners to enter, giving the OCU supporters the opportunity to commit the crime of breaking down the doors of the church, entering and desecrating it".

The church of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel which is located in the village associated with the childhood years of Sergey Dumenko, head of the schismatic OCU, has been attacked by raiders more than once, the Union of Orthodox Journalists recalls. On the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2023, one of the schismatic "priests" **tried to cut the locks** off the doors of the church, but the parishioners managed to push him back. The lock on the church door **was** also broken in 2019, after which "OCU" activists broke inside. But then the parishioners also managed to defend their church from being seized.

The diocese believes that the seizure was **organised by** an official of the Chernivtsi regional administration, Mykola Gergelyuk. Earlier, the latter had already been **involved** in raiding other churches of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the region.

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