

Megachurch Pastor Exonerated After Prostitution Sting

Senior co-pastor at Rock Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia has been exonerated after new information has come to light after his arrest on Oct. 29, 2021. John Blanchard has continued to profess his innocence after 17 men, including him, were arrested in a police sting.

At the time, law enforcement believed the men were allegedly looking for sex through online and social media platforms. During the last 11 months, Blanchard stepped back from his pastoral duties handing over the oversight of the congregation to Bishop Anne Gimenez and his wife, Pastor Robin Blanchard.

Blanchard was arrested on charges of solicitation of prostitution from a minor age 16 or older and using a vehicle to promote unlawful sex. Now, the church is thankful that the truth has come to light and they have won the case.

"We have always believed in John's innocence. His humility and submission to those over him during this time has been a testimony to his character. He has spent the time in fasting and prayer and has invested much of his time in his family and education," Robin Blanchard said in a statement.

It's unclear what the new information is, but prosecutors said because of lack of evidence, they will no longer be pursuing charges against Pastor Blanchard. In a statement from the church, they say his defense attorney was pleased with the Tuesday outcome.

The church anticipates he will resume his church duties in the near future. The church was founded by Blanchard's father-in-law, the late Pastor John Gimenez and his wife Bishop Anne Gimenez who is still there today.

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