

Police Officer Slain in Planned Parenthood Shooting Was Also a Pastor

The violent shooting at a Colorado Springs Planned Parenthood clinic may still be so fresh you don't recognize the names of the victims. But slain officer Garrett Swasey is a person to be remembered.

The full-time police officer at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs was also an elder and co-pastor at Hope Chapel at the time of his killing.

Swasey was "a devoted husband of 17 years and a wonderful father to his two children," his wife Rachel said in a statement. "His greatest joys were his family, his church and his profession," she said. "We will cherish his memory, especially those times he spent tossing the football to his son and snuggling with his daughter on the couch."

According to the *New York Times*, Swasey's faith was inspiration, and friends and family are now drawing strength from it.

"Here's a guy who worked full time as a police officer, and then gave a great amount of time to his local church and didn't get a dime for it," Scott Dontanville tells the *Times*. Dontanville is a co-pastor who knew Swasey for 15 years.

Several reports indicate Swasey often put himself in harm's way to protect the innocent.

"There was no way any of us could have kept him here," UCCS Police Chief Brian McPike said. "He was always willing to go ... he had an enthusiasm that was hard to quell."

Swasey's friend and another co-pastor, Kurt Aichele, reiterated those same comments to the *Times*.

"He's an absolute man of courage," Aichele says.

Swasey was also a famed figure-skating champion who had a "sibling-esque playful bond" with Nancy Kerrigan.

"I am not surprised with the way he was living his life, as police officer helping others," Kerrigan tells the *Boston Herald*. "It makes total sense, he was always like that."