



Mount Pleasant Police Department

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Wayne Isbell, Police Chief

Press Release December 11, 2013

The Mount Pleasant Police Department and Titus County Sheriff's Office are joining forces to create a Clergy and Police Alliance (CAPA) civilian police academy. The program is designed to engage the faith-based community into Law Enforcements Community Policing concept.

Both Chief Isbell and I have long recognized that clergy and their congregations are an abundant and dynamic community resource in our community, said Sheriff Tim Ingram. Our goal with the CAPA program is to involve churches of every faith and denomination in the City of Mount Pleasant and Titus County.

Before becoming a member of this new CAPA program, pastors and clergy will first have to attend a special 18-hour training course sponsored by both agencies which will be similar to a Citizen Police Academy. The 6-week class is designed specifically for pastors and clergy to indoctrinate them into the inner-workings of a law enforcement agency and the Criminal Justice System. Pastors and clergy will receive classroom and "hands on" training in the areas of hate crimes, family violence, sex crimes, homicide investigation, traffic enforcement, narcotics, communications, officer use of force, internal affairs investigations, high risk incident command issues, law, and various other topics related to law enforcement. After graduation, the new CAPA members will ride with a police officer or deputy to finish their training in a field environment scenario.

The CAPA program is a unique ministerial opportunity, said Chief Wayne Isbell. CAPA members and their organizations will be called upon to pray for their police and sheriff's departments members, to be intentional in the building of relationships with police officers and other governmental officials, be available on a voluntary basis and ride with officers and deputies on patrol to view and evaluate community issues, and be available for crisis interaction involving our community members with follow-up ministerial services.

Both Chief Isbell and Sheriff Ingram purport the benefits of this program for the community will include: providing calm in crisis situations to prevent an escalation to violence; offering support to victims; assisting in situations where a minister is requested or needed; relaying factual law enforcement information back to their congregations and community neighborhoods related to criminal justice issues; assisting law enforcement in non-traditional roles; and responding in disaster situations.

Chief Isbell said; we believe a Clergy and Police Alliance program is a natural extension of each of our Department's community policing philosophy. This is a great opportunity for both law enforcement and ministers to come together and work hand in hand to solve our community problems.

Letters were sent out this week to each church in the city and county. Both the police and sheriff's departments are encouraging ministers and clergy to go online and read more about the program and complete a registration form at www.mpcity.org/CAPA. The minister training program will start on Tuesday January 14th at 6 PM at the Mount Pleasant Public Library Community Room and is by invitation only.