

| PENTECOST

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2021

WAVES of PENTECOST UNITY

SWEEPING FROM CALIFORNIA ACROSS THE NATION

BY MEESH FOMENKO

During a late-night devotional session in the winter of 2021, Pastor Mark Francey of Oceans Church in Orange County, California, stumbled upon a passage that would ignite a movement across California and beyond. It was a story about the largest water baptism in American history, a monumental event at Pirates Cove in Corona del Mar, California, in August of 1990. Around 3,000 people were baptized by 100 pastors, and many were part of the Jesus Movement that started in the 1970s. Inspired by the story, Francey felt a divine whisper stirring, urging him to replicate this historic baptismal gathering. Little did he know this whisper would catalyze a movement reverberating across denominational and geographical borders.

As Francey read about the throngs of people descending upon Pirates Cove, his spirit stirred with an inexplicable sense of divine urgency. It was as if the very voice of God resounded within him, echoing through his soul: “Mark, I’m going to do this again.” With closed eyes and a humble heart, Francey beheld a vivid and compelling vision of Pirates Cove teeming with boats and people, recognizable faces from his own congregation among them. And then, like a gentle whisper, came the question that would alter the course of his ministry forever. He heard the Holy Spirit say, “Mark, would you do this for me? Would you organize this event? Would you bring my body together? Would you gather the church of California and help host the largest water baptism in American history to inspire America? If I can do this in California, I can do it in any other state.”

A Movement Is Born

Thus began the journey of Baptize SoCal in 2023, Baptize California for 2024 and Baptize America in 2025, a movement birthed in the depths of prayer and fueled by a relentless passion to see the church united in the power of Pentecost. It was a vision for a single event, then a revival sweeping across California and beyond, igniting hearts and souls with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

“When we announced it, everyone was really excited. We had no idea that a movie for ‘The Jesus Revolution’ would come out six months later, making everyone even more eager to join in. It set the stage for a big campaign, making people want to be baptized at Pirates Cove to be a part of California’s history with God,” Francey says.

The inaugural Baptize SoCal event in May of 2023 exceeded all expectations. Over 200 churches participated, with 30 pastors in the ocean baptizing over 4,000 individuals who descended upon Pirates Cove; the unity and revival were profound. People from all walks of life converged to participate in this mass baptism unlike any other. From entrepreneurs to drug

dealers, children to the elderly, the waters of Pirates Cove bore witness to a profound outpouring of faith and unity. It was a moment of divine significance—a glimpse of Pentecostal power in the 21st century.

But the impact of Baptize SoCal extended far beyond the shores of Pirates Cove. A seismic event sent shockwaves of revival throughout Southern California and beyond as people flew in from across the country to be part of this historic occasion. And as they emerged from the waters of baptism, their faces radiant with joy and newfound faith, it was clear that something extraordinary was happening—a divine intervention orchestrated by the hand of God.

In a whirlwind of faith and determination, stories of transformation and dedication unfolded at Baptize SoCal, of the power of community, belief and the call to take the next step in one’s spiritual journey. Among the remarkable tales shared, Francey recounted an extraordinary encounter with a man who journeyed all the way from Arizona to partake in the baptismal waters.

“I baptized a guy who flew out from Arizona,” Francey recalls. “He saw the advertisement we had done on social media that week. He lived in Phoenix, and he literally had Sunday off



from work. So, he hopped on an airplane.”

The intensity of the man’s commitment was palpable as he made his way to Pirates Cove, driven by a desire to fulfill his spiritual calling. “He told me, ‘I’ve been wanting to get baptized. I’m ready to take the next step,’” Francey says, reflecting on the man’s resolute determination. “He gets on an airplane Sunday morning, lands at noon, gets to Pirates Cove at 1:30, gets baptized at 4:00 p.m., and then literally gets back on an airplane at 6:30 p.m. and goes home.”

Over the rushing tides and the jubilant cries of celebration, the profound significance of baptism manifested itself in the tears of joy streaming down the man’s face as he emerged from the waters. “It was truly a special baptism, and there were many other incredible stories just like his,” Francey shares.

Indeed, the event was a testament to the community’s

inclusivity and compassion, exemplified by the provision for individuals facing physical challenges. “We had people who were paralyzed getting baptized. We had a special baptismal tank area for them,” Francey explained, on the commitment to ensuring that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, could partake in this sacred rite of passage.

