News 22 November 2026 | English article

UK Pastor Steve Maile Vindicated Today: Police Drop Case 7 Months After Handcuff Arrest in Watford

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"In the name of Jesus, get in the car."

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Hertfordshire Police have dropped the case against Pastor Steve Maile, the 66-year-old Watford street preacher arrested in double handcuffs on 18 April 2026 after preaching and questioning whether Islam is a religion of peace. The force confirmed no further action after seven months, saying the evidence did not meet the threshold to charge him. The case closure was announced on 16 November 2026, and the Christian Post covered it on 21 November.

A 66-year-old grandfather sang hymns on a Watford high street for ten minutes - then three officers handcuffed him, and seven months later the police admitted he had committed no crime at all. That is the whole story, and it took seven months of investigation to reach a conclusion Maile says he knew from the first minute.

Maile is a father of four and a grandfather, and he has been preaching for 45 years. He became a Christian in 1979, and he has preached in more than 50 countries and recorded five albums as a singer. In 1999, he founded Oasis City Church in Watford with his wife Karina, and he still leads it as senior pastor today.

On 18 April 2026, he was preaching peacefully on Watford High Street, singing Christian hymns and pop songs, when three Hertfordshire Police officers arrested him. They put the 66-year-old in double handcuffs. One officer was filmed shouting at him: "In the name of Jesus, get in the car."

He was detained for up to 12 hours.

He was first accused of assaulting a teenager - an allegation he strongly denied, which was quickly dropped. But the investigation did not end there. He remained under investigation for a Section 5 public order offence, described as racially or religiously aggravated disorderly behaviour, for questioning whether Islam is a religion of peace.

For seven months, the case hung over him and his family. He is a man with no previous criminal record, a pastor who had spent 45 years preaching in public without ever being charged. All the while, the question was simple: had he committed a crime by preaching the gospel and criticising another faith on a public street?

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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