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Pastor arrested for four counts of raping a minor appears in court

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By Brandi Hunter - bio | email

CROSS COUNTY, AR (KAIT) – A pastor accused of raping a minor appeared in a Cross County courtroom Thursday.

According to the Cross County Circuit Clerk's Office, James Edward Davis had his court date continued to Monday March 12.

James Edward Davis, pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church, is charged with four counts of raping a minor.

According to police, deputies arrested Davis after a middle school counselor reported the pastor to the Arkansas State Police Crimes Against Children's Division child abuse hotline.

After hearing the news of his pastor's arrest, Morning Star Baptist Church deacon L.C. Brown said there is no room for the court of public opinion in the investigation. "I don't know if he did it. The only one know (sic) is him, and the girl, and the good Lord, and we cannot judge, and the Bible say (sic) who without cast the first stone."

Police said the mother of the middle school student is in jail, and Davis is the former boyfriend of the mother. The family of the girl allowed her to live with the pastor and his current wife while the mother of the girl is in jail.

Police said she described incidents dating back to 2010, one in which the pastor told the girl she could have sex with him in place of being punished. Deacon Brown said it is hard for him to believe his pastor of more than three years is capable of committing those crimes. "I think he's a good man. We don't ever know what's going to happen to us," he said.

Family members of the victim said she is now pregnant.

Deacon Brown said the best thing for people to do right now is let justice run its course. "Just let the courts make their decision. Then, we'll know what to do, but we can't judge that man. We don't know what he did."

Davis posted a $50,000 bond after a judge lowered it from $500,000. He is set to appear again on Monday March 12.

Region 8 News will continue to track this story and bring you the latest details as soon as they become available.

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