

For many, May 16th was a Saturday like any other. But for the Reformed Baptist Church of Douglas County (RBCDC), this was a very special occasion: it was time to show their out-of-town visitors the fine art of informing the sinners of Eugene, Oregon of their depravity. Hot on the heels of the 8th annual Southern Oregon Evangelism Conference, the Roseburg Baptists and company were ready to practice their new evangelizing skills. With fresh fervor following days of impassioned sermons and workshops, it was time to approach one of the greatest cesspools of gay, satanic celebration: the Eugene Saturday Market.



To help market-goers understand their moral depravity, these

soldiers of so-called “God” brought signs, banners and business cards spelling out just what sin is and how it works – any slight infection can cause even the best-intentioned shopper of beets and pottery to be cast into a fiery hell.

For the practiced members of the RBCDC, this was not the first time confronting sinners of Eugene with the bad news of their final destination. For years, they’ve frequented the local Planned Parenthood, the University of Oregon campus, and the Farmer’s Market with graphic imagery of mangled fetuses, and lists of the top sins that will send you straight to hell. Near the top of the list: LGBTQ, abortion, fornication. And for years, the community of Eugene has made it clear that their rhetoric is not welcome.

In anticipation of the religious entourage, community members organized a counter demonstration to gather in opposition. A call to action quickly and quietly circulated through the Eugene community, and by the time the religious group arrived, an entourage of queers and accomplices were stationed on all four corners of the blocks at which the market is held. The group of 20+ were adorned in colors, costumes, and queer and trans pride flags. They held signs, banners and flags of their own in front of those brought by the other group, blocking the messages proclaiming that queer people are dangerous, satanic, and bound for hell. One man held a sign reading, “Make women meek, modest and submissive again”. His fiancée was also in attendance. As some of the men attempted to preach through the amplifier they brought, the sound was largely drowned out by chanting, kazoos, and other noise-makers the demonstrators had brought.

One of the demonstrators, Reb, is herself an ordained minister, and has faced off with some of these very preachers before and knows their words and faces well. Reb believes deeply in confronting groups like these directly, and that

ignoring them will not make them go away. "I'm doing this for the queer and trans kids who might see this," Reb states. "They need to know that their community won't let this happen." She continues this work in part to honor her father, Wayne, who passed away on Easter of 2025, and was deeply proud of her advocacy.

The religious group arrived around noon, and by 2pm the crowd of resisters had grown to 60+, and was joined by many people who were attending the market. An organizer of the resistance demonstration, Emma Serena Lavin, described the parade that formed to escort and serenade the Baptist coalition out of the market. A piano player began playing "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye," a saxophone player joined in, and before long the whole crowd was singing along as the group took their leave.



To Lavin, showing opposition to groups like these is not only in defense of queer community and their rights as a whole, but in defense of faith itself, stating, "If there's really a higher power worthy of the name, it has no need of fear, scapegoats, selective interpretation, and suppression or

domination. These people are declaring that the literal Creator of the Universe has less emotional intelligence than many five-year-old human children I've known, so clearly their version of God is just their own personal sock puppet, there to sanctify their own biases." Lavin adds that people who come to judge and dehumanize the community should at least take responsibility for their own bigotry. "If you came with love, you'd be welcomed."



This action was effective in making the evangelical group less welcome in the public community space, and the organizers and participants are hopeful that it will result in those groups being less willing to share their messages of condemnation and dehumanization. Direct confrontation of prejudiced and dehumanizing rhetoric towards marginalized groups – such as queer and trans people – sends the message that they can trust the community to stand up for them when it counts.

*Dissonant Times welcomes comment or response from any of the women or femmes that came with the evangelical group, as we don't believe they should remain silent or meek.*