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For Immediate Release: Pastor Sentenced to 35 Years in Prison for Stealing Three Churches

(Dallas, Texas) – Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot is satisfied to announce the conviction of Whitney Foster, 56, for Theft of Property valued at \$300,000 or more.

“Stealing real estate is an incredibly serious and damaging crime. It’s worse than the theft of someone’s vehicle or other possessions,” said Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot. “When someone steals property, we must hold them accountable because they are hurting people.”

Whitney Foster, a pastor who led a small congregation without a physical place to gather, was accused of stealing real estate from three churches. Foster filed fraudulent deeds, listing a fake leader for the victim churches as the grantors and naming his church in his own name as the grantee. The combined value of the stolen properties exceeds \$800,000.

The affected churches are First Christian Church of Lancaster and, in Dallas, Canada Drive Christian Church and Church at Nineveh. Two of the three properties are still under the defendant’s or his church’s name, with his congregation actively gathering at one of them. The third property remains embroiled in legal complications caused by Foster’s actions.

Lead Prosecutor Phillip Clark said, “Property ownership is a bedrock of our society – it provides security, a home, a place to love and welcome each other. It also represents a very active part of our economy, both in terms of buying, selling, and renting property, as well as property taxes that support everything our government does for the citizens of Dallas County. Deed Fraud cases are not simply disputes; they are lies and fraud – they are theft – and they are deeply damaging. I’m so grateful that the jury saw the truth in this case and held the defendant to account.”

During the punishment phase of the trial, the jury was presented with evidence of seven additional fraudulent deeds displaying the same characteristics as the three charged deeds. Additionally, they were informed of Foster’s prior convictions, which include Identity Theft and Arson.

Thank you to lead prosecutor ADA Phillip Clark who specializes in Deed Fraud cases. Additional thanks to ADA Melinda Chaney and DA Investigator Hoyt Hoffman, along with the Lancaster Police Department and the jury for upholding their oath to follow the law.

Deed Fraud Alert Service

Homeowners in Dallas County and elsewhere*, can register property for a Deed Fraud Alert Service. This service will send an alert via email whenever a document is filed on your property. It might be something legitimate, like a tax notice or a lien or it could be a fraudulent filing.

An early alert allows for quick action. It won't prevent the fraudulent filing, but being able to move against it quickly can make a huge difference.

Go to <https://dallas.tx.publicsearch.us/property-alert> to register your property.

**NOTE: many other counties also offer this or a similar service – check out your County Clerk's website to find out.*