

# Opportunities for Ministry



*Chaplains Serving  
Beyond the Walls  
of the Church*

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# *Outstanding Opportunities*



**T**he Church of the Nazarene provides magnificent opportunities for making a worldwide impact on society through specialized chaplaincies. Chaplains are carving a unique niche for ministry in the business world, health care institutions, correctional facilities, and the military services, among others, carrying the name of Jesus to needy people.

Chaplains go out to the marketplace, as the apostle Paul did, to hurting and hungry people who search for hope and meaning in life. The world truly is the chaplain's parish. Virtually every sector of society is served through chaplaincy ministries. As agents of God's prevenient grace, chaplains make contact with the sinner whom God is awakening to his or her need for Christ. They are missionaries, going where others can seldom go. They perform the same ministries as a pastor, with a difference. Chaplains are an integral part of the community, bringing the gospel directly to the workplace where people often spend 60 per cent of their waking hours.

Two key words characterize chaplaincy ministry: availability and identification. Chaplains bring salt and light to a bland and dark society. They seize opportunities to identify and listen to hurting people, turning moments of desperation to times of hope and light. The important thing is they are there when people need them. Chaplains are present to identify with their "congregation". Often through hardship and at the risk of danger they point people to Christ in their crises. They demonstrate God's love in action. They are spiritual leaders, counselors, and friends to the people of the community they serve.

The mission of the Church of the Nazarene is vastly extended through the ministry of faithful Nazarene chaplains. The church recognizes the validity of these ministries. It provides endorsement, spiritual support, concern, and prayer to those called to serve as chaplains.

The following pages provide information on several kinds of chaplaincy ministry. They do not include all the ways and places in which chaplains serve. Chaplaincy ministries have been established almost everywhere that people congregate. Most of our full-time chaplains serve in four major roles—correctional, workplace, health care, and military. Part-time and volunteers serve as fire, institutional, and law enforcement chaplains and in the Civil Air Patrol. They serve in diverse forms of ministry in national parks, coal mines, railways, mortuaries, FBI, counseling situations, campus ministries, nursing homes, sports activities, Veteran's Administration, and Seaman's ministries.

In Ezekiel 22:30, God looked for a person to stand in the gap, but there was none. There is a gap in numerous areas where chaplain representation is not present. This unique ministry of presenting the gospel of grace and hope will fill that gap through men and women called by God. We must heed the call to stand in the gap. If we don't, others will— New Age cults and others who may further confuse and destroy the lives of broken men and women. By sending chaplains, our church fulfills the very message and ministry of Christ.

# *Correctional Chaplaincy*



## **A pastoral presence.....**

**I**t is hard to imagine any place that needs the “good news” of Jesus Christ more than correctional facilities. Largely regarded as outcasts of society, the unlovable residents of these institutions are persons Christ loves and for whom He died. Many of these inmates are hurtling toward eternity without hope unless a chaplain intervenes in the name of Christ.

Correctional chaplains are called to share in Christ’s ministry in ways few others can understand or relate to. They must bring love and hope to a world of hatred and despair. The chaplain ministers to inmates in the role of pastor, friend, and advocate. He or she must be able to confront in love. Much of their time is spent in counseling individuals adjusting to prison life. The chaplain coordinates worship services, weekly Bible studies, seminars, and crusades to help new Christians mature in their faith in spite of adverse circumstances.

Another aspect of the correctional chaplain’s challenge is administrative. Besides the day-to-day operations, the chaplain coordinates the groups of citizen volunteers who minister to all faith groups represented in the prison population. Their pastoral presence serves as a reminder that physical imprisonment does not have to mean spiritual isolation. A chaplain can be the catalyst who helps bring true rehabilitation. When an inmate hurts, does anyone really care? The chaplain’s message of compassion says that he or she does by reflecting the nature and character of God in the midst of dehumanizing situations.

People who are incarcerated have many conflicting values. The chaplain communicates values that make life worth living, that produce an inner peace for those in correctional facilities greatly increasing the possibility of rehabilitation. The ultimate goal is salvation through Christ, but the ministry to the spirit and body aid in achieving that goal.

## *Fire Department Chaplaincy*



### **A pastoral presence.....**

**T**he rationale for the service of a fire department chaplain can be found in Isaiah 61: 1-3. The key thought is to give beauty to ashes. The fire department chaplain goes into a situation of fire, accident, or disaster to minister just as Christ would do.

The nature of the firefighter's profession is stressful and crisis-oriented. Firefighters need the spiritual and emotional stability of a chaplain. The aftermath of every fire is anger, frustration, and remorse that more could not be done. A chaplain brings the healing presence of Jesus Christ to ease the emotional uptightness that is part of the firefighter's life. On the job, the department needs a person of poise and authority to assist in public relations and crowd control, helping to bring order to chaos.

A caring chaplain is a ready chaplain, that is, he or she must be on call 24 hours a day when on duty. Ministry in the department is in two areas: to the firefighter and their family, and to the community.

