A calling within a calling

CHAPLAIN

AMERICA'S NAVY

A GLOBAL FORCE FOR GOOD.™

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The ability to minister outside of the conventional setting. The chance to interact with members of diverse faith groups. The opportunity to make a profound difference in the lives of individuals on a regular basis. These are some of the things that make the work of Navy Chaplains so rewarding and so unique.

The Navy Chaplain Corps is made up of over 800 Navy Chaplains. Chaplains confirm more than 100 different faith groups currently represented (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist and many others). Each Chaplain is also a Navy Officer – meaning each holds an important leadership role.

Together, Navy Chaplains enable the free practice of religion for all the Sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen who serve. But their impact goes far beyond the mere exercise of religion.

JOB DESCRIPTION

As a Navy Chaplain, you will nurture the spiritual well-being of those around you. Living with them. Working with them. Eating with them. Praying with them. Understanding their needs and challenges like no one else – in a ministry that is truly 24/7.

In this role, you will offer everything from faith leadership to personal advice to much-needed solace. Using your own faith to prop up others. Expanding the depth and reach of your ministry. All while living up to the guiding principles of the Chaplain Mission:

- Providing religious ministry and support to those of your own faith
- Facilitating the religious requirements of those from all faiths
- Caring for all servicemembers and their families, including those subscribing to no specific faith
- Advising the command to ensure the free exercise of religion

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Navy Chaplain, you will be the one servicemembers seek when they need someone to listen or someone to guide them. You will be a trusted outlet when they struggle with personal issues or search for answers at crucial moments in their lives. And often, you will be the constant support for young people away from home for the first time.

The job of a Chaplain spans a broad range of duties and a great diversity of backgrounds. It involves seeing people through some of their most joyful moments to their most personally challenging, and it could include any of these responsibilities:

- Conduct worship services in a variety of settings
- Perform religious rites and ceremonies such as weddings, funeral services and baptisms
- Counsel individuals who seek guidance
- Oversee religious education programs, such as Sunday school and youth groups
- Visit and provide spiritual guidance and care to hospitalized personnel and/or their family members
- Train lay leaders who conduct religious education programs
- Promote attendance at religious services, retreats and conferences
- Advise leaders at all levels regarding morale, ethics and spiritual well-being

NAVY POLICY

Navy Chaplains are expected to support and ensure the free practice of religion for all. Therefore, you must be:

- Willing to function in the diverse and pluralistic environment of the military
- Tolerant of diverse religious traditions
- Respectful of the rights of individuals to determine their own religious convictions

The specialized environment of the military requires Navy Chaplains to embrace these guidelines without compromising the tenets of their own religious traditions. Also, it is important to note that Navy Chaplains are officially considered noncombatants and not authorized to bear arms.

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WORK ENVIRONMENT

When you're deployed, you'll be immersed in the daily lives of Navy personnel. Serving God. Serving country. Serving faithfully alongside your congregation. In what can be best described as a ministry of presence, you will be there to offer guidance and insight in the moment, whenever you're needed.

At times, this will involve ministering to group audiences in a scheduled worship setting. But often, this will involve ministering to individuals on a very personal level. Under these circumstances, you'll have the ability to build meaningful relationships and to become a trusted advisor.

Where you fulfill your higher calling could be anywhere on land or at sea. You could be presiding over religious ceremonies on a base. Conducting services from the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. Or even performing baptisms somewhere in the middle of the desert. Your job as a Navy Chaplain could literally take you anywhere in the world.

TRAINING, EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT

Serving as an Active Duty Chaplain

Interested in serving full-time as a Chaplain in the Navy? If you qualify, your 12 weeks of initial training will begin with five weeks of Officer Development School in Newport, R.I., and end with seven weeks at the Naval Chaplain School in Fort Jackson, S.C. Active Duty Chaplains normally complete their training within three months of commissioning.

The Chaplain School program includes four weeks of basic school, which covers professional chaplaincy, working in a pluralistic environment, chaplain corps history, ethics, ship visit and religious ministry team training with a Religious Program Specialist. Chaplain School also includes three weeks of Religious Ministry Team Exercise (RMTEX); field exercise for religious ministry teams; Tools, Empowerment and Ministry Skills (TEAMS); premarriage training; suicide prevention; and more. The combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training that you receive in the Chaplain School program offers leadership and professional development while also preparing you to provide religious ministry wherever Navy Chaplains serve – at sea, at home or overseas.

After Chaplain School, you can continue your education throughout your career as a Navy Chaplain. There are opportunities for continuing education through the funded Graduate Education Program while being paid full-time as a Navy Officer. Plus, participate in clinical pastoral education and receive tuition assistance for other off-duty educational programs.

Serving as a Reserve Chaplain

Interested in serving part-time as a Chaplain in the Navy Reserve? If you qualify, you will complete the same 12 weeks of training as Active Duty Chaplains. However, you may divide your training into separate sessions in order to make it more convenient. The only time requirement is that you complete training within two years of commissioning.

