

# **Pastor Sentenced To 87 Months For Distribution Of Child Pornography**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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**EAST ST. LOUIS –** The U.S. Attorney's Office announced Thursday afternoon that Steven P. Tibbetts, 62, of Godfrey, was sentenced to 87 months in federal prison followed by 10 years of supervised release for knowingly distributing child pornography in December 2019. The Court further ordered Tibbetts to pay \$10,000 in restitution to victims who were depicted in some of the videos and photographs.

The U.S. Attorney's Office said court documents and evidence showed that Tibbetts began viewing and distributing child pornography starting in the 1990s and continued

until his arrest in June 2020. Furthermore, while Tibbetts was on pre-trial release for the charged offense, an officer located additional devices in his home, which were later found to contain child pornography.

The instant offense involved 2,430 images of child pornography and 408 videos containing child pornography. Tibbetts has served as a Lutheran pastor since 1992. At the time the complaint was filed, Tibbetts was employed as the head pastor at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Godfrey, Illinois.

In imposing the sentence, the Court noted that “The defendant was living two lives of sorts.”

The FBI Springfield Division and Macoupin County Sheriff’s Department investigated the case.

Significant assistance was provided in the early stages of the investigation by the Peoria (Illinois) Police Department. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Christopher R. Hoell and Karelia S. Rajagopal.