

are not here very long before they hear Pastor Mike say that being a Christian does not mean you're wimpy. Wimpy Christians are not attractive. Likewise, an officer's show of strength is not a non-Christian trait. Tanner states, "When you need to get physical, you get physical." Someone once asked Tanner if hurting people bothered his conscience. "We are called upon to be bearers of the sword. I am where I am supposed to be. I pray every day that God gives me wisdom."

Tanner mentions, "As police officers, we are called upon to play several different roles in any one day, sometimes even on one call. I pray that God not only gives me wisdom, but that He helps me to portray myself as needed for any one situation. For example, if I am called to a domestic assault, I may need to be an intimidating presence to a man who has assaulted his wife or children, and at the same time be a comforting presence to that woman and her children."

Doug states, "My wife and other Christian friends have always prayed for me in police work. Even when I was a young Christian and not in tune with the Holy Spirit, I always felt protected on the job." But in praying for law enforcement officers, it's not just their personal safety we need to remember. We also need to pray against the prevalent attacks on their

testimony and mind. Police see horrible things, things that will never be forgotten. Doug says, "I have prayed many times that God will help me deal with these memories, and put them in proper perspective as to the evil world we live in." He recalls 1 John 5:19 "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the devil." Police are injected into this evil world, and it is much more evil than the average person will ever know. Maybe this ignorance is a good thing. Doug has always felt God going before him. When he was weak, or when he was strong, prayer really defined his path.

air-head (âr'-hed) n. 1. What a woman intentionally becomes when pulled over by a policeman.

There are times in an officer's day when being a Christian is beneficial to both victim and perpetrator. One day Tanner spotted a wanted plate at a low-rate motel. He called Pine City who had put out the notice, and they said to be careful. Tanner was told "He fights." Tanner and two others did a forced entry, and yes, there was a fight. Two out of the three were injured, and the perpetrator received a broken nose. As he's in the back of the squad car, swearing and telling how bad his life is in many choice words, he hears Tanner's radio playing KTIS. When the man asks Tanner what he's listening to, Tanner tells him about the hope in Jesus. From the back seat Tanner hears, "I

don't know peace." Before turning him over to custody, Tanner prayed with his prisoner to accept Christ.

Some of the first law enforcement officers were the Roman Centurions. In Luke 7, Jesus was amazed by the faith of one who knew what "authority" meant. The next Centurion was in charge of Jesus' crucifixion. That Centurion witnessed the entire crucifixion and then proclaimed Jesus as God.

Not everyone is meant to be a law enforcement officer. Tanner mentioned being called to bear the sword, much like the early Centurions. Officers have to live with the fact that they may be called to place their life on the line, or to use deadly force against someone. Romans 13 states that he or she does not carry the sword in vain.

For thousands of years law enforcement officers have walked the line between law-abiding citizens, and those who would come to steal, kill and destroy. Today we honor and pray for those men and women in law enforcement, the THIN BLUE LINE between the citizens and the wolves.

Proverbs 28:1 The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.

i am maranatha!

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Two girlfriends were speeding down the highway at well over 98 MPH. "Hey," asked the brunette at the wheel, "Any cops following us?" The blonde turned around and had a long look at the road behind them. "Yeah, looks like it." "Are his flashers on?" The blonde turned around again. Lemme see... "Yup...nope...yup...nope...yup...nope...yup..."

More of us than not have looked in our rearview mirror only to have our heart skip a beat because we've been caught. We know we are guilty, but we hope for mercy. We also know the officer is just doing his or her job – enforcing the law.

