

Police Chaplain



The Police Chaplain program is designed to provide spiritual guidance and counseling and comfort in times of crisis. The police chaplain strives to be a particularly close friend to the officers and citizens of Dickinson. He/she also serves as a link for communication between people in crises and their own spiritual advisors.

The police chaplain is aware of the fact that the police officer's job is an extremely difficult one, being constantly in the presence of danger and under constant pressure and tension. Because of this, the police chaplain strives to create such a relationship with the officer that he/she would feel free to turn to for counsel at any time. While the primary intent of this program is to aid and complement the police officer, emphasis is to be placed on the relationship of this goal to the basic purpose of law enforcement: to protect and serve the public.



Pastor Michael Wolters began serving with the Dickinson Police Department's chaplaincy program in the summer of 2011. In 2022, he became the department's lead chaplain. Pastor Wolters has been in the holy ministry since 1987, serving parishes in Iowa and Minnesota before moving to Dickinson. He graduated from Concordia Teachers College, Seward, NE, in 1983 with a BS in Education and from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, in 1987 with a Master of Divinity degree. He has been married to Lisa (Davis) since 1984 and has five children.

Pastor Wolters is head of the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Dickinson.

Honored Retiree



Pastor Jim Hessler was the founding chaplain for Dickinson Police Department's Chaplaincy program. He served graciously for 41 years, retiring in 2022.

Pastor Hessler began his studies all the way back in 1956, earning a Master's degree in 1962, and becoming an ordained minister in 1965. He and his wife Lois settled in Dickinson in November of 1978 where he became pastor of the River of Life Assembly of God Church. Shortly after, Pastor Hessler continued his calling by establishing the first-ever Police

Chaplaincy program for the Dickinson Police Department in 1981. He went on to assist the North Dakota Highway Patrol and Stark County Sheriff's Office to establish programs of their own and also offered his services when needed.

As a Police Chaplain, Pastor Hessler provided fellowship and support for our officers and dispatchers. He also assisted in the field by providing comfort to families during traumatic events and delivering emergency notifications.

Pastor Hessler's care, compassion, humor, and kindness will forever be embodied in the spirit of the Dickinson Police Department.

The duties of the police chaplain include:

- Being called to the scene of a traumatic incident to provide comfort to victims, families of victims, and officers involved
- Notifying next-of-kin in death or serious injury incidents
- Offer follow-up assistance to victims of crisis
- Furnish referral or resource assistance
- Give confidential counsel to police personnel
- Be available to families of officers in traumatic situations
- Provide personal or family counseling to department personnel and their families
- Help with Critical Incident Stress Debriefing to all first responders
- Training for crisis intervention and participating in defusing and debriefing sessions as requested
- Visit sick or injured department employees
- Conduct invocations at department functions such as awards ceremonies, building and facility dedications, or at any other appropriate event
- Fulfilling other functions deemed appropriate or requested by the department