The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow's Only Anglican Church Suspends Services

January 26, 2026



St. Andrew's Anglican Church. **St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Moscow / Telegram**

St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Moscow, the only of its kind in the Russian capital, has suspended religious services following an earlier dispute over who owns and runs the church.

"Services will not be held in the next few weeks due to the absence of persons authorized to conduct them in accordance with Russian law," the church said in a statement this weekend.

St. Andrew's also warned that "conducting services in the church building by individuals or groups connected to foreign religious organizations" has not been approved by the church and would violate Russian laws governing religious groups.

"The Diocese in Europe of the Church of England does not have the authority to manage Russian religious organizations or carry out religious activities on the territory of Russia," the statement reads.

St. Andrew's did not respond to a request for comment.

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Reverend Canon Dr. Arun John, who is originally from India, was appointed chaplain of St. Andrew’s in December 2024. Last year, he accused several members of St. Andrew’s of “illegitimately taking control of the administration and finances of the church.”

“This group has also tried to prevent the appointed Chaplain from getting a visa to return to Russia,” John wrote in a fall newsletter.

It was not immediately clear if that internal dispute was connected to the recent suspension of services at St. Andrew’s.

Established in 1825, St. Andrew’s consecrated its building in central Moscow’s Voznesensky Pereulok in 1885.

Soviet authorities confiscated the church in 1920 and used the building for various purposes, most notably as a recording studio for the state record label Melodiya.

The church resumed services in 1991 and was officially returned to the Anglican community in 1994.

St. Andrew’s is the only purpose-built Anglican church building in Russia. In other cities, like St. Petersburg and Vladivostok, the Anglican church rents out spaces for worship services.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/01/26/moscows-only-anglican-church-suspends-services-a91773