

Janitor at Greektown church says shooting of woman was accidental

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DETROIT -- The janitor at a historic Greektown church allegedly told police he fatally shot a woman in the basement, though authorities remained skeptical today of why it happened.

A police investigator said Alvin Norris Wilson claimed he shot **Suzanne Ware** in the thigh accidentally Jan. 3 as he was considering buying a gun from her.

But a pool of blood, bruises, her scattered papers and the pants around her ankle suggested Wilson may have wanted to rob or sexually assault the woman, a prosecutor argued.

Because Wilson's statement seemed hard to believe, 36th District Judge Cylenthia LaToye Miller ordered Wilson, 58, to stand trial on a murder charge and two related felony charges.

Ware, 47, was found dead in the alley behind Detroit's Second Baptist Church. Witnesses at Wilson's preliminary examination Friday testified they saw Wilson with the woman the day she died and that a pair of women's underwear was found in a choir room closet.

Ware bled to death after a shot pierced an artery in her leg.

Wilson later told police he met **Ware** the night before and they had spent the night partying. In the church basement, Wilson said she began undressing and wanted to have sex as he considered buying a gun from her, police said.

"As I pulled that thing back (on the pistol), everything happened," according to the statement. "I dropped it. I didn't know what to do."

Wilson told police **Ware** was hot after being shot and moved outside. A pathologist testified that with massive blood loss, she would have been cold and clammy and would have quickly lost consciousness.

Wilson's lawyer unsuccessfully argued the shooting was an accident and should only be charged as manslaughter.

Wilson was convicted of felonious assault in 1975 and again in 1978. Two years after his release from prison in 1984, he was convicted of assault and a drug offense.

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