SERVICE OPTIONS

Whether you're beginning your career as a faith leader, wanting to expand your ministry or hoping to take it in a new direction, the Navy is a great way to follow your calling. There are both full-time and part-time service options available.

Full-time, Active Duty service – In this position, you can take full advantage of the available career and leadership opportunities. You can impact the lives of many – all over the world. Enjoy the broad range of benefits. And experience possibilities of travel and adventure to the utmost.

Part-time, Reserve service – In this position, you will commit to as few as two days a month and two weeks a year with opportunities for additional service and pay. This gives you the flexibility to minister in the Navy and still continue to have a ministerial career outside of the Navy. You can enjoy many of the benefits and advantages of full-time service. And experience the rewards of military chaplaincy while maintaining responsibilities to your congregation at home.

Want to gain additional insight into what it would be like to serve as a Navy Chaplain – full-time or part-time? Be sure to visit **facebook.com/navychaplain** to ask questions. Get answers. And connect with current, former and aspiring Navy Chaplains.

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TRAINING, EDUCATION AND ADVANCEMENT (CONTINUED)

Joining as a Graduate Student

In the process of starting or completing your graduate theological degree? If so, consider entering the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program (CCPO) as a student.

With CCPO, you'll be commissioned as a Navy Officer while you finish your theological studies at an accredited seminary or graduate school. And through the program, you'll receive on-the-job training under the direct supervision of a Navy Chaplain.

It's your chance to see Navy Chaplains at work and to experience the challenges and rewards of working in the diverse situations the Navy provides. You may go to the Fleet, shadow Chaplains on ships, or have hands-on ministry opportunities at places such as Bethesda Naval Hospital or Naval Base San Diego.

Once you have completed the requirements, you will go through an interview process with your Recruiter and the Chaplain Candidate Program Manager. After that, a Selection Board at the Chief Chaplains Office will determine whether you meet the requirements to become a member of the Navy Chaplain Corps. Completing the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program (CCPO) qualifies you for significant pay advantages once you enter Active Duty.

Contact an Officer Recruiter for more information about Chaplain training, education and advancement.

BENEFITS

The precepts of godly service aren't tied to material wealth. Nevertheless, serving as a Chaplain in the Navy qualifies you for benefits that are valuable by any standard.

With Active Duty service – Look forward to a competitive salary with tax-free allowances for housing and meals. 30 days' vacation with pay earned every year. Plus comprehensive medical and dental coverage (which includes family).

With Reserve service – Benefit from supplemental income (the equivalent of four days' pay for only 16 hours worked each drill weekend and two weeks of paid training each year). Low-cost life insurance options. Plus VA home loans (based on service commitment).

With either service option – Receive scheduled pay raises, regular promotions and retirement benefits. Tax-free shopping privileges at military stores and access to Officers' clubs and recreational facilities. Plus free or low-cost travel opportunities.

All this while you discover the pride, purpose and satisfaction of serving your country. Enjoy respect as a religious leader and an Officer. And make enduring connections that will last a lifetime.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEPS?

Once you're inspired, better informed and seriously interested, here's how to proceed:

1. TALK TO YOUR RECRUITER

- Ask questions and review your qualifications
- Talk about the responsibilities and opportunities associated with Navy Chaplaincy
- **If you're pursuing your theological degree:** Discuss the advantages of entering through the Navy Chaplain Candidate Program (CCPO)
- **If you're already involved in ministry:** Discuss your service options and service commitment details

2. APPLY FOR THE POSITION

- Be prepared to provide personal information that includes birth certificate, social security card, academic transcripts, proof of ecclesiastical endorsement, professional references (if applicable) and medical history
- Pass a full medical examination
- Participate in a precommitment interview
- Accept an Officer commission in the Navy or Navy Reserve

3. BEGIN YOUR TRAINING

- **Navy and Navy Reserve** – Newly commissioned Officers start by completing Officer Development School (ODS) – a comprehensive five-week course in Navy history, tradition and leadership

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QUALIFICATIONS

To be eligible to become a Navy Chaplain, you must:

- Be a U.S. citizen at least 21 years of age and be able to complete 20 years of service before age 62
- Meet certain medical and physical fitness standards
- Hold a BA or BS degree with not less than 120 semester hours from a qualified educational institution; and hold a post-baccalaureate graduate degree with not less than 72 semester hours in theological or related studies
- Hold an ecclesiastical endorsement from a religious faith organization registered with the Department of Defense (DOD)

Note that qualifications for part-time service as a Chaplain in the Navy Reserve may vary. Contact an Officer Recruiter for details.

AFTER THE NAVY

Regardless of denomination, the full scope of ministry you'll practice in the Navy immerses you in virtually all aspects of traditional ministry – and takes you beyond. It exposes you to opportunities not available in everyday civilian settings.

Your time as a Chaplain will give you unique experiences and fulfillment to draw from and take with you in future religious undertakings. The people you'll meet, the lives you'll touch and the places you'll visit will stay in your memory and in your heart for a lifetime.

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