

King's daughter leaves Ga. church after scandal

by [Adelle M. Banks](#)

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(RNS) The Rev. Bernice King, daughter of the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., announced Tuesday (May 31) that she is leaving an Atlanta-area megachurch whose leader has been embroiled in scandal.

"When I came to New Birth I came for a season and I expected that season not to be quite as long as it was," King said in an interview on Atlanta gospel music station WPZE-FM, two days after her last Sunday at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church.

Her announcement follows a settlement between the church's senior pastor, Bishop Eddie Long, and four young men who accused him of sexual misconduct.

King, who did not tie her departure to the scandal, said she had told Long in April that she would be leaving at the end of May. After declining the presidency of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in January, King said she feels called to a new assignment.

"I'm not calling it a church right now," she said. "What God is showing me doesn't look like what people are accustomed to."

In a statement, Long said he had discussed how King could continue the legacy of her father and mother, Coretta Scott King, whose 2006 funeral was held at New Birth.

"I am in full support of her decision to leave New Birth in pursuit of this worthy endeavor," he said.