

Colorado pastor jailed

The Assemblies of God minister critically injured a child

A Denver area minister who left his family and his congregation to meet a New Jersey woman he met on the Internet could face a four-year prison term. Bradley Wayne Dorsey, 35, pleaded guilty to second-degree aggravated assault after critically injuring the woman's 2-1/2-year-old son by shaking him during the 1999 meeting with the mother. Sentencing was scheduled for early June.

Dorsey was pastor of High Plains Christian Center in Strasburg, Colo., a farming community of about 2,000 people 38 miles east of Denver. Georgia Hamilton, a writer for Eastern Colorado News, told Charisma that church members were dismayed and a little shocked by their pastor's actions.

"But people in rural areas are pretty resilient," she added. "If you happen to be a Christian, you forgive and continue on. That's pretty much what the community has done."

Bob Cook, superintendent of the Rocky Mountain District of the Assemblies of God, said the church appears to have weathered the storm. But he added that the results of such sin could go deeper than what is seen on the surface. "The fallout could be generational," he said. "People may have been lost to the kingdom. I'm grieved by it."

Church leaders grapple with how to prevent this type of thing, Cook added. "All of us are asking why we didn't pick up signals," he said.

Cook said Dorsey was a young pastor with much talent, but who “didn’t know about the dark side of his life.” Gerald Garcia, who became pastor about six months after Dorsey left, said the church has recovered by “putting our eyes on Jesus.”

The Rocky Mountain District Presbytery recommended that Dorsey be dismissed from the Assemblies of God. The recommendation was adopted by the General Council’s credentials committee, and Dorsey’s ministerial license was revoked. Dorsey’s wife, now rearing her two sons as a single parent, is on staff at a Kansas City, Mo., church.