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## Ex-Youth Minister Gets 10 Years For Sex Crimes

### Man Had Illegal Contact With Boys At Anderson Church

POSTED: 5:39 p.m. EST November 14, 2002  
UPDATED: 3:33 p.m. EST November 21, 2002

**ANDERSON, S.C.** -- A former Anderson County youth minister was sentenced Thursday morning to 10 years in prison for multiple sex crimes involving children at the church where he worked.



Circuit Court judge J.C. Nicholson also sentenced James William Bell to five years of probation and ordered him to take part in a sexual offender treatment program.

Before the sentencing, a spokeswoman for the victims asked Nicholson treat this case as if it were his child who was violated.

"It's really tough for the families. They entrusted their little boys," 10th Circuit Assistant Solicitor Joy Davis told court. "They sent them to church and he was supposed to be teaching them about Christ and all along he was sexually assaulting them."

Bell, 26, pleaded guilty on Nov. 14 to two counts of second degree criminal sexual conduct with a minor, four counts of lewd acts on a child under 16 and one count of contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Bell was a youth minister at Mount Tabor Baptist Church in Anderson County for a year and a half before his arrest.

Bell told the judge that he instigated sexual encounters in the church gym and at his condominium between April and November of last year.

Four boys were involved.

Bell originally was scheduled to be sentenced last Friday, but the hearing was delayed.

He must serve at least 85 percent of his term or 8-1/2 years.

#### Previous Stories:

- February 9, 2002: [Ex-Youth Minister Faces Sex Charge](#)

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