

21-Year-old St. Louis Man Charged In Destructive Dow Southern Baptist Church Fire/Break-in

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEY - A 21-year-old St. Louis man has been charged in the destructive July 29, 2020, Dow Southern Baptist Church fire.

The Jersey County State's Attorney's Office announced today charges were filed against 21-year-old Deahvion Kortez Bishop. He is charged with arson/place of worship and criminal damage to property \$500-\$10,000 of Dow Southern Baptist Church, a place of worship, located at 24735 Dow Road, Dow, in Jersey County. He is also charged with motor vehicle and residential burglary.

Bishop is also charged with the offense of criminal damage to property where he knowingly damaged a camera system affixed to the AT& T Communications Building at 25218 Dow Road, Dow. There was significant damage done to one part of Dow Southern Baptist Church.

"On the same night a vehicle was stolen from Jerseyville, the Jerseyville Police Department, along with deputies Jersey Sheriff's Office worked together and were able to identify a suspect from both incidents," Jersey County Sheriff Mike Ringhausen said. "Deahvion was arrested by St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department with the stolen vehicle from Jerseyville."

The Jersey County Sheriff's Office commended the work of all the agencies involved from the sheriff's office, to Office of Illinois Fire Marshal, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Jerseyville Police Department.

Jersey County Sheriff Mike Ringhausen praised all the officers and state fire marshal's office personnel that worked so diligently to make the quick arrest and subsequent investigation. He said everyone involved in the church fire investigation/burglary did "great" work.

"The Jersey County Sheriff's Office would like to commend the effort from all the agencies involved being the Jersey Sheriff's Office, the Office of the Illinois Fire Marshal, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Jerseyville Police Department," Sheriff's Ringhausen said. "This investigation could not have been solved without the dedication from all the departments involved."

Jersey County State's Attorney Ben Goetten said the man was apprehended quickly after his cell phone was found at the scene and his photo was on the cell phone screen. He was found in quick fashion Goetten said thanks to the impressive investigative work by law enforcement authorities.

Goetten said the man gave a full confession to the crime.

On Wednesday, July 29, the Jersey County Sheriff's Office was contacted in reference to a smoke alarm set off at 25218 Dow Road in Dow. While responding to this call, a Jersey County Sheriff's deputy observed flames coming from the Dow Southern Baptist Church. QEM Fire Protection Agency, Jerseyville Fire Department, Fieldon Fire Department, Godfrey Fire Protection District and Carrollton Fire responded to the scene for mutual aid in fighting the fire. During the same time, it was discovered the AT& T building had been burglarized and the building damaged.

[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)