As a minister to the firefighter, the chaplain must have a pastoral relationship with each individual. He or she will provide spiritual

guidance, be present for weddings, baptisms, births, and will conduct memorial services for fallen firefighters. At the scene of a fire, the chaplain will be watchful for firefighters who need first aid. The responsibility of a chaplain at such times may be to meet firefighters at the hospital, notify families of injuries or death, relate accurate reports from doctors to family members, and offer comfort.

In ministry to the community, the chaplain is responsible to establish order to avoid panic, and keep distraught citizens from interfering with firefighters. Duties often include extending comfort to victims and the bereaved, offering assistance by contacting family members, assisting in obtaining emergency aid and filling out necessary paperwork. The fire department chaplain will occasionally be called on to serve at official functions.

## *Health Care Chaplaincy*



### **A pastoral presence.....**

**H**ospitals are microcosms of the larger society. The events of birth, death, and intermediate crises are the concentrated events of life itself. It is in these breakpoints of life that the spiritual dimension is crucial. Often those hospitalized are unchurched or geographically removed from their pastors and families.

Whether occasioned by joy or sorrow, pastoral care in hospitals always involves an element of trauma both for the patient and the family. In either situation the hospital chaplain steps in as a redemptive agent to bring a link between people in crisis and a loving God.

Hospital chaplaincy involves giving pastoral care and a spiritual point of reference to families in crisis. The people to whom the chaplain will give spiritual guidance include the victims of trauma and/or chronic and terminal illness. The families will also benefit from spiritual guidance, as will the hospital staff who deals directly with these intense situations. The chaplain must be a caring and compassionate person and must be able to provide non-sectarian, non-judgmental, spiritual ministry.

What is true of spiritual care for these in the hospitals applies equally to the many other institutions relating to spiritual care for the sick, dying and the elderly. Hospices, nursing homes and other health care entities are open to the ministry of chaplains in this area of health-related service.

## *Law Enforcement Chaplaincy*

### Police & Sheriff's Department/ Jail/FBI



#### A pastoral presence.....

**M**ost police officers, according to homicide detectives, never get to deal with the public under normal circumstances. Whenever and wherever law enforcement is involved, there is some measure of stress present. The dangers of the job greatly increase that stress, which takes its toll on our officers and their families.

Police officers, sheriffs and deputies constitute a tightly knit, closed society. In time of crisis they tend to turn to one another. It is important that they have someone who is able to identify with them



and who can provide the spiritual perspective they need.

The police chaplain provides pastoral care for police officers and their families. He or she visits sick or injured officers at home or in the hospital and is available for family or marital counseling, or just to be a sounding board. They preside at memorial services for fallen officers and are present for other significant break points of life.

Present on the job, the police chaplain rides along with officers on patrol in order to keep in touch with the pressures and problems that are encountered on the streets. They serve as consultants to officers in domestic crisis. They are present at official department functions.

Another important part of their responsibility is serving as public relations officers and liaisons between the community and the department. On call for 24 hours a day on a rotation schedule, it is essential that the police chaplain be available when needed. A police chaplain can provide an entirely different outlook on life for the officers, especially in the area of Christian living.

## *Military Chaplaincy*

### ACTIVE DUTY

#### A pastoral presence.....



**M**ilitary life provides opportunity for a very enriching and exhilarating ministry, but can be emotionally, physically, and spiritually demanding. Many active-duty military members and families are away from home for the first time and in need of religious guidance and

encouragement. They will feel more secure if the chaplain is there for them as a highly visible and integral part of their daily lives. Chaplaincy is a professional and adventuresome career for those called into this ministry, whether officiating at a baptism, marriage, communion or memorial service, counseling a couple who may be working through marital discord, organizing religious education classes or counseling servicemembers and families in other crisis situations. Servicemembers desperately need a chaplain's guidance, compassion, and spiritual influence.

This form of chaplaincy offers a dynamic opportunity within a pluralistic environment to those who welcome the challenge of ministry to men and women of various backgrounds, cultures, and religions. The military chaplain has the opportunity to participate in spiritual workshops and receive educational training to enhance his or her skills by enabling professional and personal growth. After as few as fifteen or twenty years of active duty service, one will receive a pension from the military whether they are active-duty, reserve, or National Guard.

The military has certain age restrictions in regard to accessioning potential chaplains. Generally, one must be able to achieve retirement eligibility by age 60. However, if one has prior military service, age may be waived.

A person interested in serving as a military chaplain must also meet the armed forces physical fitness and weight requirements.

## RESERVE/NATIONAL GUARD CHAPLAINCY

### A pastoral presence.....

Spread throughout the strata of society are Reserve and National Guard chaplains. These chaplains not only represent their church,

they serve their country as well. They are a diverse group of dedicated people who stand ready to respond wherever and whenever they are needed to be peacekeepers and peacemakers.

Reserve chaplains come from nearly every form of ministerial service. They are pastors, college professors, even religious executives—all who are called to serve in an exciting parish as challenging as you could find anywhere.

The opportunities are extraordinary for evangelism and kingdom growth. Chaplains often serve with more non-Christians than one would ever contact through their own church ministry. The challenge is not without benefit. There is an expanded and enriched ministry, continuing education, opportunities to travel, supplemental pay, and accumulative retirement benefits.

