

Christianity 'Not A Real Religion' According to LAPD as Cannabis Church Files Suit Against City of Angels

HOLLYWOOD, Calif., Feb. 14 (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – When Reverend Craig X Rubin was arrested at his house of worship he asked the lead LAPD officer for the special rights accorded to clergy under California Penal Codes 1524 and 1525, but was told by the officer that his Bible-based Judeo-Christian organization, that was recognized by the state of California, was “not practicing a real religion.” Temple 420 is a registered religious organization with the State of California (CA Corporation #C2791851) and Reverend Rubin has been ordained by a church that has passed the State’s organizational test in court. Members of the congregation use cannabis in their temple – a practice that has gotten them into trouble with the LAPD.

People know Reverend Craig X Rubin for the role he plays, as the owner of the medical marijuana club, on the hit show “Weeds” on Showtime; but what people don’t know is that he is a messianic Jewish preacher on the weekends.

Temple 420 on Hollywood Blvd. (www.Temple420.org) has services every Saturday and Sunday at 4:20 p.m. The Old Testament is taught on Saturday and the New Testament on Sundays. The unusual thing about Temple 420 is their faith that cannabis is the “Tree of Life,” spoken about in several places in the Bible; most notably the Book of Genesis and the Book of Revelation, where it describes the leaves of this plant as being, “for the healing of all nations” because cannabis, sometimes called hemp, is so versatile as a natural resource.

“Ending the prohibition on cannabis will get us out of the Middle East sooner,” claims Reverend Rubin, “because we can use cannabis to make fuel, thus making us more energy independent. The President keeps talking ‘switch grass’ and I know which grass he should switch. Henry Ford built a hemp car that ran on hemp fuel back in the 1930s.”

The congregation feels burning the Tree of Life reminds them to follow the Laws of God, the Ten Commandments, that emanated from a burning bush. Further, they use the smoke of the plant as an intercessory to carry their prayers to God. Both Jewish and Christian members of the sect agree that cannabis is the Biblical Tree of Life and wonder why they are treated differently than the Catholic Church who actually did recently commit crimes and allegedly covered them up.

“Could you imagine the type of paramilitary force that invaded our temple, kicking down the doors of the Catholic Church to get information on alleged pedophile priests – yet that is exactly what they did in our house of worship.” Officers kicked their way into the sanctuary with weapons pointed, without the slightest thought or care of putting their paramilitary boots on the Holy Cross and Star of David on the custom made temple doors. The

Reverend continued, "I was taught in California public schools all the way through graduating from UCLA. I have seven children, have no criminal record, and yet without a conviction the LAPD has seized all of my personal assets, leaving my family penniless and about to be homeless."

February 13, 2007 the Reverend responded as the City of Los Angeles tried to permanently seize control of the Reverend's life savings. He had 30 days to respond or his worldly assets became their property. When filing his response and requesting a quick resolution he was told by Sharon Terry of the District Attorney's Office, "Not to expect a hearing anytime soon" as the City was busy. Meanwhile, the Reverend and his family are being evicted, as their assets are held for an indefinite period of time, and the Temple's only income comes from donations via the Internet.

According to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the authorities can only use "the least restrictive means necessary" if they feel a religious organization is violating rules of general applicability. That is why Reverend Rubin has filed a complaint with the LAPD (CF07-000151) and has given notice to the city of his intent to sue for religious discrimination and violations of his civil rights. The complaint alleges that Officer Trayce Fields knew on August 25, 2006 that Reverend Rubin was an ordained minister teaching the Bible at his Hollywood Temple and she did not give that information as required by law to the judge who issued the warrant.

"American churches should be concerned about religious freedoms at this time in our history. That is why I took this case. Temple 420 is reaching people other churches don't," says defense council La'Chelle Woodert, as she represents Reverend Rubin, who is facing seven years in prison for his religious beliefs.

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