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Christians to take stand against porn

By: JENNIFER KABBANY - For The Californian
'Porn and Pancakes' breakfast set for Saturday

LAKE ELSINORE ---- Tides Church is known as one of the edgier places of worship, with its alternative music, a pastor who wears flip-flops, and a vibe that tends to appeal to a younger crowd.

So perhaps it should be no surprise that Tides is taking on a topic that had not until recent years been considered a proper subject of discussion in the pews: pornography.

On Saturday, the church is hosting a "Porn and Pancakes" breakfast. The event is scheduled for 8 to 10 a.m. at Lambs Fellowship Church in Lake Elsinore, and is open to boys and men only, ages junior high and up. A "Porn and Pastries" event for women will be scheduled for a later date, church representatives said.

The morning will include a comedian, testimony from a former porn star on the realities of the industry, and a sermon on the sometimes destructive nature of porn.

The event is part of "National Porn Sunday" and is sponsored by www.xxxchurch.com, an online ministry that started the annual event to help churches tackle the topic.

About 48 percent of Christian homes admit to having "a major problem" with porn, according to the Web site.

Participating churches can address the subject in a variety of ways, from a Sunday sermon to screening documentaries to hosting the breakfast.

In its third year, more than 200 churches across the nation have joined forces to host an event related to porn Sunday, which is designed

to "confront the elephant in the pew," according to organizers.

"It's a huge epidemic not only affecting men and women but also young children," said Bryan Johnston, lead pastor at Tides Church. "I feel it is something that is out of control and needs to be addressed."

National statistics show that about 40 million people visit porn sites online every day and that porn revenue is larger than the combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises.

Johnston said that from a secular perspective, pornography degrades women, causes relationships to fail, hurts marriages and creates unrealistic expectations.

"The porn industry tells us that women enjoy (degrading experiences)," the pastor said. "Women don't enjoy that. It's all fantasy and made up."

From a Christian perspective, the Bible does not condone sex before marriage, advises people to avoid immoral activities and states that even fantasizing about another woman or man while married is akin to adultery, he said.

Pornography can also be addictive, said Rocky Hill, owner of the Temecula-based Hill Alcohol and Drug Treatment center.

"It has a biochemical effect on the brain," Hill said. "It's almost a way for some to self-medicate."

Like any other addiction, after a while the brain needs more and more stimuli to be satisfied, which can lead people to visit more graphic or disturbing Web sites or further their addiction to phone sex and other outlets, he said. It can also lead people to waste their money to satisfy their cravings, he said.

Johnston said that those who attend the breakfast can expect "a relevant, hip presentation on the dangers of pornography."

"Just come and check it out," he said. "You are not going to be alone. This is not something for the porn addict, like you can only come if you are a porn freak. It's for anybody."

PORN AND PANCAKES

According to Tides Church officials, "Porn and Pancakes" is a breakfast and talk about issues surrounding porn from pastors and adult entertainment industry insiders. The breakfast is open to men and boys in junior high on up.

When: 8-10 a.m. Saturday

Where: Lambs Fellowship Church, 21901 Railroad Canyon Road, Lake Elsinore

Cost: \$8

Information: (951) 244-3199 and www.tideschurch.org

Statistics from XXXchurch.com

- Number of pornographic Web sites: about 4.2 million.
- People who visit porn Web sites daily: about 40 million.
- Breakdown of male/female visitors to pornography sites: 65 percent male, 35 percent female
- 30 percent of unsolicited e-mails contain pornographic materials.
- Women, far more than men, are likely to act out their fantasies in real life, such as having multiple partners, casual sex or affairs.
- Porn revenue is larger than the combined revenues of all professional football, baseball and basketball franchises.
- Porn revenue in the U.S. exceeds the combined revenues of the networks ABC, CBS and NBC.