

Christian rock pioneer Norman dead at 60

by UPI

SALEM, Ore. - Larry Norman, widely regarded as the "father of Christian rock music," has died of heart failure at age 60 at his home in Salem, Ore., his family said. The Texas-born, California-raised singer, songwriter and producer began recording for Capitol Records with his band People! in 1966 and for the next two years performed concerts supporting The Doors, The Who, Janis Joplin and Jimi Hendrix, said a statement released on behalf of Norman's brother, Charles Norman. Larry Norman left the band the day People!'s debut album was released and went on to record solo albums on his independent label Solid Rock. In the last 40 years, he released nearly 100 solo albums. He was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001. Cover versions of his songs have been recorded by Petula Clark, Sammy Davis Jr. and Cliff Richard. In a message he wrote Saturday, Larry Norman said: "I have been under medical care for months. My wounds are getting bigger. I have trouble breathing. I am ready to fly home. I won't be here much longer. I can't do anything about it. My heart is too weak. I want to say goodbye to everyone. ... Goodbye, farewell, we will meet again."

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