

Subscriber login | [Subscribe/register now](#) | [Subscription help](#)[Enlarge text](#) [RSS](#)**AreaWideNews**THE NEWS
SOUTH MISSOURIAN NEWS
VILLAGER JOURNALFog/Mist ~ 28°F
High: 31°F ~ Low: 25°F
Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2014

Search

[Home](#) [News](#) [Sports](#) [Records/Obituaries](#) [Features](#) [Opinion/Columnists](#) [Blogs](#) [Photos/Video](#) [Weekly Ads](#) [Marketplace](#) [Contests](#) [Classifieds](#)[RSS](#)[Print](#) [Email link](#) [Respond to editor](#) [Read comments \(1\)](#)Share: [f](#) [t](#) [b](#) [g+](#) [su](#) [e](#) [v](#) [p](#)

Pastor arrested for raping mentally handicapped child

Wednesday, February 6, 2013
Tammy Curtis, Staff Writer

A Cave City pastor was arrested on Jan. 25 for felony rape following an investigation that began with an emergency call on Jan. 15. The 911 call was from the mother of a 15-year-old female victim regarding an incident of alleged sexual contact between the pastor and the young woman who is mentally handicapped.

Sharp County Sheriff Mark Counts and Detective Aaron Presser responded to the call. The mother told Presser that one of her daughters came into her room late in the evening of Jan. 14 to explain her younger sister was crying and upset. After the mother went to speak with her daughter, she was informed that Ira Smith, 33, had forced the girl to perform oral sex on him in the home the day before, also touching her inappropriately during the incident.

Records indicate that Smith had also been accused in 2009 of a similar incident but was cleared by the Arkansas Department of Human Services. On or around Jan. 17, Crimes Against Children Investigator Allison Vanaman was contacted about the case and interviewed the victim and other siblings in the home. According to the case report, Vanaman's training led her to believe that four of the children had been assaulted by Smith, and further investigation into Smith's behavior was needed.

Sheriff Counts had originally scheduled a polygraph for Smith on Jan. 22, following the initial interview, but Smith failed to appear for the examination. Arkansas State Police Special Agent Ramey Lovan performed the polygraph examination on Jan. 24 at the Troop C Headquarters in Jonesboro, after Smith was advised of his Miranda rights and signed the required consent forms to undergo the examination. During the interview, Smith admitted to forcing the child to the sexual act, corroborating the story the girl had told her mother. Smith denied the accusations of molesting the other children in the home, but did admit to sexual fantasies about another child in the home, who is also 16.

Smith was arrested on Jan. 25 and charged with Class Y felony rape. The violation states that Smith "Did, unlawfully and feloniously, engage in sexual intercourse or deviate sexual activity with another person who was incapable of consent because she is physically helpless, mentally defective or mentally incapacitated." Smith is being held in the Sharp County Detention Center, and is due in Circuit court on Feb. 6 for his first appearance. He is the pastor at Corinth Baptist Church in Cave City.

Cutline: Ira Dewayne Smith

© Copyright 2013 Area Wide News. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Comments

Note: The nature of the Internet makes it impractical for our staff to review every comment. If you feel that a comment is offensive, please [Login](#) or [Create an account](#) first, and then you will be able to flag a comment as objectionable. Please also note that those who post comments on areawideneews.com may do so using a screen name, which may or may not reflect a website user's actual name. Readers should be careful not to assign comments to real people who may have names similar to screen names. Refrain from obscenity in your comments, and to keep discussions civil, don't say anything in a way your grandmother would be ashamed to read.