



SatanCon, the Satanic Temple convention, comes to Boston this weekend

Description

USA: Hundreds of members of The Satanic Temple will be in Boston this weekend for SatanCon and organizers say it will be the largest satanic gathering in history.

The sold-out three-day event at the Marriott Copley Place will include satanic rituals, entertainment and discussion panels. There will also be a counter response. A Christian event called Revive Boston! will be held in the city this weekend as well. A truck with a Christian Action Network billboard was parked outside the Marriott Friday.



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The Satanic Temple organizers say they do not believe in Satan and shouldn't be confused with other satanic religions. Instead, the group says it advocates for the separation of church and state and

empathy for all.

“It’s about supporting human rights. It’s about supporting women’s bodily autonomy. It’s about freedom of religion, freedom from religion,” SatanCon attendee Richard-Lael Lillard told WBZ-TV. “Most don’t believe in Satan, not a literal Satan. It’s not some 1980s horror film.”



SatanCon attendee Richard-Lael Lillard in Boston, April 28, 2023.

“I understand the confusion, the fear. I really do, but at the same time, we’re a very misunderstood group,” said Suzanna Plum, who is in town from Pennsylvania for her first SatanCon. “We’re just like everybody else. We pay our taxes, we want our communities to improve and do better. We love our kids just like everybody else. We’re just normal people, we just believe a little differently,”

The milestone event, which marks the 10-year anniversary of The Satanic Temple, is dedicated to Boston Mayor Michelle Wu after the group wasn’t allowed to deliver a satanic invocation at Boston City Hall.

“Satanism is a very misunderstood religion,” said Dex Desjardins with The Satantic Temple. “A lot of people think we just picked the name Satan out of a hat to troll Christians or something, but we honestly don’t really care what anyone else thinks about us. So, we’re not doing anything to troll anybody.”

The mayor’s office responded in a statement that the mayor does not decide who does the invocation, adding “Neither Mayor Wu nor the City of Boston are sponsoring or affiliated with SatanCon 2023. Mayor Wu will be out of town this weekend.”

Boston’s Christian community is responding. Hundreds of Christians are expected to hit the streets to worship and pray, and some Catholic churches are passing out prayer cards.

“God loves everybody. God loves everybody whether you’re a Satanist or whatever background you

might be,” said Tim Nee with Revive Boston! “Satan is a deceiver. Anything other than Jesus is not the truth. So, I feel bad for these people, they’re deceived like anybody else, but the love of God is extended to them.”

A woman staying at the Marriott for a medical convention says she is relieved she’s heading home Friday.

“I think it’s a little odd but they’ve been very hospitable to people,” she told WBZ-TV. “I just think people’s opinions are going to get out of hand and I hope it doesn’t.”

“I don’t want to be judgmental, but it is unheard of,” said Betty Silva in Boston. “I hope they respect the churches’ boundaries.”

“I’m just more curious, like, what are they practicing or what the beliefs are,” said Jennifer Vo in Boston.

SatanCon organizers say, given past threats like when The Satanic Temple porch in Salem was set on fire last June, they will have robust security at the three-day event.

Both Revive Boston! and SatanCon will run through Sunday.

BY TAMMY MUTASA

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Date Created

05/02/2023