

Pastor's Business Targeted, Event Canceled After Backlash

An event in the Seattle area has been canceled after activists issued complaints against a Christian coffee shop owner. The "Coffee with a Cop" event was intended to connect community members with local law enforcement officers.

"It was neither the department's nor the City's intent to make any community member feel unwelcome based on the selection of the event venue and the values that the venue may or may not hold. When planning future events, we will be more intentional with our venue selection," the City of Shoreline wrote on Facebook, explaining the event's cancelation. "Again, we are reaffirming our commitment to creating a thriving city that is Welcoming to All. Part of how we can do that is by listening to our community, taking feedback, be it negative or positive, and coming out better and stronger."

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The venue for the event, Pilgrim Coffee, is owned by Keith Carpenter, the pastor of Epic Life Church. Carpenter's beliefs are not integrated within his business, conservative radio host Jason Rantz reported.

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Speaking to Rantz, Carpenter said the event's cancelation due to his beliefs is "a form of discrimination, for sure."

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"I can deal with people posting negative things online. That's

just the way they are. They don't like everything about me or our church, and our coffee shop, and that's fine. But not just misunderstanding, but just blatant lies and calling us hateful, calling us every buzzword that can get people's attention," he said, adding that the business serves "anybody who walks in the door."

"We don't ask questions. So it's like a non-starter for us, because nobody's asking questions at the door. Anybody who walks in that space will get the same exact beautiful, generous, generously hospitable treatment. And probably the best cup they'll have all all month or all year," Carpenter said.

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