

Substitute teacher and pastor charged with sexual abuse in Mason County

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A substitute teacher and pastor in Mason County is charged with two counts of sexual abuse.

James Paul Hadinger, 44, of Gallipolis Ferry, was arrested on Thursday, Feb. 21. He was charged with two counts of sexual abuse by a parent, guardian, custodian or person in a position of trust to a child.

Hadinger is accused of sexually abusing an underage girl from an area junior and senior high school. According to police, Hadinger took the victim to an abandoned building late one night earlier in the month, where the alleged abuse happened.

Hadinger was also a preacher at Faith Gospel Church in Gallipolis Ferry, and led several youth groups at the church.

According to the Mason County Sheriff's Department, Hadinger confessed to the alleged incident.

He is in the Western Regional Jail. Bond was set at \$200,000.

Mason County Schools Superintendent Suzanne Dickens released the following statement on Friday, Feb. 22:

"Confidentiality requirements prevent me from commenting upon or discussing any allegations of employee misconduct. In the event disciplinary action is taken against an employee by the Board, further information will be disclosed. However, I can say that anytime the district is confronted with allegations relating to the safety and welfare of students, the allegations are taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and that measures are taken to ensure that students are safe and not exposed to any continuing risk of harm."