

New Details: Children's Minister Facing Sex Abuse Charges, Multiple Victims Confirmed

Posted on: 6:51 pm, February 4, 2014, by [Josh Voight \(http://whnt.com/author/whntjoshvoight/\)](http://whnt.com/author/whntjoshvoight/) and [Michelle Stark \(http://whnt.com/author/whntmichellestark/\)](http://whnt.com/author/whntmichellestark/), updated on: 04:54pm, February 5, 2014

MUSCLE SHOALS, Ala. (WHNT) – Muscle Shoals Police have released new details in the investigation of a children's minister accused of multiple sexual abuse crimes.

Late Tuesday afternoon, Jeffery Dale Eddie, Highland Park Baptist Church children's minister, was arrested and charged with two counts of child pornography, 31 counts of second-degree sodomy and three counts of sexual abuse of a child under the age of 12.

Court documents, released Wednesday morning, state that while being questioned on Sunday afternoon, Eddie "confessed to performing oral sex and other acts on several of the minor members of his church, numerous times."

On Monday, investigators spoke with a minor and his family about acts Eddie told police he performed on the child over a three-year period. Documents indicate these incidents happened between the summer of 2010 and this past fall at the church.

During Wednesday morning's news conference at the Muscle Shoals Police Department, Chief Robert Evans told WHNT News 19 the whole investigation started on Saturday after a parent contacted police and church officials about possible inappropriate behavior between Eddie and a child at church.

After finding child pornography on Eddie's computer at the church, Evans said the investigation ballooned to include the sexual abuse charges that have now been handed down.

Investigators are still interviewing possible victims in this case. Evans confirmed there are multiple victims and is asking the public for prayers for those involved.

Eddie is being held in the Colbert County Jail on a \$1,030,000 bond. His preliminary hearing is set for Feb 18 at the Colbert County Courthouse.

As of Monday, Eddie was listed as a children's minister on the Highland Park Baptist Church website. His picture and information have since been removed from the site (<http://hpbaptist.com/>).

Church's Response

The church [posted this statement on its website \(<http://hpbaptist.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Public-Statement.pdf>\)](http://hpbaptist.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Public-Statement.pdf) Wednesday, saying Eddie is no longer affiliated with the church. Highland Park Baptist's Lead Pastor, Brett Pitman, also came to the police department's news conference on Wednesday morning and read the statement aloud. It says:

"As a church, we are outraged, shocked and deeply saddened by the events that have unfolded over the last few days. First and foremost, we are striving to assist any children and families that have been affected by these events. The health and well being of these children is our number one priority at this time. For years, Highland Park Baptist Church has invested in the Shoals community and we are committed to helping our entire community cope with this situation. Anyone with any information about this case should immediately contact the Muscle Shoals Police Department. Any children or families in search of counseling may contact our church office for assistance. In closing, we want to personally thank every person that has come forward. They are heroes and should be treated as such."

Highland Park Baptist Church has canceled all Wednesday night activities, classes, and rehearsals.

The number for the Muscle Shoals Police Department is (256) 383-6746.

101 comments



- *nonyobusiness* says:

February 4, 2014 at 7:47 pm (<http://whnt.com/2014/02/04/muscle-shoals-childrens-minister-arrested-on-sex-abuse-charges/#comment-21679>)

I saw this guy at a local ice cream parlor with 5 young girls from the church and I wondered why the church would allow this. I always had my doubts about him.

[Reply \(/2014/02/04/muscle-shoals-childrens-minister-arrested-on-sex-abuse-charges/?replytocom=21679#respond\)](/2014/02/04/muscle-shoals-childrens-minister-arrested-on-sex-abuse-charges/?replytocom=21679#respond) [Report comment](#)



- *Neb* says:

February 4, 2014 at 8:05 pm (<http://whnt.com/2014/02/04/muscle-shoals-childrens-minister-arrested-on-sex-abuse-charges/#comment-21688>)

When I was younger I used to go with friends to after school bible study that this guy ran. I went to my own church so I never really got close to their congregation. All the kids seemed to like bro Jeff but I always thought he was a weird old dude. He would never really talk too much about Christ, and me and my buddies were always seeming to annoy him. I always thought something was weird about him so I kept my distance. I never thought he was like this though. Effin wackjob got what he deserved. There's a special place in hell for people like this.