



# Department of Justice

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## **FORMER METHODIST MINISTER SENTENCED TO 210 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CONVICTION**

CLEVELAND, OHIO – Gregory A. White, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, announced that Jerry Paull, a retired Methodist minister, was sentenced to over 17 years in federal prison for receiving and possessing child pornography.

Paull, age 64, of 1202 Orchard Glen Dr., Amherst, Ohio, pleaded guilty in January to a four-count indictment. He was sentenced by the Honorable Donald C. Nugent to 210 months in federal prison to be followed by 8 years of supervised release.

The case was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). ICE began the investigation after Paull's credit card information was discovered on subscriptions to illegal child pornography websites. The ICE investigation revealed that Paull had a pattern and history of subscribing to such websites.

ICE special agents executed a search warrant of Paull's residence in June 2004 and seized CDs, floppy disks and videotapes of child pornography, as well as printed images and documents relating to child pornography websites, all discovered hidden in a new garbage can in his garage. A computer forensic analysis revealed more than 3,700 images of minors, many prepubescent children, engaged in sexually explicit conduct including bondage.

The Judge considered a variety of factors in arriving at the sentence, including statements of Paull, his attorney and three people who spoke on Paull's behalf, as well as dozens of letters supporting Paull. The Judge also considered information provided by a man who was sexually

abused by Paull in the mid-80's when he was a child and a member of one of Paull's congregations. Additionally, the court considered several victim impact statements submitted on behalf of some of the children depicted in the images downloaded from the Internet by Paull, including one written by a 17-year-old girl who was raped when she was 10 and 11 by her father and whose images are traded widely on the Internet: "Thinking about all those sick perverts viewing my body being ravished and hurt like that makes me feel like I was raped by each and every one of them." Judge Nugent commented that children such as her have been given a "life sentence." After handing down his sentence, the Judge addressed Paull, "When you feel sorry for yourself, you should think about those children. You should be disgusted."

The case was being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Sullivan of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

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