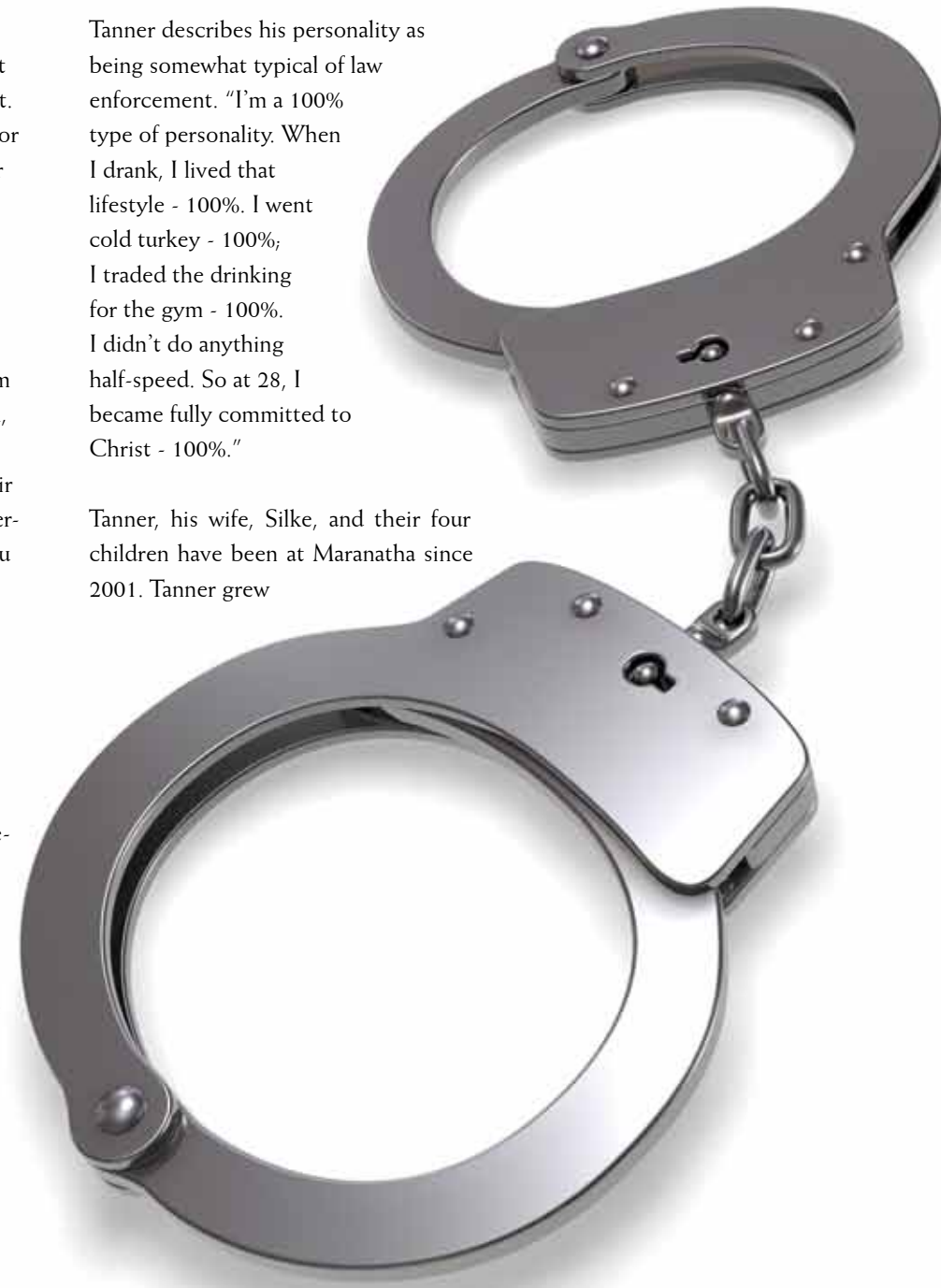
Maranatha is blessed to have quite a few officers attending each week representing city, county, state, and federal, and some who have put in their 30 years and are now retired. We are proud of them all. We would like to introduce you to two of them, Tanner Spicer and Doug Wood. We've asked them some tough questions, and we think you'll like their answers. The stories they tell will help you to understand the world they live in, and will encourage you to remember them, and all officers, in prayer.

Tanner has been in law enforcement for 12 years, seven of those years in the Drug Task Force division. He is now a detective for the city of Mendota Heights. He went into police work because he missed the structure of the military and it just seemed to fit. He is second generation law enforcement, as his father was a deputy.

