

Youth Worker at Rick Warren's Church Accused of Molesting Two 14-Year-Old Boys

A youth worker at Rick Warren's Saddleback Church is accused of molesting boys younger than 14 years old.

Ruven Meulenberg faces five felony counts of lewd and lascivious acts toward a child aged 14-15 after a tipster turned him into the police.

Warren's church released a statement that it was "shocked and grieved to share that this week a Saddleback member reported that a student ministry volunteer had acted inappropriately with two 14-year-old boys."

The Los Angeles Times reports church volunteers are fingerprinted, their backgrounds are checked and they receive annual training on appropriate conduct.

"We ask you to do two things: First, please pray for the Saddleback families who are involved in this sad matter. Second, please pray for the investigators as they determine the facts. As followers of Jesus, we always want the whole truth to come out because Jesus taught us that lies enslave us, but the truth sets us free," the statement continued.

"Both victims indicated they had engaged in inappropriate conduct with the suspect for the past year while he volunteered at the church. There have been several alleged incidents of lewd and inappropriate conduct, several of which have occurred on the church property," according to the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

Police suspect other victims may come forward, as Meulenberg volunteered at Saddleback for six years. {eo}