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Ex-Minister Sentenced for Molestation

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A former Tulsa County minister accused of molesting a teen-age church member was sentenced Friday to five years in prison. Steve Lamberson, 35, pleaded no contest April 3 to two molestation counts.

Tulsa District Judge Ned Turnbull refused to grant any probation, but agreed to review the sentence in four months.

Lamberson, a resident of the Mounds area, was pastor and principal of Liberty Heights Free Will Baptist Church and academy in south Tulsa County when the offenses occurred, said a report by Sheriff's Deputy Gary Ross.

Lamberson was charged in 1994 with molesting a girl -- now 18 years old -- in December 1991 and March 1992, when she was 14 and 15.

Lamberson "is no longer in the preaching business," defense attorney Fred Schraeder said when a plea agreement was reached in April, halting jury selection for a trial.

Lamberson, who performed 80 hours of court-ordered community service, was jailed Friday. He had been free on \$3,000 bail for more than a year.

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