



# Stepping Down

*Michelle Stimpson*

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## **Stepping Down** Michelle Stimpson

Mark has been pastoring New Vision church for six years now, and all his hard work is about to pay off as the church approaches mega-church status. But while Mark has been busy building the church, his own household has been crumbling to pieces. Mark finds himself caught up in the appearance of a scandal that threatens to tear the church apart. And his wife's secret may ruin everything.

## **Stepping Down Details**

Date : Published July 26th 2013

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Author : Michelle Stimpson

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## **From Reader Review Stepping Down for online ebook**

### **Lynelle Clark says**

4.5 Stars for this wonderful read.

I received this book from the Touring host for an honest review.

Well I was really blessed when asked to review this book. I was looking forward to seeing what the writer will reveal in this book. There are a lot of scenarios in life especially where it concerns the church or being a Christian. So we kick off by meeting Pastor Mark and his wife Sharla and son Amani. A typical preacher family. But as the story unfolds we get to know them and their struggle with the challenges they face every day with themselves and with others. We see a very dedicated preacher who started a new church but with a support group that was not always on the same page as he was willing to compromise the message of Christ with worldly tools. A lot of heartache but also salvation forgiveness and reconciliation. This is a book of God's love for a dying world and how we sometimes messed up when we do not listen to our Father. Well done Michelle you brought out a lot of truth about the struggles a lot of Sheppards face with a lot of people condemning and not supporting.

A very good and inspiring read with a lot of revelation of God's grace.

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### **Tiffany says**

I have to give praise where praise is due. Michelle Stimpson is a super talented author. I loved this book. It wasn't fast paced and it wasn't twist and turns on every corner but it was reality. She hit on so many points of what married couples go through, families that deal with adoption, womanhood and church life. It was really a breath of fresh air to read. I would recommend this to anyone who wants to read a true christian fiction novel.

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### **John W. Carlton says**

For a pastor that has experienced many of the things that are brought up in the book, this could only be written by someone who was familiar with the temptations and trials of not only a minister, but his family also. Many ministers have been accused of the church being his mistress. As an older, retired minister, I see many mistakes that I made as I reared my children, and took my wife for granted. God gave me the very best wife that a pastor could have, and my mentor was her dad with whom I had the pleasure to work with for 16 years. God bless you Michelle Stimpson.

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### **T. Beasley says**

In Stepping Down by Michelle Stimpson readers are introduced to Mark and Sharla Carter III, the pastor and first lady of New Vision Community Church. Mark and Sharla are raising their adoptive son, Amani. Sharla

is trying her best to support her husband's ministry but their son is pushing her to the limit. Sharla is starting to feel like a single parent since her husband is too busy to help. She brings her concerns to her husband's attention praying that things will change before it is too late. When Sharla finds out her husband has been in an accident her biggest fear comes to light and Sharla will have to make some hard decisions.

Mark Carter III has been working hard to keep New Vision Community Church running. Mark has also been trying to deal with his wife and her frustration. Mark is on his way when he is in a car wreck. The questions start when it is discovered that his passenger was not his wife. The church asks Mark to step down as pastor until he can get his affairs in order and Mark understands their concerns. While recovering Mark learns that Amani's biological mother wants him back. Mark and Sharla will not give their son up without a fight. In the course of trying to keep their son, Mark finds out some disturbing news about his wife. Will Mark and Sharla make it through this test? Or will their faith falter?

Stepping Down was about faith and sacrifice. The author does a wonderful job developing characters readers can relate to. The message of faith, forgiveness and sacrifice was present throughout the book. It was entertaining, suspenseful yet inspirational. Once again this author has impressed me with her talent and I look forward to reading her next installment. I definitely recommend Stepping Down to others.

This book was provided by the author for review purposes.

Teresa Beasley  
A&RBC Reviews

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### **Pearl Jessie says**

#### **Did not like**

Normally I am a fan of her writings but this book took me too long to finish. Some areas were lacking in development. Like at the end, it never stated he had returned to preaching the way that GOD wanted, it was just assumed because it skipped to 2 months later at the end.

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### **Tasha says**

I absolutely loved this book. Although Michelle Stimpson wrote this as a fiction novel everything about this book speaks to real people, real lives, real situations. Having already read Stimpson's Mama B series I was aware of her ability to write well and tell a wonderful story that weaves human trials with God's wonderful grace.

This book however took it to an entirely different level for me. I often read Christian novels in hopes of putting my scriptural reading in perspective that will allow for personal reflections. Sometimes the way a story is written helps me to do this. However, I do hold Christian novelists to high standards because of this expectation. Stimpson DID NOT DISAPPOINT!

This book, on too many occasions, caused me to look in the mirror and examine my personal walk with

Christ. I sought out scripture readings as a result and noted this particular book in my Christian reference log.

This is a clean, wholesome book that I was very happy to read. I read it in a day, which considering the busyness of my life is nearly impossible. But it was well worth it.

I give this 5 stars because this will stay in my to-be read again collection and I will purchase and share this book with others.

