

Extravaganza explores Christian matrimony basics

By Victoria Elmore
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Planning a wedding can be a tough job for event planners and newly weds who are new to the task.

Friendship Missionary Baptist Church is hosting its fourth annual Wedding Extravaganza on Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. The purpose of the event is to help brides, grooms, and wedding planners implement Christian based principles into their wedding and marriage.

The idea was birthed out of women's confusion. Carolyn Lloyd, chairperson of the wedding ministry at Friendship said that many women were coming to church to be married and were clueless about how to carry out a Christian wedding.

Lloyd feels many brides prepare for weddings that aren't conducted from a Christian perspective.

"Many brides are not aware of the sanctity that

comes with bringing a wedding to a church. Brides today are internet literate, so they go to various websites or help," Lloyd said, "But they need to actually speak with professionals."

Brides will receive professional guidance at the Wedding Extravaganza. Vendors will be set up for brides to receive information about a variety of professionals in the wedding field. "Brides will have the opportunity to listen to professionals in the business. Professional vendors will help guide them into what to do," Lloyd said.

Lloyd believes that brides are not aware of what a Christian wedding should look and sound like. "A Christian wedding is a worship service. Brides and grooms are taking vows in front of the Lord," the Wedding Minister said. She feels couples need to understand what it means to walk down the aisle and get married.

In many ways the event is targeted to women but according to Rev. J.R. Covington, the Deivisional Minister of Spiritual Guidance and Wellness at Friendship, men play a major role in not only planning the wedding, but making sure the spark never dies. "Men to recognize that his wife is a precious jewel and what someone sees as precious they work to hold on to it," Covington said. "Men must seek the things that are important to his wife." The minister believes that men should realize that their wives are the most precious gift that they've been blessed with.

Covington will be one the speakers at the event. He will discuss the ways in which married couples can keep the glow lit in their marriage. Covington and Lloyd stressed their desire to teach couples the importance of vows and holding on to those promises. "The Wedding Extravaganza is

about planning a life together, not just one day," Lloyd said.

For the previous three years, the ceremony has been called Bridal Extravaganza. This year the name was changed to Wedding Extravaganza, so the importance of men involving themselves in the planning process would be evident. "We've found that the grooms are interested in the planning more than

they were before," Lloyd said. She said that men felt left out because of the name of the event, which was another reason for the name change.

The Wedding Extravaganza will stress the importance of a Christian wedding. During the event, speakers will cover topics that will define what it means to create a Christian wedding. "Christian ceremonies are based on the

principles of the Bible. The vows come from references in the Bible," Covington said.

Tony McNeil, minister of music at Friendship, will discuss the types of music that is appropriate for a Christian wedding. Nancy Stroud and Daisy Walker will discuss how the financial side of planning a wedding. They will expand was to create an inexpensive and elegant wedding.

Online site can locate church home

By Victoria Elmore
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Folks who are new to the Charlotte area might stumble across many stumps in the process of looking for a church home. Praisepreview.com is a website designed to help newcomers do just that.

When co-founders Ron Lewis and Earl McLaurin Jr. moved to Charlotte they discovered how difficult it is to find a church home, they sought a solution.

"The idea was born out of personal experience. I would go to churches randomly," Lewis said. "I just couldn't find a church that I was used to."

He said that he figured there are many other friends and family who feel the same way. "I decided to provide a way for people to preview a church before going to if it was efficient."

There are currently about 2,000 churches on the website with 25 of those churches

being in the Charlotte area. "Our main target is the Charlotte area. However, churches from Gastonia, Atlanta, and Fayetteville have become members of our site," McLaurin said. "We even have church from Arkansas that has added their information to our database."

Praisepreview.com allows people to search for churches throughout the Charlotte area. The website even provides a calendar for churches to list its upcoming events. Folks seeking a church home will be able to go to the Praise site and learn more about the church, its congregation size, and any other information that church placed on the site. "It's a ministry first and a business second. Praisepreview.com is a website for people to view churches and learn more about it," Lewis said.

The co-founders are excited about watching their vision of the website come to life and

many people are open-minded through the process.

"People have been encouraging us. We have not experienced any resistance," Lewis said. "We're optimistic that it's going to continue to grow."

McLaurin and Lewis received Christian guidance during creation of the website. "We asked Pastor Alexander about our vision for Praisepreview and he said it was awesome," McLaurin said. "In the very beginning we experienced difficulties because we partnered with the wrong person."

When we got further down the road (in building the site) we realized he didn't have the same vision," McLaurin said. The co-founder stressed the importance of partnering with people who share the same vision. "Our site is at enterprise level. It is strong and stable, with the most modern technology," McLaurin said.

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April, 2006 Newsletter - Part II

Several years ago, while teaching a Bible class, I was asked the direct question: Is God reproaching sinners today? My immediate answer was: "Right before my eyes." The unsaved religionist, no matter how orthodox, denies God's reprobation this way, as a preacher's wife in the family did: "I just can't imagine God hating anyone." I quoted the Word to her: "JACOB HAVE I LOVED, BUT ESAU HAVE I HATED." (Rom. 9:13) The preacher's wife sat there amazed, dumbfounded and not knowing what to say. It is partly because, in religious circles today, the religious leaders only teach on the love of God. Almost all religious leaders never teach on the hatred of God and God's reprobation. It will be an awful day when multitudes of you church members come down to press a dying pillow and find out the "god" you worshipped was Satan. And you'll have nothing to go out into eternity on. Cain was the first sinner in the Bible who was reprobated. God set a mark on Cain. (Gen. 4:11) I was visiting with an old retired school teacher several years ago and his wife and sick mother-in-law. His wife, in speaking of her sick mother, said: "As long as there is life there is hope." All my life I've heard that statement. If they mean that there is hope for a sinner to be saved as long as he is living, they simply have never learned God's reprobation. When God set that mark on Cain, there was no hope of Cain ever being saved. That was the curse set upon Cain. God does not curse His elect! Then look at Pharaoh of Egypt. The Lord hardened his heart. That was God reprobating Pharaoh. (Gen. 10:1) Sometime back we brought a study from God's Word listing some 14 verses which set forth so clearly that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. And yet preachers and Bible teachers will stand before their congregations and deny God's reprobation. I attended the funeral of my cousin's friend on Thursday (March 23, 2006). Not one preacher or religious leader there could tell how God saves a poor, lost sinner. Isn't that sad?

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Dr. Fred Gibson
Senior Minister

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1515 Remount Rd. • (Tel.)332-8335 (Fax)372-7548
28208

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Dr. C.V. Owens



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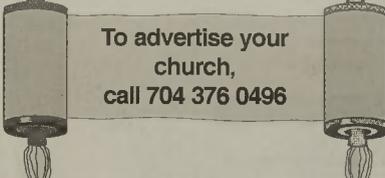
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