

TBN Theme Park Targeted for Gay Day

✖ Members of the gay and lesbian community plan to visit the Holy Land Experience in Orlando, Fla., Tuesday with hopes of bringing “a message of equality.”

The Bible-based theme park owned by the Trinity Broadcast Network (TBN) is legally required to drop its \$35 admission fee one day a year in order to receive certain property tax breaks. This year the park decided to host its free day just two days before the kick-off of Orlando’s Come Out With Pride week.

Kirk Hartlage, an Orlando-based DJ, is encouraging pride week supporters to visit the park on Tuesday wearing red. “By no means should we seek to disrupt the park’s daily activities; instead we should hope that our message of equality will be accepted in a place where tolerance and acceptance of all is said to be preached,” Hartlage said in a memo, according to the *Orlando Sentinel*.

Colby May, communications counsel for the Holy Land Experience, told *Charisma* the park would operate as usual on Tuesday. “The Holy Land Experience is opened to everyone and is designed to present all visitors with a glimpse into the events of the Bible during the time of Christ Jesus,” he said.

May said the date for the free day was randomly chosen. The park will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Update: Turnout for the free day caused traffic jams, and the park reached maximum capacity a half hour after the doors opened. TBN spokesman John Casoria said the park gave out

5,000 vouchers for those who couldn't make it in to come back within 30 days. Last year's free day drew roughly 900.

Casoria said he noticed only a few dozen people wearing red shirts, signifying their support for the gay pride week.

"We were welcoming them to come believing that it would be a very unique ministry experience for the park, for everyone," Casoria said. "The more people we get into the park and have a great experience here at the park, we know they'll come back and bring their friends and family. We see this as a very good thing."