Pentecost 2024 and Beyond

Building upon the inaugural event’s success, Baptize California in 2024 will have over 300 churches from 58 counties across California hosting baptismal gatherings simultaneously. From the redwood forests of Eureka to the sun-drenched beaches of San Diego, those who want to be baptized will gather to participate in this collective expression on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 2024.

“We aim to baptize 30,000 people this year. Next year, I believe we could baptize 300,000 people or more. What we do here in California can affect America so that we can baptize millions in one day,” Francey says. “So, if the body of Christ will work together, we’ll get close enough to start loving each other and not believing the worst about one another. That’s what I’m excited about,” he concludes.

Baptize California will be more than just a series of events; it’s a movement of the Holy Spirit, a manifestation of Pentecost power in the modern era. In churches, large and small, believers experience the transformative power of baptism as old divisions are cast aside and hearts are united in worship and fellowship.

“Baptize California isn’t just for California. It’s for every church, pastor and believer who wants revival and unity,” said Pastor RayGene Wilson from West Coast Life Church in Murrieta, California.

Baptize California will establish its headquarters event in Huntington Beach, California. Pastor Francey unveiled another thrilling aspect of the event, a sprawling festival stage set to create a splash in the coastal city. “We’re excited about this huge festival stage set up at Huntington Beach,” Francey divulged.

But beyond the musical extravaganzas, Baptize California harbors a deeper purpose rooted in outreach and inclusivity.

Francey illuminated the significance of a dedicated time for the Latino community, featuring esteemed Latino artists and the influential voice of Pastor Samuel Rodriguez, who will deliver a message of hope and salvation.

“Pastor Samuel Rodriguez will be here; he’ll be preaching the gospel in Spanish,” Francey revealed, on the event’s commitment to reaching diverse audiences and fostering unity. But Francey’s vision goes beyond California, seeing Baptize Cali-



fornia as the start of something bigger, a movement that will spread to other states and countries. The main goal is to bring Christians together to share the message of Jesus and help people become followers of Christ through baptism.

Christmas, Easter and Pentecost

Looking ahead, Francey imagines a future where people worldwide gather on Pentecost Sunday as one of the three primary holy days of the faith, along with Christmas and Easter. They’ll worship, tell others about Jesus and baptize many new believers. This vision of unity and a powerful spiritual awakening when the church brings hope and change to a needy world is a vision of unity and a powerful spiritual awakening.

The Baptize California team is already planning for the years to come, believing next year will be Baptize America on Sunday, June 8, 2025, with baptism movements in multiple states across the country. The team plans to expand internationally in the following years, resourcing and uniting churches in multiple countries and continents.

Pastor Francey believes this movement will go beyond borders and differences. It will unite Christians worldwide under the idea of Pentecostal unity. The ultimate goal? A global revival, a huge wave of

spiritual change touching every corner of the globe, touching every heart and soul.

“I really think it could be on the heels of a global water baptism movement that will prepare the earth for the second return of Jesus Christ, the prayer of John 17; Jesus prays for all of us believers. The prayer of Jesus was unity and was to make them one as we are one. When you look at the landscape of the body of Christ, even with Baptize California, we have Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Charismatics and everyone in between. It really is one of the central doctrines of all believers that we can agree on,” he said.

As Pentecost Sunday 2024 approaches, believers across California prepare to gather in churches, beaches, lakes, oceans, pools and stadiums to participate in this sacred tradition. It is a moment of anticipation, a holy expectation of what the Holy Spirit will do in their midst, for they know that in the waters of baptism, they will find forgiveness and renewal and the power to transform lives and change the course of history.

In churches everywhere, believers will sing and worship, celebrating God’s goodness and the triumph of the cross. They’ll step into baptismal waters with faith and hope, aware they’re part of a divine movement bringing revival and renewal across the land.

Pastor Francey wants to make Pentecost a day when everyone recognizes its significance, especially those who don’t know God yet. He states, “We envision Pentecost as the day people flock to churches for baptism, just as they do for Christmas and Easter. It’s about emphasizing the importance and goodness of baptism to those without a spiritual foundation. By prioritizing Pentecost as a day of unity, we honor the birth of the church, rooted in powerful gospel preaching and the symbolic act of water baptism.”

For information about Baptize California, visit <https://baptizecalifornia.com>.

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