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Hernando minister used library computer to view child pornography, police say

By Cindy Wolff

Posted April 4, 2011 at 3:30 p.m., updated April 4, 2011 at 11:08 p.m.

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Eddie Prince

Eddie Prince, a longtime Hernando pastor arrested and charged with possession of child pornography, used a computer at the public library to view and download the material, authorities said Monday.

Prince, 63, pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church, remained in the DeSoto County Jail Monday afternoon charged with one count of possession of child

pornography. His bond has been set at \$60,000. He will make his initial appearance in Hernando City Court on Wednesday.

Prince was arrested by Hernando Police Friday evening after a four-month investigation, said Hernando Police Chief Mike Riley.

Riley and DeSoto County Dist. Atty. John Champion said during a Monday afternoon news conference that the investigation is ongoing, but there have been no allegations that Prince molested any children.

"The place we know he had access to children, which is his church, has been investigated, and there have been no complaints from anybody about this at his church," said Champion.

He said investigators issued search warrants on Friday and seized computers from Prince's home and church.

"It has taken us so long in this case because we have had to analyze the computer we seized from the library, and now are having to analyze the computers we have just received," Champion said.

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The investigation started in mid-December, Champion said, with a complaint from employees at Hernando's First Regional Library.

Champion said library employees told police that Prince was seen by library patrons viewing child pornography on one of the library's computers.

Catherine Nathan, director of First Regional Library, said in a statement that Prince somehow bypassed the library's computer-monitoring system.

"Unfortunately, it appears this person was able to temporarily partially defeat the filtering system before being detected. We believe the arrest in this matter will discourage others from attempting to use our computers inappropriately," Nathan said.

Champion said the library's computers sit in the middle of the building, in plain view of all patrons.

"If you are doing something in public like this where you can be seen, you're yelling out 'I need to be caught,' " Champion said.

Champion said a child-pornography charge is a felony that carries a 20- to 30-year prison sentence.

Authorities said Prince is cooperating.

Bob Wright, a spokesman at Prince's church, said the mood at Sunday's service was "very somber."

"We are shocked, saddened and are prayerful," he said of their pastor's arrest.

Wright said the church's deacon committee met Saturday after learning of the arrest and decided to place Prince on leave of absence.

Oak Grove is a 159-year-old church with 150 active members.

-- Yolanda Jones: (901) 333-2014

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April 4, 2011
4:24 p.m.

[bluesman1](#) writes:

You can't fix stupid. Oh, and 1st.

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April 4, 2011
4:25 p.m.

[LuckyGuy](#) writes:

First!

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April 4, 2011
4:25 p.m.

[LuckyGuy](#) writes:

Darn!

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April 4, 2011
4:38 p.m.

[romarospivey#262352](#) writes:

Maybe he wanted to see if he could "LAY HANDS" on the child lol

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April 4, 2011
4:47 p.m.

[jots](#) writes:

He used a computer at the public library? LOL! Guess he thought it would be hard to trace it to him. Think again, moron. Wow.

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April 4, 2011
5 p.m.

[Tiger_since_2005](#) writes:

Is this something that is rampant amongst this sect?

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April 4, 2011
5:07 p.m.

[a_melee_ensued](#) writes:

Here is an example of how a person can be innocent of this sort of charge:

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<http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/t...>

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Don't convict the man without a trial.

April 4, 2011
5:27 p.m.

[chancegearheart](#) writes:



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Here is an example of how a person can be innocent of this sort of charge:

<http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/t...>

Don't convict the man without a trial.

Doubt they'd target some random person using a Library computer.

April 4, 2011
5:27 p.m.

[thecatsmeow](#) writes:

He should never walk free again. Just viewing? Just viewing who? My prayers for all the innocent children this POS's proclivities have harmed.

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April 4, 2011
6:09 p.m.

[MRTIBBS](#) writes:

[in response to a_melee_ensued:](#)

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Here is an example of how a person can be innocent of this sort of charge:

<http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/t...>

Don't convict the man without a trial.