A Christian as long as he can remember, Tanner grew up in Ely and Two Harbors, going to church regularly. He did fall away from God at around age 16. It wasn't until months after the military that a tragedy opened up his eyes to the distance he had created between himself and God. His dad had a massive stroke which put him in a vegetative state for four years. It affected Tanner and "I knew I needed to make a change." His dad died in 1999, but Tanner started living for Christ.

Tanner describes his personality as being somewhat typical of law enforcement. "I'm a 100% type of personality. When I drank, I lived that lifestyle - 100%. I went cold turkey - 100%; I traded the drinking for the gym - 100%. I didn't do anything half-speed. So at 28, I became fully committed to Christ - 100%."

Tanner, his wife, Silke, and their four children have been at Maranatha since 2001. Tanner grew



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Tanner Spicer
Mendota Heights
Use of Force training
pictured right.

up in small churches where you know everybody and they know you. Maranatha seemed very exciting after those experiences. For his European Catholic wife, it was even more so. The lack of "religious pomp" drew them into the Maranatha family. Tanner stated, "Nobody is fake around here" and they enjoy the realness of Maranatha. Tanner helps in the Youth Ministry in the area of security and also on Sundays. He also teaches Maranatha's two-year-olds.

Doug is retired from the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department after 32 1/2 years. He and his wife Nora have three children in their 30s. The youngest is also in law enforcement.

Up until 1980, his wife was a Christian, but he was not. He didn't realize it at the time, but when he would fall asleep she would lay hands on him and pray that he would come to know Christ. The kids were little at the time, and between them and her it was starting to sink in that he needed a change of heart. Then a strange thing happened. He was sitting on the stool in the stall of a public bathroom. Yes, that's really where it happened! Someone kicked a Billy Graham track into his stall, landing right in front of him. It was even facing in the right direction as if to say, "Read me!" Not only did he pick it up, he couldn't throw it away, but carried it with him for days. A week later, he accepted Christ.

They found themselves at Maranatha in the mid 80s where they knew the Holy Spirit was acknowledged. "The people were different. They were genuine. There is something about this church that none other has." They became very involved. Doug has served as a trustee for 10 years.



Doug Wood
Ramsey County Sherriff
Pictured with his son.

Law enforcement has its unique moments. Most of the humor and war stories of an officer are only understood by fellow officers. Some stories don't go past that unseen barrier. But both Tanner and Doug share a few with us. Humor is part of everyone's life, but for law enforcement it is even more appreciated. Most of their day is dealing with very "not funny" situations, so humor has a way of eliminating some of the stress. If you do something fairly non-traditional in front of an officer, you will probably be part of a story in the squad room that has them all laughing.

Tanner's story: "We were called to a residence where a homeowner thought there was an intruder in his house. When he went into the kitchen to investigate he found a large, unhappy raccoon in his kitchen sink. When we arrived, my sergeant had a great plan. He decided he would taze the raccoon, and while the raccoon was being tazed, I would get the dog noose around its neck and my other partner would hold the outside door open. Apparently, no one told that raccoon how the plan was supposed to go. That thing moved, and only one of the prongs hit him. This got the raccoon steaming mad. It looked at me and decided I must have been responsible for its misery, and took a dive off the counter at me. I managed to dodge it, while one of my partners hid around the other side of the counter, and the other on the other side of the door. The raccoon ran past the open outside door and into the basement. Now we had to find a ticked-off rabid raccoon in a dark basement. Before the incident would end, that raccoon would be tazed at least four more times, and shot at with a .22 caliber hand gun, finally ending with a noose around its neck.

