

Pastor Starts Church on Steps of Planned Parenthood

Pastor Ken Peters was faithfully leading his small church in Spokane, Washington, when a guest preacher's Sunday sermon grabbed his heart and prompted an unexpected response. That providential moment led to the creation of "The Church at Planned Parenthood" (TCAPP), a monthly gathering of Christians from various churches to worship God, boldly preach the gospel message and spend time in corporate prayer repenting for our nation and for the church's silence on abortion—while standing together outside of a Planned Parenthood clinic.

We spoke with Pastor Ken to learn more about TCAPP and to understand the impact that this church plant is having nationwide. Below is an edited transcript of our conversation.

Tell me about the pivotal moment that started TCAPP.

Ken Peters: Reverend Rusty Thomas of Operation Save America came to our church to stir us up about the murder of the unborn in our nation. He was preaching on when Jesus said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." He said, "If you have any worship leaders, have them go out to Planned Parenthood with a guitar and start worshipping. If you have any intercessors, get them out there praying. If you have any preachers, get them out there preaching."

I thought, *That sounds like church: preaching, worship, and prayer.* I felt like the Lord spoke to me and said, "Don't you dare plant another regular church until your next church campus is the church at Planned Parenthood, an outdoor church." I got up after the sermon and announced to the congregation that our next church was going to be a church at Planned Parenthood!

My guess is there was surprise and even concern after your passionate proclamation. Describe the reaction.

Ken Peters: My wife looked at me like I was crazy! And Reverend Thomas literally bent over. He said he had never heard of such an idea. It was so simple, yet so profound because he had just proclaimed that the church will win against the gates of hell. Quite frankly, after I made the announcement, I began to doubt. I was afraid. My church was supportive but they waited to see if I would follow through on my promise.

Two months later, in October 2018, you held the first service of the new church plant. What happened?

Ken Peters: I was expecting my wife and maybe 20 people to show up—maybe a couple of elders and deacons from the church because they felt obligated. But 175 people came for the first service! The church was so gracious—they followed their crazy leader and responded.

Describe the atmosphere at a TCAPP service.

Ken Peters: You can literally feel the spiritual warfare. When it's almost time to start, people are coming in from everywhere because they have to park in the surrounding neighborhoods and walk because Planned Parenthood won't let us use their parking lot. The police are there with five to eight police cars with their lights flashing. They have to put up barricades on both sides of the street because we've attracted a number of protesters.

Some might wonder if you are there protesting Planned Parenthood. Is your worship service directed toward Planned Parenthood?

Ken Peters: We are not a protest. We do not engage with the protesters. We are there to call upon the Lord. It's spiritual warfare, not warfare of the flesh. We are having church,

believing that the gates of hell will not prevail.

You are following the model of worship, prayer and preaching, but is your preaching geared towards pro-life issues?

Ken Peters: It's naturally going to be more focused on the life issue because we're right next to Planned Parenthood. If the preachers want to preach the gospel, that's what they do. A picture is worth a thousand words when you have Christians out there worshipping God. You don't have to say anything about life, but everyone knows why you are there.

TCAPP is growing across the country and there are other locations replicating what you started. Talk about your vision as this church is gaining attention and more people are learning about it.

Ken Peters: My vision is that the "bushel" is taken off the church. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world, a city on a hill." Either keep your light under a bushel or "let your light shine before men that they might see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." My ultimate goal is to see revival and to see the church activate.

Why do you think the church has been largely silent on abortion?

Ken Peters: I think it's become a political issue. Churches want to reach everyone. But they've stayed away from issues that might chase people away, instead of realizing that Christ Himself is the Truth and we don't need to be afraid of the Truth. I think we can speak truth boldly and not hatefully.

What has been the biggest cost to you in starting TCAPP? What's been the biggest gain?

Ken Peters: A year ago, I was a pastor with a cute family, a church and a Christian school. In the last year, I've been labeled a hateful bigot, an extremist that is a danger to society. We have had people come to our home church and stand

outside our doors protesting, screaming at our church people as they come and go. So that's the cost.

I never thought me making a difference would be starting a church at Planned Parenthood, but the Lord works in mysterious ways. I thought only 20 people were going to show up at our first service. Now we have 650 people and are on the front page of the newspaper.

The Lord's given me a prophetic voice in this nation through the craziest yet simplest of ideas. We've heard many, many stories of the blessing of The Church at Planned Parenthood.

Since our interview with Pastor Ken Peters, the Spokane city council is now considering an ordinance to essentially silence TCAPP. The ordinance could lead to fines of \$500-\$1,000 and up to 30 days in jail. Please continue praying for Pastor Peters and The Church at Planned Parenthood. {eo}

Megan West is Media Director of My Faith Votes, a nonpartisan movement that motivates, equips and activates Christians in America to vote in every election, transforming our communities and influencing our nation with biblical truth. By partnering with national faith leaders, My Faith Votes provides resources to help Christians pray, think and act to create an America where God is honored in the public square. My Faith Votes also has a free Voting Assistance Center that provides information on registering to vote, sample ballots, candidates, polling locations and more.

If you'd like to learn more about The Church at Planned Parenthood or to connect with Pastor Ken Peters, visit www.thechurchatplannedparenthood.com.