



## **Judge acquits Christian charged with “criminal trespass” for preaching on public property**

*Schenectady police had arrested Christian man for handing out religious literature on public community college campus*

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ADF Media Relations | 480-444-0020

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SCHENECTADY, N.Y. — A Schenectady judge acquitted a Christian man Tuesday of the charge of criminal trespass after the man, the Rev. Greg Davis, was arrested in 2006 for sharing the Gospel on a public college campus. Davis was represented by the Alliance Defense Fund and ADF-allied attorney James Trainor.

“Christians have the same First Amendment rights as other citizens,” said ADF Senior Legal Counsel Brian Raum, who assisted in the case. “Thankfully the judge in this case restored the rule of law and cleared Mr. Davis of the charges, reaffirming that campus officials were not authorized to eject Mr. Davis from campus for simply exercising his First Amendment rights by preaching in public.”

Davis was arrested and arraigned in city court on a charge of criminal trespass on Sept. 8 after preaching outside on campus at Schenectady County Community College and handing out religious materials to passersby who would accept them. Assistant Dean of SCCC Michael Paul D’Annibale approached the area where Davis was preaching, known on campus as “the quad,” and demanded that Davis leave. When Davis refused, Schenectady police were called and an officer arrested Davis.

In his ruling acquitting Davis, the judge found that the state offered insufficient evidence to prove its case against Davis. The judge added that Davis posed no threat to D’Annibale, to police, or to students with whom Davis had interacted.

“The First Amendment right to free speech and religious expression is known as ‘our first liberty’ for good reason,” said Raum. “Our nation’s Founding Fathers placed a high priority on the ability to express one’s beliefs, both publicly and privately.”

A copy of the order issued by the Schenectady City Court in the case *The People of the State of New York v. Davis* can be read at [www.telladf.org/UserDocs/DavisAcquittal.pdf](http://www.telladf.org/UserDocs/DavisAcquittal.pdf).

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