The requirement to serve two weeks a year and two days a month does not mean a Sunday per month out of the pulpit. Duty time is arranged so the busy pastor does not miss his or her full-time church service responsibility.

## CHAPLAIN CANDIDATE

### **A pastoral presence.....**

If interested in service as a military chaplain, the chaplain candidate program allows individuals to explore the military ministry option while attending seminary. The purposes of this program are procurement of Reserve and National Guard chaplains to meet future mobilization requirements, and provision of a pool of trained chaplains from which candidates may be selected for extended active duty. No service obligation is incurred until acceptance of appointment. It is designed to expose seminarians to the diverse and demanding role of military chaplaincy in a variety of ministerial settings.

Chaplain candidates are commissioned officers who wear the military uniform of their choice. They receive pay and other benefits while in training.

A person interested in serving as a chaplain candidate must also meet the armed forces age, physical fitness, and weight requirements.

## CIVIL AIR PATROL (CAP) CHAPLAINCY

### **A pastoral presence.....**

The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) offers a unique ministry with cadets and adults whose special missions are to perform emergency services and engage in aerospace education. CAP is the official auxiliary of the United States Air Force. It is a private non-profit benevolent corporation chartered by the United States Congress. The CAP is one of the world's largest volunteer chaplaincy programs.

The CAP chaplain serves with clergy of other faiths and will be afforded ample opportunity to enrich his or her professional development through chaplain training programs. One wears the uniform of a CAP officer, will be promoted, earn awards, and can serve at local, regional, and national levels.

Civil Air Patrol chaplains express care and concern for the cadets by providing an adult assisting presence. These chaplains are available to counsel cadets when requested. Cadets need a chaplain's guidance in the development of their life values. To address these needs, chaplains conduct moral leadership programs. Through the ministry of presence, the CAP chaplain imparts an influence for good and provides opportunities for members to share their joys, hurts, and frustrations. This pastoral care is provided for both cadets and senior CAP members. Chaplains also participate in emergency serv-

ice missions and exercises by being there for victims in a disaster operation. He or she performs professional religious functions such as conducting religious services, serving on the commander's staff, and acting as advisor on spiritual and moral issues.

The Civil Air Patrol has no age, health, medical, or physical requirements.

## *VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) Chaplaincy*



### **A pastoral presence.....**

**T**he role of the VA chaplain is to render ministry to those who have given some of the best years of their lives in defense of their country. VA chaplains provide a complete religious ministry to veteran patients and families. Patients in VA hospitals or psychiatric institutions, even more than other hospital patients, are often removed from their families and pastors.

Many are unchurched, having no spiritual counselor to advise them. Many are impoverished and some are homeless.

These patients are often shunned by friends and family, and feel isolated from society. The VA chaplain is part of a patient-therapeutic team. He or she brings love and acceptance to those who sometimes feel forgotten. They also minister to the families of patients. The VA chaplain's major responsibility is to bring a ray of hope to "those who sit in darkness" of despair and depression (Isaiah 42:7 NIV).

# Workplace/Industrial Chaplaincy



## A pastoral presence.....

People bring their problems to the workplace—resentment, family tension, ill health, frustration, fear, anxieties, boredom, stress, and addictions. These problems are increasing with an expanding technology and faster pace of life.

In light of the growing number of corporations looking to psychiatrists and social workers to help address employee concerns, the Church can no longer afford the luxury of waiting for the world to ask to be served. Chaplains can expand the message of hope and salvation into the workplace where workers spend one-third of their lives on the job. All desperately need the love of Christ.

The aim of industrial or corporate business chaplaincy is to follow Jesus' example, to go wherever there are people in need and to help add meaning to their lives. More and more employers are recognizing the benefits of providing employees with more than paychecks. They are beginning to provide childcare, job sharing, fitness programs, and now, many are providing chaplains. For Christian business owners, a chaplain fulfills a desire to meet their employees' spiritual needs. Even secular CEOs are discovering that corporate chaplains can be a cost-effective way to deal with employees' personal issues, provide counseling, and improve morale.

Many employers find that providing their employees a spiritual counselor is more effective than high turnover. An industrial chaplain must work in a pluralistic environment and listen to employee concerns as the employee initiates counsel on such diverse topics as marital conflicts, alcoholism, drug abuse, financial fears, delinquency, etc. He or she must be compassionate without taking sides or becoming involved in management disputes. The workplace chaplain represents a vital new dimension of service to labor, as well as to professionally managed businesses and industrial workers. He or she is a reminder of the fact that God is concerned and at work in the world of technology and industrial change and conflict—wherever there is human need.

## *Ecclesiastical Endorsement Process*



**A**ny Nazarene elder or layperson who desires to serve as a full-time chaplain must be endorsed by the Church. Various standards apply, depending on the form or classification of chaplaincy. The academic requirements, especially for full-time chaplains, generally include a four-year liberal arts degree and a three-year graduate degree (90 semester hours from an accredited institution). Ordination is required for most full-time chaplaincy positions.

