



## Youth pastor accused of sexual relations with young girls fired, arrested

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By David Whisenant - bio | email

SALISBURY, NC (WBTV) - At a recent church service at High Rock Community Church, the senior pastor told church members that a staff member had been fired for having sexual relationships with young girls.

Now that staff member, youth pastor Torrey Morgan, is in jail on charges of disseminating harmful material to a minor under 18 years of age, (felony) disseminating harmful material to a minor under 16 years of age, 2 counts of (felony) indecent liberties with a child, and (felony) second degree sexual exploitation of a minor.

This investigation continues, with more charges possible, according to Sheriff Kevin Auten.

"Unfortunately, I have some sad news to share with you today," senior pastor Ray Johnson told church members. "Many of you know Pastor Torrey, the East Campus Pastor and former Student Pastor. He has admitted to extensive sexual immorality. He managed to hide these relationships from me and from the rest of staff."

"It is the primary responsibility of our leadership to look after the well being of the people at High Rock Church. Therefore, as a result of his confession, we have released Torrey from his position of pastor and revoked his ordination. We are still trying to discover the full scope of the circumstances, and there may be other actions placed against him. We will keep you posted as things develop," Johnson added.

According to the sheriff, in June, the Rowan County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division was alerted to possible inappropriate behavior by a youth leader, at the High Rock Community Church, located on Bringle Ferry Road, near Salisbury. The complaints were from female teenage members of the church, and involved allegations of sexual activity and advances, made by Morgan, 36, of Crawford Road, Salisbury.

Morgan was given a \$50,000 secured bond and was placed in the Rowan County Detention Center. Morgan made bond a short time later and was released from custody.

Anyone with information concerning this case is asked to contact 1st Lt. Chad Moose, of the Rowan County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigation Division, at (704) 216-8687.

"High Rock is a family and when one family member hurts, we all hurt. Please pray for Torrey, his family, and all who are involved during this difficult time," Johnson told church members. "God has done amazing things over the 9 years of High Rock's existence. We believe we are on the cusp of seeing God do even greater things across all of our campuses, especially with the launch of our newest campus in Myrtle Beach just 68 days away.

"Wherever God is at work, you can be sure that the enemy is at work as well. Satan has thrown everything at us, including the kitchen sink, to stop this amazing work of God."

"I encourage you not to let Satan use the sins and mistakes of one man to separate you from what God is doing in the hearts and lives of so many others," Johnson said.

High Rock Community Church is a popular church with multiple locations that began on Bringle Ferry Road in eastern Rowan County. According to the church web site, there are now locations in Albemarle, Harrisburg, Kannapolis, Mooresville, two in Salisbury, Wilkes County, and a new location set to open in Myrtle Beach.

"Ultimately, we want to communicate a caring God to an ever-changing culture and to be an optimistic, practical, grace-filled church that honors the teaching of Jesus Christ," reads a statement on the church web site.

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