Doug tells this story about an impromptu relay chase, the handoff being a squad car instead of a baton. "One night my partner and I went to Walmart to arrest a shop-lifter. All seemed okay until we got the suspect out to the squad car. At that point, he bolted across the parking lot. I gave chase, and while I was chasing him across the parking lot, my partner jumped in my squad and began to chase me and the suspect. About half way across the lot I slowed down, and the suspect put distance between them. My partner then pulled the squad by me, and he then got out and started chasing the suspect. I then got in the squad and started chasing the both of them. Eventually I caught up to them with the squad,



and I again got out and continued the chase with my partner. We finally cornered the suspect out in a field and arrested him. After this, we both laughed so hard the suspect must have thought we were crazy."

Anyone working in law enforcement is well aware of the risks involved. They are placed many times in dangerous situations. Often their quick judgment can make a huge difference in their lives and the lives of others. They need people praying for them always. Both Doug and Tanner have had situations in their careers where they knew God was protecting them.

Doug is very thankful for a Christian wife who has prayed for him throughout his career. "One time I know God saved me." It was in the early 80s. The State Patrol had a high speed chase with a motorcycle on Highway 694. During a chase, squads from any nearby department will join in to help. The chase went up the ramp on Lexington and surprising everyone, the motorcycle sped right back down the ramp. Coming off the ramp, it hit Doug's car full force, impacting the door post. Glass flew everywhere and got in his eyes. He was thinking that the impact threw his squad into the traffic, which was a major concern. He rubbed his eyes in order to see the situation, only making it worse by scratching them from the glass. He crawled out the passenger window. If the impact had been one to two feet further, Doug would have been killed.

Tanner's Mom woke up praying in the middle of the night. That same night that she was praying Tanner and his partner stopped a car. It was February and very cold. His partner detained the man in the back of the squad car. As soon as the man lay down, Tanner knew what was coming next. The man kicked out the window and was out of the squad car in no time at all. They were in for the fight of their lives because the man was high on PCP. As

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

A police officer stops a guy for speeding and asks him very nicely if he could see his license. He replied in a huff, "I wish you guys would get your act together. Just yesterday you took away my license and now today you expect me to show it to you!"

Things Not to Say to a Police Officer:

I can't reach my license unless you hold my beer.

Sorry, Officer, I didn't realize my radar detector wasn't plugged in.

Aren't you the guy from the Village People?

Hey, you must've been doin' about 125 mph to keep up with me. Good job!

Are You Andy or Barney?

I thought you had to be in relatively good physical condition to be a police officer.

You're not gonna check the trunk, are you?

I pay your salary!

Gee, Officer! That's terrific. The last officer only gave me a warning, too!

Do you know why you pulled me over? Okay, just so one of us does.

I was trying to keep up with traffic. Yes, I know there are no other cars around. That's how far ahead of me they are.

When the Officer says "Gee Son...Your eyes look red, have you been drinking?" You probably shouldn't respond with, "Gee Officer your eyes look glazed, have you been eating doughnuts?"

soon as they would get him tackled, he would be up again. By the time he was apprehended, they were cold and exhausted.

Some people think that Christian and law enforcement officer is an oxymoron, in that you can't be one and also the other. Obviously, with as many officers that we have at Maranatha, we do not agree.

How to be an effective Christian in the workplace is a concern of any occupation. Like many who are not allowed to verbally proclaim their faith in their work place, Tanner doesn't witness with words with his fellow officers. "They don't like to be told how to live, but they do know who I am." Doug agrees and says, "The way you act is a much stronger testimony."

In law enforcement, Christians are a minority. Over the course of Doug's career, which has spanned most of his Christian life, he has separated himself from much of the typical lifestyles of many officers, which included drinking and other related behavior. He states,

"I was never disrespected for this stance, but had to accept the fact that I would never really be embraced as 'one of the boys'. It's funny how a few words said can have an impact on others. I once was questioned about my non-participation in going out to bars and one bar was named in particular. I had stopped into this bar once to say good-bye to a guy who retired. I later told a couple of married guys who were there that 'a place like that is no place for a married man' and I then went on to explain why — drinking, temptation, etc. Those words were brought up for years afterwards, and even recently brought up again at my retirement ceremony where there were around 75 people present. You don't have to be a great orator or comedian to effectively get a message out."

The men of Maranatha