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Sex Offender and Sex Crime News

Minister charged in rape of girl
2001-12-01 The Natchez Democrat

MEADVILLE - A Meadville minister was arrested Friday for an alleged sexual offense with a 9-year-old girl.

Derwin Rogers, 43, of 86 Main St., Meadville, was being held without bond Friday on charge of statutory rape of a female younger than 12 years old, said Franklin County Sheriff James Newman.

Rogers, the pastor of Emmanuel Full Gospel Church in Meadville, is believed to have assaulted the girl at a house near the church that belonged to a church member, Newman said.

Franklin County officials including the Department of Human Services had been investigating the case for several days prior to Friday's arrest.

"Evidence was there to make an arrest today (Friday) I thought," Newman said.

The father of the victim also confronted the pastor about the allegations Friday, Newman said.

The alleged crime took place several months ago but just recently came to the attention of family and law enforcement.

"(She) broke down and told her father two or three days ago," Newman said.

According to former church members and friends of the father, the child told her father of the events last week. At that same time, they said, she made the director and assistant director of the day care facility aware of the accusations.

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Current Poll

Which choice best reflects how you would react if your adult child was arrested for a sex offense involving a minor?

- Do anything you can to support your son/daughter, even if you have doubts about his/her innocence.
- Do anything you can to support your son/daughter, but only if you are confident he/she is innocent.
- Do anything you can to support your son/daughter, even if you are confident he/she is guilty.
- Offer no support, including no assistance with bail.
- Break off contact with your son/daughter completely.
- Not sure.
- None of the above.

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"They wouldn't do anything about it," Monica Smith of Natchez said. Smith is a former member who said she left the church over concerns about Rogers.

Loretta Stander, assistant director of the day care, confirmed that she had been notified of the allegations.

"There was no proof of what was being said," Stander said. She directed all other questions to Regina Poole, director of the day care. Poole could not be reached for comment.

Willie Earl Winston, a former deacon at the church and spokesperson for the girl's father, said the father left the girl at daycare and went to Natchez working.

"He was gone for a little over two hours. She didn't tell him what had happened for some time," Winston said.

According to Winston, the girl claims that Rogers took her to a house next to the church and told her, "if someone comes, then run and hide out back."

Rogers is also being charged with sexual battery charges filed by a 19-year-old former employee at the day care. Rogers pleaded not guilty to the charges last week in Franklin County.

An attorney for Rogers could not be reached. When calls were made to Emmanuel Full Gospel Church Friday night, the person answering the phone said the church had no comment.

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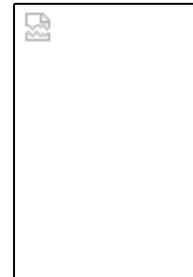
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