

In praise of Occupy St Paul's

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As the [Guardian reports tonight](#):

The traditional solemnity of St Paul's Sunday evensong was disrupted when four members of the Occupy London movement, which camped outside the cathedral for four months, chained themselves to the base of the pulpit.

While the choir sang, four women dressed in white shouted their own sermon to mark the anniversary of the start of the Occupy camp outside St Paul's, accusing the cathedral authorities of colluding with banks and turning their backs on the poor.

Occupy had been invited to read a prayer at the service, but if the gesture was an attempt at reconciliation, it was firmly rejected. After Tanya Paton, of Occupy Faith, had read her prayer, the group of women rose from their seats and chained themselves to the pulpit.

"In the fight for economic justice Jesus threw the money changers out of the temple, but you invited them in and instead evicted us," shouted activist Alison Playford. "Your collusion with the City of London Corporation led to our violent eviction on your doorstep. You testified against us which acted to uphold injustice and inequality that is growing by the day. St Paul's Cathedral you must stand up and be counted at this great trial of history."

A year ago I had the chance to be strongly critical of St Pauls, including on BBC1 news.

Giles Fraser came out of Occupy at St Paul's with dignity. Almost no one else in the CoE did, least of all St Paul's itself, [which has unedifyingly strong links with the City](#).

I applaud those making this protest tonight. They are right in three ways. They are theologically right to make this protest. They are spiritually right to make this protest. And they are ethically right to make this protest.

It is indeed time for St Paul's to have a Damascene moment. It can't come too soon.

