



St. Elijah's church of Ukrainian Orthodox Church seized with police assistance in Bukovina Village of Zabolotye



DECR Communication Service, 31.05.2025

On May 30, 2025, "clergy" and activists of the "OCU" (Orthodox Church of Ukraine), backed by police forces, stormed the premises of St. Elijah's Church belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the village of Zabolotye, Chernovtsi Oblast, Ukraine, forcibly seizing the church.

According to the Union of Orthodox Journalists' website, citing parishioners, the raiders pushed and beat believers, broke down the door, and violently entered the sanctuary. Meanwhile, police officers formed a human barrier on the church porch, shielding the assailants who were forcing their way in.

After the seizure, security personnel encircled the church to block access for parishioners. Members of the displaced community gathered near their church and held a prayer vigil.

Petro Andriychuk, a "priest" of the schismatic group from the city of Storozhynets who participated in the raid, was filmed aggressively arguing with female parishioners on the church grounds before kicking

one of the believers twice in a fit of anger. Police briefly intervened to restrain him, but he later returned to continue shoving parishioners.

Also present was Roman Hryshchuk, an "OCU chaplain" previously involved in multiple raids on Orthodox churches in Bukovina.

The raiders brought in food parcels, sleeping mats, and remained overnight inside the seized church.

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/93298/>