

Nudist Believers Give New Meaning to Church Modesty

Many churchgoers feel pressure to dress in their Sunday best when they attend a worship service, but that concept is foreign to members of a small congregation in Virginia, who worship God in the nude.

At White Tail Chapel in Ivor, Va., members mostly attend church naked, but some go topless.

"There's not a feeling that you have to be better than one another, physically," pastor Allen Parker told WWBT NBC12. "We're humans, we have scars, we have what we have. ... It's learning to love and accept that."

The nontraditional church is part of White Tail Resort, a "family nudist community," according to its website. It opened in 1984 and is the only year-round nudist resort in Virginia. More than 10,000 people visited last year.

Katie Church wasn't a nudist when she met her husband, Robert, but she quickly fell for him and the resort. She embraced the nudist lifestyle, and the Churches got married at White Tail.

"Once we were married, and we were here, this whole place became our family," Katie Church told WWBT. "I feel like I can turn to anyone in this church, or even in this park, and they will be there to help me."

Her husband agrees. "People are more open as far as hearing the Word of God and speaking the Word of God," he says.

Parker argues that some of Jesus' biggest moments in life happened while He was naked.

"When He was born He was naked, when He was crucified He was naked and when He arose He left His clothes in the tomb and He

was naked,” Parker explained to WVEC ABC13. “If God made us that way, how can that be wrong?”

Parker agrees with resort visitors who say being a nudist is about being free from societal judgment in a stress-free environment where everyone is equal.

“I consider this a gift and a privilege God has given me,” he told WVEC. “They’re caring, they’re understanding, and they’re community and family-oriented. We have one of the most involved chapels anyplace around. I’ll put our church up against others around.”