

Pastor Turns Christian Mother in For Poisoning Her Family

A pastor turned in a mother in his congregation for poisoning and killing her children with anti-freeze, according to reports.

“They might have gotten away with murder if the pastor of their church hadn’t tipped off police,” *PEOPLE*’s KC Baker writes. “His anonymous alert came after months of apparent misfortune for the Staudte family, as first Diane’s husband and then her son fell ill and died. Next, one of her daughters was hospitalized. But where others in the community were shocked and saddened, her pastor became suspicious.”

Diane Staudte was the “mastermind” of the murderous plot and recruited daughter Rachel to assist.

The two poisoned husband Mark Staudte, who died in April 2012, before killing son Shaun just five months later. Daughter Sarah was hospitalized for the anti-freeze effects.

During the investigation, police said it was an anonymous tip that led them to pursue a poison lead. New reports show the tipster was actually the pastor of the family’s church.

“She was at church and someone else told him that Sarah was at the hospital and wasn’t expected to survive,” Springfield police detective Neal McAmis tells *PEOPLE*. “He was so troubled and bothered, and that’s why he had to come forward.”