

County-Wide Chaplaincy

Thanks you!

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March 2018 – Spring is here!

This month's letter is written by Peter Schrater. Peter has volunteered with County-Wide Chaplaincy for nearly 9 years, and also serves as a departmental Chaplain with Vancouver Fire. He and his wife, Tamar, have been married for 15 years and have six children. Peter is a pastor at City Harvest Church, and has faithfully served there since 1998. His heart to be available to serve his community with his precious time is greatly appreciated.

Several years ago I was in the Hudson's Bay HS cafeteria with a thousand plus other people taking the public safety test with the hopes of landing one of the few fire fighter positions available in the area. The instructors had just passed out the test booklet. As they were giving us directions, I started looking around at the people in this large room: different ages, genders, backgrounds and personalities; but all passionately hoping that this would be their day, hoping to score in the high 90's. I sensed God pointing out that many were hoping to become heroes, serving others in distress and those in desperate need of help. Then I felt God ask me, "Who's in line to be a hero to the heroes?"

At that very moment I knew God was recalibrating the compass of my life. I had spent the previous 37 years wanting nothing more than to be a fire fighter, a captain, and then to retire as a Battalion Chief. When I was 19, one week before beginning a three year course in fire science and paramedicine, God directed me to not take this course, but to stay and serve the church I had helped plant. Then at 37 I felt the green light to once again take the test. But now I realize the reason He gave me the green light wasn't to live out my dream but to realize **His dream** for me. I had already been working as a chaplain with County-Wide Chaplaincy and Vancouver Fire, but this took me from a four cylinder to a V-8 in terms of motivation.

Just this year, I was at a home after a grandfather's heart had unexpectedly stopped. While sitting outside with his daughter, she asked me what a lot of people ask once things calm down on a scene. "Is this what you do for a living?" I then answer, "No, I do this as a volunteer to serve the community". She then asked, "Why in the world do you do this?!"

A couple hours later, I began to read my Bible and felt God direct me to Isaiah 61:1-3: *"The LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to those who are bound... to comfort all who mourn...that He may be glorified."*

It was then that my mental compass was more finely calibrated to the course God had for me. It started with me watching my father serve others as minister, volunteer fire fighter, and the local disaster coordinator for the Red Cross. Through this, God showed me the WHAT—I was to serve others; the WHO—I should be a servant to the fire fighters, and lastly the WHY— *"The LORD has*

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anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to those who are bound... to comfort all who mourn...that He may be glorified.”

Jesus applied this Scripture to Himself. Since He lives in me and through me, I have a part of His mission, to serve as a chaplain for fire fighters and those they serve in the community.

Peter Schrater

Giving Statements: Statements were sent out around the 1st of February for 2017 donations. If you donated to us in 2017 and didn't receive yours, and would like one, please reach out to us. Contact Chad Zoller at chad@911chaplain.org or 360-901-4074. Thank you for your support of the chaplaincy!

As always, please continue to pray earnestly for the safety of all our first responders. We are all so grateful for them!

You can give online or by mail.

Your donations can be given by mail using the enclosed envelope, or online. To give online and/or set up recurring billing there is a link to give on the donations page of our website: www.911chaplain.org.

Or you can go straight to it with the following web address:

<https://911chaplain.churchcenteronline.com/>.

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