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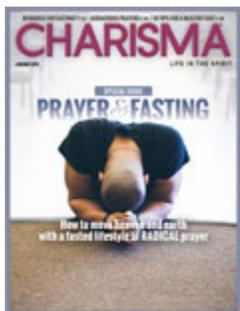
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Baptist Pastor Charged in Triple Slaying at Kentucky Pawn Shop

10:00AM EDT 10/11/2013 Tim Ghianni/Reuters ([/component/search/?searchword=Tim%20Ghianni/Reuters&ordering=newest&searchphrase=exact&areas\[0\]=authors](/component/search/?searchword=Tim%20Ghianni/Reuters&ordering=newest&searchphrase=exact&areas[0]=authors))

A Baptist pastor who also owned a gold-buying shop has been arrested and charged with murder and robbery in the September 20 slayings of three people inside a Danville, Ky., pawn shop he once owned, officials said Thursday.

Kenneth Allen Keith, 48, was accused in the shooting deaths of pawn shop owners Mike and Angela Hockensmith, and a customer, Daniel P. Smith, prosecutors said. He was arrested Wednesday afternoon and is being held without bond.

Keith had once owned the pawn shop where the killings occurred and Mike Hockensmith, who was a youth pastor at another Baptist church, had managed the store for him. The Hockensmiths later became part owners of the shop, with another man, according to the Danville *Advocate Messenger* newspaper.

"It's fair to say that he (Keith) had owned the business prior to this and they had had a working relationship," Commonwealth Attorney Richard Bottoms told Reuters.

The deaths have caused "devastation to two families," he said.

Keith could face the death penalty if convicted.

He is pastor at the Main Street Baptist Church in Burnside, Ky., and also owned a gold-buying store in Somerset, Ky.,



A Baptist pastor has been arrested and charged with murder and robbery in the slayings of three people inside a Danville, Ky., pawnshop he once owned.

Bottoms said.

No one answered the telephone at the church on Thursday.

The slain couple were the parents of two children, a 9-year-old son and a 14-month-old daughter, who were in the store at the time of the murders, according to the *Advocate Messenger*. The boy dialed 911 after the killer left the premises.

The couple also were hosting a Taiwanese foreign exchange student this year, the paper said.

Jennifer Fox, manager of another pawn shop in Danville, said she was relieved at the news of the arrest after three weeks of worrying that a killer remained at large.

"There was a lot of feeling of ease this morning coming into work," Fox told Reuters.

A court hearing for Keith was set for Wednesday in Boyle County.

Reporting by Tim Ghianni; Editing by Mary Wisniewski

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