

As members of KCPD you have accepted the call to “protect and serve” the people who live in, work in, and visit our community. Policing is a most honorable profession with enormous responsibilities and challenges. Yours is not just a “job” for at its core policing is a way of living in relationship with fellow officers and community members. And, for those of you who are part of a religious tradition, policing is a way of expressing, or living out, your relationship with God.

The holy texts of the three Abrahamic religions – Christianity, Islam, and Judaism – make it clear that peace is a foundational concept. The Holy Scripture of Islam, called the Quran, states, for instance, that one of Allah’s names is As-Salam, which means peace (59:23), and 2:205 says that “God abhors any disturbance of peace!”

Shalom (peace) is central to Judaism. Hebrew Scriptures are replete with references that reveal that peace is achieved when one lives in right relationship with God and with others. “Seek peace and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:15); “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Leviticus 19:18); “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13) are but a few examples of Judaism’s call to righteous living.

In the Christian New Testament followers of Christ are called to live in peace with one another. Jesus is revealed as “the Prince of Peace” who calls his followers to actively seek peace in the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the peacemakers.” (Matthew 5:9). In one of the most telling examples, when Jesus, following his crucifixion, appears to some of his disciples who have hidden themselves behind closed and locked doors, his very first words to them were “Peace be with you.” (John 20:19). The disciples had denied and deserted him and could have expected words of wrath, condemnation, or at the very least, disappointment. Instead, Jesus offers them words of peace.

“Blessed are the peacemakers,” Jesus said. You are the first line peacemakers. Every day you risk life and limb to get criminals off our streets. Every day you respond with composure and self-restraint to people who sometimes revile and insult. Every day you seek to build positive relationships with members of the community who are old, young, and in-between, both likeable and impossible. Every day you seek to improve the safety of neighborhoods and the quality of life for all KC residents. I know you do. I know that you are blessed peacemakers. I know because as a KCPD Chaplain I witness it firsthand.

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