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Georgia pastor to address lawsuit allegations

By the CNN Wire Staff
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Fourth lawsuit filed against pastor

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Pastor Eddie Long will address his congregation Sunday morning

He has denied allegations he coerced men into sexual contact

Four lawsuits were filed in DeKalb County, Georgia, this week

Atlanta, Georgia (CNN) -- Five days after the first of four lawsuits claiming he coerced young males into sexual relationships was filed, Georgia pastor Eddie Long will take to the pulpit Sunday to tell his side of the story.

Long, who led the growth of the Atlanta-area New Birth Missionary Baptist Church to 25,000 members, is expected to speak on the matter during the 8 a.m. worship service and again at a 10 a.m. news conference. The church also has an 11 a.m. service.

The pastor, on the advice of his lawyers, has had little to say until now.

"Let me be clear: The charges against me and New Birth are false," Long said in a statement released Thursday. "I have devoted my life to helping others and these false allegations hurt me deeply, but my faith is strong and the truth will emerge."



The four men who brought lawsuits this week in DeKalb County, Georgia, State Court claim that Long took them on overnight trips to various locations within the United States and beyond, sharing a room and engaging in sexual contact with them, including massaging, masturbation or oral sex.

The lawsuit filed Friday by a Charlotte, North Carolina, man says Long uses church money and other accounts to entice young men with cars, clothing, jewelry and electronics.

Long's spokesman and church members say it is appropriate he first speak in detail about the civil lawsuits with his church family.

"I stand behind the bishop because of the leader that he is. He is a

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true leader. The word that he gives is so rich, it is so life-changing," New Birth member Gary Foster Jr. told CNN Saturday night.

He and two other young church members said Long is family-oriented, a mentor and a respected leader who has helped families and individuals.

Gabrielle Richards, who has attended New Birth for nearly eight years, said she has seen no evidence that Long is a sexual predator.

A former New Birth employee said he hopes the allegations are not true, but he wants to hear from Long so that the "cloud of suspicion over him can be dispersed."

"The information is certainly damaging," Kevin Bond said. "The evidence ... all of that is very troubling to many of us in the gospel community, the Christian community."

A Facebook page in support of Long had more than 6,000 members Saturday night.

CNN's Don Lemon contributed to this report.

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DFTycoon · 3 years ago

The IRS needs to go after this crook. All religious organizations should pay tax.

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jerrykansas · 3 years ago

Forget all the allegations...He wears designer suits, takes lavish trips and drives a Bentley his followers are F**king stupid. This man is not meek, this man is not humble, this man will lead all his cattle to where ever he wants and they will go because he carries a title of "pastor" again his followers are FOOLS! His followers should be ashamed

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Thomas LoCurto → jerrykansas · 3 years ago

You know, if the sheep happily follow the sheaperd into the slaughter house ignoring any warning, well, how bad can you really feel for them? If they know how he dresses, takes his trips and know he drives a Bentley, their dumb asses deserve to lose out on money.

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highfive · 3 years ago

He's not gay!.....But his boyfriend is.

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freestinker → highfive · 3 years ago

He will seek out "da lawd" and obtain forgiveness. Then he will continue to milk the flock of its cash.

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think4ursef · 3 years ago

five days is way too long tp let this story spiral out of control. if he felt he needed to address the church members first, he should have called a special service.

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Chalupa · 3 years ago

Eddie Long is busted. As a buddhist monk said several hundred years ago "I fear those who speak often of integrity, for they seem to have the least".

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AusieSceptic2 → Chalupa · 3 years ago

Hockey, old chap,your comment on the the buddhist quote above shows your inability to read,

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Hockeyhappy → Chalupa · 3 years ago

Oh yeah, like the buddhist never do anything wrong - please!

1 | · Share >



xrev · 3 years ago

Well he has 6000 facebook supporters already! That only leaves 19,000 more from his congregation who need to sign up... or will they? If nothing else, he should at least get some supporters who want to see him in his spandex again.

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REB1 · 3 years ago

I think the majority of "anti-gay conservatives" are just trying to hide the truth about which they swing. Homophobia is the sin.



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