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### **Catspirit says**

#### **Amazing..just like all of her books**

I loved this book. At first I read all the Mama B books and I was hooked reading all of Michelle Stimpson books I can find. They are all about real life problems and real people trusting in God. By the way Michelle Simpson's books are labeled as African-American. I am a middle age white lady and I am still drawn in by her writings and always have that feel good feeling when I am finished. Stepping down was a bit different then some but shows what doing the right things and listening to God can change people even though we are not always perfect. Couldn't put it down but felt sad when it was finished because I wanted more.

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### **Lynelle Clark says**

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A very good and inspiring read with a lot of revelation of God's grace.

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### **Cathy Roberts says**

#### **Enjoyed**

The book started off a little slow, but eventually turned out to be a good read. I loved to see the transition the characters made and how their perceptions of God's place in their lives opened their eyes to the obvious

things.

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### **Joan Bergeron Troche says**

I starting reading this book and immediately felt upset at the emphasis on prosperity gospel that seemed to be implied. Descriptions of dream homes, fancy cars and televised services simply to gain numbers and money for the church was not what I wanted to read about. I came very close to closing this book after the first few chapters. I am glad that I did not however. After the described content above, I was happy to discover that the emphasis changed to Christ and our dependence on Him and the continual work He us doing in us. The story has its faults, but also some very interesting twists and turns that make it a good read. The lesson learned in the book makes it a great read. Stick through the beginning until the meat begins. It is worth it.

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### **Valarie says**

I enjoyed this title. A good read about how even the leaders of the church are real people who can have real issues just like the lay members. 1st Lady Sharla had some struggles with something she had done in her past and with trying to keep up the image of who a 1st lady should be. Pastor mark had his own internal church power struggles, balancing that with his home life as a husband and father, and hearing from God and doing what he was ultimately called to give to God's people. Thankfully it showed that even when we take issues into our own hands and mess things up, when we repent and give problems fully to God then He can work things out better than we could have.

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### **Tracee says**

#### **Great Book**

This book was awesome!!! It really showed how what we think is not always what God has in store for us, but if we trust Him and follow His plan all will work out!!! Great Read!!!

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### **Dr. Jori Macarthy says**

#### **This was a very moving and soul searching book.**

I really enjoyed this book and almost finished it in one sitting!

I am a minister, and though a couple of scriptures I didn't agree with the interpretation written in same, it fit into the story succinctly.

I would strongly recommend this book for persons struggling with past hurts; secret unresolved sins that need to be addressed via God's love, and acquaintance with fellowship and oneness with the Lord.

I applaud the way everything meshed together in the end and the family became a unit.

Applause and accolades for the perfect witnessing tool  
Jodi Macarthy, D.D./D.A..

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### **Dawn says**

This is my first time reading Michelle Stimoson's work. I thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to reading more. The story was so relatable with themes of faith, trust and love. We often get so caught up in things that the very things we should be caught up in (family and home) often go neglected. When we don't heed the warnings willingly, God will say ok let's do this the hard way then. Stepping Down will open your eyes to what's important and how to recognize when things are out of control. Thank Michelle for a wonderful lesson.

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### **Stacie Wyatt says**

I read Stepping Down, in exchange for honest review from Write Now Virtual Tours. I loved reading this book. This was one of the best books I have read in a long time. The book is about Pastor Mark. He is married to Sharla and has an adopted, teenager, named Amani. Amani is in that rebellious teenager stage. Sharla feels abandoned because Mark spends more time at church, than at home. She feels he needs to work on his marriage and his relationship with his son. Sharla also wants a child, but feels God is punishing her. Toss in a temptress, who keeps stopping by the church trying to get alone time with Pastor Mark. You also have the church elders trying to change the direction of the church, with or without the Pastor on board. You also have Mark's assistant and mentee, Johnathan, who is fresh out of seminary school. The church is moving far from God. God definitely needed to be the center of Mark's church. Reverend Kit is definitely a problem. For example, when Mark was lead by God during a sermon, Kit interrupted the move of God to send people back to their seats. Reverend Jackson is also another problem. The elders want the church to have similar programs and services like other semi mega and mega churches, in addition to what market research says, but Mark wants the church to center on God. The elders want the church to experience growth, similar to T.D. Jakes and Joel Osteen. Mark knows he let other things get in the way of God. One passage, which stood out, was how one of the elders said the church experienced growth by works, instead of God. That one statement let me know the church was off-centered and not focused on God.

Then tragedy occurred. Pastor Mark was in a car accident, with a female member of the church. Nothing incident was going on. The female member wanted to talk to Pastor about an issue, Mark and Sharla was directly involved in. The conversation started in the parking lot, but then someone shot a bullet, and the two tried to escape. Anyway, the elders feel Pastor Mark needs to step down until the accident investigation concludes. After all, the church needs to protect it's image (insert sarcasm here lol) since Mark had an unidentified woman in the car.

Once again, I loved reading the book. One of the best fictions, I read in a long time.

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