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Sexual misconduct charge rocks Harnett County church

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BENSON, N.C. — A Harnett County church was rocked this weekend by allegations of sexual misconduct against its pastor.

Paul Burke Johnson, 74, who is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Dunn, was arrested Thursday on a charge of sexual battery.

Johnson did not show up at church Sunday.

"Right now everybody is just confused, upset. Everybody is in tears," church member James Norris said. "It's a tough time for everybody."

Norris said he helped Johnson meet a \$20,000 bond to be released from jail.

"He was very confused, upset with everything going on. I'm not going to say he was a wreck, but it was tough on him," he said.

Benson police, who are investigating the case, haven't released any details about the allegations. Sources close to WRAL, though, said the incident happened at a nursing home.

"He was at the nursing home," Norris said. "What was he doing there? Well, he's a pastor. He goes around and prays, and he visits the sick."

Johnson is also on the Board of Ministers for the Campbell University Divinity School. University President Jerry Wallace said he had just heard of the allegations and wasn't prepared to comment on them.

Members of Calvary Baptist said they are praying for direction.

"We're just trying to come together as one and see Dr. Johnson and everyone through this thing," Norris said.

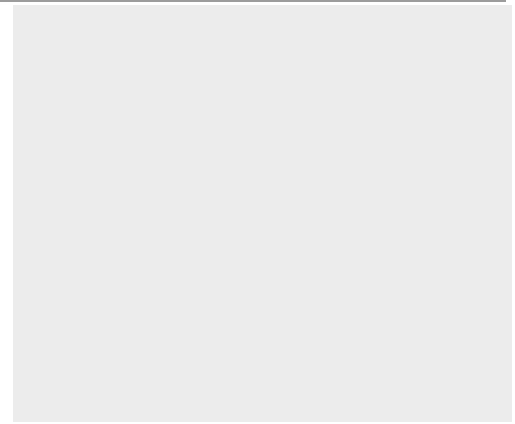
Johnson is due to appear in court Monday.

- Reporter: [Sloane Heffernan](#)
- Photographer: [Greg Hutchinson](#)
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Guilty until proven innocent! The poor man might have been helping the person not assaulting them. If you have ever been to a nursing home you would know that the patients dont get the proper care anyway , so when someone comes around that will help they get them. Let's wait and see what happened first!

carroln

March 28, 2011 10:53 a.m.

How about we let him have a fair trial and be convicted prior to condemning him? He is innocent until proven guilty. I don't care if he is a Baptist minister of a Muslim terrorist, he is innocent until proven otherwise. In case some of you have forgotten, thats the way our system works.

Mr. Middle of the Road

March 28, 2011 10:29 a.m.

sure seems like there are a lot of perverts hiding behind the 'church'

wakeforest914



GOLO member since December 15, 2009

March 28, 2011 10:25 a.m.

For anybody who wants to jump to conclusions -- there isn't nearly enough information given to even speculate as to what, when, where and how something may have happened with this pastor.

deutschgirl89



GOLO member since September 24, 2010

March 28, 2011 10:19 a.m.

I have decided that cases like this should not be reported on with blazing headlines like WRAL loves to do. It doesn't matter if this man is innocent,his life is ruined.If he is guilty.....then he should be punished by the judicial system, not the media.Nursing home residents are easy prey, but elderly people can be easily confused and misinterpret actions.We need to protect the vulnerable (young and old)without casting blame recklessly.

mdwrfw

March 28, 2011 10:17 a.m.

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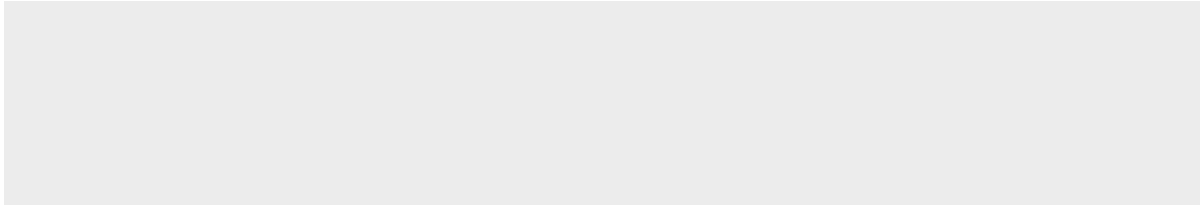
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