I know that this may be a stupid question, but how did they trick him into taking the files home?

April 4, 2011
6:26 p.m.

[crappywebby#497292](#) writes:

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[in response to chancegearheart:](#)

Doubt they'd target some random person using a Library computer.

It is good that you should point this out. Spammers and hackers are very ethical chaps and it would violate their code to be so indiscriminate as that.

Let's hang him and move on to the next case.

April 4, 2011
7:19 p.m.

[Mamba](#) writes:

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[in response to a_melee_ensued:](#)

Here is an example of how a person can be innocent of this sort of charge:

<http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/t...>

Don't convict the man without a trial.

Dang homey; looks like you're wanting to cut this "OLD" sicko more slack than the two kids in the article last week; what gives? I'll bet you a good quarter that

he's done worse than viewing; wanna bet?
Silly me; I just thunk of the reason.
Mamba
SIDE NOTE: Don't convict the man without a trial.
Try telling that to former Mayor Herenton and a few others.

April 4, 2011
7:30 p.m.

[gigger](#) writes:

it seems people who have strong personal demons find their way into the ministry... to try to fight (cover up) their shame... but in the end...

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April 4, 2011
7:35 p.m.

[BlissLaw](#) writes:

Guess he will need to be added to the roster on www.stopbaptistpredators.org

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April 4, 2011
7:49 p.m.

[BrunettoLatini](#) writes:

I really wish Baptists would deal with the mentally ill and immoral people in their own pulpits rather than harping against committed, monogamous relationships between homosexuals.

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Baptist expressions of shock and surprise each time another false prophet is unmasked ... are getting kind of ludicrous.

April 4, 2011
9:57 p.m.

[Ichabod4Memphis](#) writes:

[in response to BrunettoLatini:](#)

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Baptist expressions of shock and surprise each time another false prophet is unmasked ... are getting kind of ludicrous.

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There is no doubt that it's very troublesome whenever a minister is accused of abuse, however, we need to keep this in perspective by looking at the FACTS. The FACTS reveal that ministers are a extremely small percentage of the people currently listed on the national sex offenders registry. The FACTS are that most sex offenders are your next door neighbors, your co-workers, and most likely your family members. IF this pastor is guilty then he will be punished, however, the overwhelming majority of ministers are good men. For some reason whenever the discussion turns to sex offenders people lose their sense of reason and run strictly on emotion and ignore the facts.

April 4, 2011
11:13 p.m.

[spike693#236253](#) writes:

[in response to Ichabod4Memphis:](#)

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- because God knows it's okay for there to be just a few sex offenders in the ranks of Baptist ministers...

Are you serious?

First, there are few ministers when compared to the population. Second, there are even fewer Baptist ministers in that comparison. Therefore, any sexual predators in those ranks deserves outrage, just as any sexual predator deserves outrage.

But a Baptist minister who turns out to be a sexual predator deserves a special brand of outrage because:

1 - These "men" are in a position of trust and authority over children and adults, and a type of authority that, quite frankly, is based on emotion and sometimes (depending on the brand or ministry) walks very near to mind control!

2 - The strident objection of these ministers regarding homosexuality, and insistence that homosexuality is the premier perversion in our world.

(And that goes the same with priests and teachers and anyone in the public trust, by the way.)

As I get older, I realize what I have been told often but was hesitant to believe - that those who express hatred the most and who are the most religiously fanatic and pious are usually (as another poster said) trying to cover up huge personal demons and perversions.

Trouble is, when you can't even face a problem and try to cover it up, it eventually surfaces.

So, if found guilty, let the balance of justice play out.

April 4, 2011
11:57 p.m.

BrunettoLatini writes:

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[in response to Ichabod4Memphis:](#)

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The FACT is that your neighbors, co-workers, and family members aren't in positions of spiritual and moral authority. They don't use the powers of pulpit, media, and politics to condemn segments of humanity that they deem immoral.

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