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Former Douglasville minister accused of sexual contact with staffer

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By Rhonda Cook

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

A former Douglasville pastor was released from jail Friday after spending a night there on charges of having inappropriate sexual contact with a member of the staff at the church and school that is one of the oldest private Christian academies in Georgia.

Four misdemeanor charges of simple battery against the Rev. Bill Winger involve one woman on the Kings Way staff and are detailed in the charges brought by the Douglas County solicitor general.

Three counts accuse him of having unwanted physical contact with the woman by "grabbing and hugging" her. The fourth charge was that he made "physical contact of an insulting and provoking nature" when he pressed against her with a part of his body that was aroused. The events detailed in the accusation are alleged to have happened between August 2012 and February 2013.

Each charge carries a maximum punishment of 12 months in jail.

Winger was arrested Thursday night and he posted a \$10,000 bond Friday afternoon following a brief court appearance. No other court date has been scheduled.

One of the conditions of his release was that he have no contact with members of King's Way Baptist Church or employees of the school. Winger must have a psycho-sexual evaluation and receive treatment if necessary.

A call to Winger's house Friday afternoon was not answered.

"The Douglas County Sheriff's Office spent the past 10 months investigating this individual," Solicitor General Matthew Krull said. "It is my job to make sure that everyone in Douglas County is afforded the opportunity to live free of unwanted and unsolicited physical contact."

Krull said there were other accusers but his office decided to prosecute Winger just on the allegations of one woman, whom The Atlanta Journal-Constitution is not identifying because of the nature of the charges.

Krull said Friday the investigation did not involve any allegations that Winger targeted children.

Winger resigned last October after 15 years at the church when allegations surfaced that he had sexually abused children in Michigan 20 years ago. He was never charged on those allegations.

King's Way school administrator Ray Conway notified parent in a letter last October of Winger's resignation.

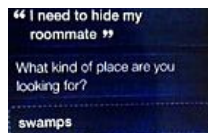
"Pastor Winger will no longer be involved in the ministry of The King's Way Baptist Church and King's Way Christian School," Conway wrote.

"The allegations and charges that are surfacing on the internet today were events that occurred while Bill Winger pastored in Michigan 18 years ago," Conway wrote. "As administrator, I am not aware of any accusations, by students or minors, made against the King's Way Baptist Church or any of the ministries."

King's Way Baptist Church has a congregation of about 1,000 and there are about 350 students enrolled in its school, which offers classes for students from pre-K through 12th grade.

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