



Raiders seize Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Khmelnytsky Diocese using falsified documents



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In the village of Dashkivtsi in the Khmelnytsky region, supporters of the “Orthodox Church of Ukraine” (OCU), together with the police, forcibly seized the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Right-Believing Prince Alexander Nevsky, **UOJ reports**.

At around 3 p.m. on September 5, 2026, “OCU cleric” Petro Leskiv and local activist Oksana Barabash arrived at the church accompanied by two police units. The raiders cut the locks on the doors of the church building and entered the premises.

Earlier, they had unlawfully registered the religious community without the knowledge of the rector and parishioners: they renamed the religious organization, amended its charter and replaced its lawful head. Officials listed Oksana Barabash as the new head in the fictitious documents, replacing the lawful rector, Archpriest Sergiy Shpak. During the seizure of the church, the raiders used these falsified documents as justification for their actions.

The Khmelnytsky Diocese emphasizes that the law defines the actions of unauthorized persons who are not members of a religious community as gross interference in the internal activities of a religious organization. The law provides for legal liability for such violations.

The religious community of the Church of St Alexander Nevsky continues its lawful activities and has also stated its intention to defend its rights to freedom of religion in the courts at both the national and international levels.

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