

Pastor Challenges Sinning Couples to Marry With Free Wedding Offer

Free weddings for all. That's the word coming out of Parkcrest Christian Church. The Long Beach, Calif., church has announced a Free Wedding Weekend on Sunday, Oct. 2, at its Heartwell campus.

In an effort to challenge people in their congregation that are currently living together, but haven't made the full commitment to become a married couple, the non-denominational church is offering the opportunity for those couples to get married for free.

The three teaching pastors—Lead Pastor Mike Goldsworthy, Missional Life Pastor Rachel Oblon and Administrative Pastor Drue Boles—will be officiating the ceremonies at no cost to the couples. In addition, the Parkcrest church facility will not charge for use of their chapel. A free cake and punch reception will be held immediately following the ceremony.

Goldsworthy says he wasn't interested in telling people that it is not God's plan for couples to be living together without providing any options for them. "The cost and time it takes to plan a wedding are very real barriers to people committing to each other in marriage," he says. "We wanted to show people that we care about their futures together so much that we were willing to put time and money into helping them make this huge step."

Upon announcing the event at their weekend services Sept. 18 and 19, Parkcrest immediately saw couples step up with the desire to commit to each other in a life-long marriage.

Goldsworthy noted that the topic may be awkward for couples

living together to talk about at church, but he hopes the challenge will bring to light a very important topic that couples often intentionally ignore.

“It’s time to stop playing,” challenges Goldsworthy. “My intention is not to guilt people into getting married. Do it because you are a couple that wants to commit to each other. Do it because you are a couple that honors marriage. Do it because you are about life-long commitment and devotion to another person in marriage.”

The Free Wedding Weekend event is open to anyone in the community that is currently living together that would like to commit to each other in marriage. The only requirement is that couples must get their own marriage license and they must contact Parkcrest Christian Church by Sept. 28 to let them know they will be participating in the event.

Parkcrest Christian Church has three locations in the Long Beach, Calif., area. The main Heartwell campus is located at 3936 Woodruff Ave., and was established in 1951. The church has more than 2,200 regular attendees, and is led by Goldsworthy, who is just 33 years old.