

Pastor, Police Chaplain Stabbed to Death Outside His Church

A pastor was stabbed to death outside his church in Fort Dodge, Iowa, on Wednesday night, Oct. 2.

Allen Henderson served as senior pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church as well as chaplain to the Fort Dodge Police Department.

Police say on Facebook that they received a call about an unresponsive male at 5:45. Medics tried to revive the 64-year-old pastor but could not. Henderson was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital. Law enforcement officials interviewed witnesses, revealing that Henderson was involved in a confrontation of some sort outside the church shortly before the attack.

“Word has spread quickly throughout the community as to the victim’s identity in this case as he was a special person to many in our area,” the Fort Dodge Police Department wrote on Facebook. “The victim in this case has been identified as Allen W. Henderson, senior pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, as well as longtime chaplain of all area public safety agencies and first responders. He was a beloved member of our family and we are working with heavy hearts this evening as we move forward from this tragic incident. He will forever be remembered for his dedication and service for all of those he touched within this community and beyond.”

Captain Ryan Gruenberg says Fort Dodge officers will miss Henderson and the support he offered the department.

“He offered us support, both emotionally and spiritually—if we so desired,” Gruenberg says, according to WHOTV. “He was

always there for us if anything happened. You know, a lot of us in this profession unfortunately see a lot of tragic incidents which can affect us and he was always there for us to offer his support and kind words to help us through any sort of incident. He was always there to lighten the mood and bring a smile to all our faces.”

Officials arrested 36-year-old Joshua J. Pendleton as a suspect in the investigation. Pendleton is being held in the Webster County Jail on charges of first-degree murder and first-degree robbery. His first court appearance was initially scheduled for Thursday morning but has been delayed until Friday, according to the *Des Moines Register*.

The school affiliated with St. Paul Lutheran Church announced on Facebook that classes were canceled Thursday. {eo}