

Think outside the church walls

Consider a ministry of pastoral care
as a chaplain or pastoral counselor



God's people are found

behind prison walls, on board Navy ships, in hospitals, or mental health facilities. God's people are not always United Methodist or even Christian.

One way The United Methodist Church serves all God's people is through the ministry of endorsed chaplains and pastoral counselors appointed to prisons, hospitals, the armed forces, and counseling centers—serving God's people in difficult places outside the traditional church walls.

The church is looking for women and men who are gifted, equipped, and prepared for these ministries.

Generally, chaplains and pastoral counselors are required to be ordained, to have completed the specialized training for a specific setting, and to have received the endorsement of the church through the United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA), General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Endorsement is both a process and a relationship. The process determines readiness for pastoral ministry in specialized settings. Chaplains and counselors who are endorsed receive support and connection through UMEA and the annual conference.

In more than 16 different civilian settings and in all areas of the military, United Methodist ordained ministers feel God's call. Here are some of the reasons why these people feel called to serve.

God's Hand at Work

A couple of months after I joined, United Flight 232 crashed at my base. This life-changing experience changed my writing, my understanding of Christianity, my whole life. I see God's hand in my joining the guard. What started out as a plan to expand my ministry ended up expanding my whole view of God and Christian life.

Gregory S. Clapper,
Air National Guard chaplain

An Irresistible Calling

This is where I do ministry. It is where God has called me to offer Christ.

Karen Meecker, Army chaplain



As a chaplain, I go . . .

As a chaplain, my main job is to make sure each airman and airwoman under my care is able to worship in a way that they are comfortable. Most Air Force personnel are 19 to 29 years old. I am with these young adults in ways that I have never seen in the local church. I go where they work, play, rest, eat, and live. I know who they are, and I see to it they know who I am.

Barry Ball, Air Force Reserve chaplain





An Incarnational Ministry

I am an Army chaplain because it allows me the opportunity to practice an incarnational ministry like no other. God cloaks me in the same uniform the soldiers wear and requires that I walk through the same shadow of death. As I am among soldiers, I am privileged to represent His Kingdom. Wow . . . Why would I do anything else?

Jeremy Mount, Army chaplain

Hospice Work Explores Spiritual and Emotional Healing

My work involves exploring the spiritual and emotional healing opportunities for patients and their families.

Knowing a patient's spiritual and emotional needs requires intense, empathetic listening. Once those needs are clear, communication with their families is essential. For me, being a hospice chaplain is an honor and a sacred trust.

Alan Barone, hospice chaplain





Role as Missionary to Young Adults

I am a Navy chaplain because the work models incarnational ministry that lives, sleeps, eats, sails, and marches with the congregation. I am a Navy chaplain because of the pastoral fulfillment I have found in the counseling, travel, uncertainties, and spiritual adventure that comes with the territory.

Most of all, I am a Navy chaplain because Wesley's words, "The world is my parish" come alive in real and personal ways.

Robert Phillips, Navy chaplain

Ministry Enhancer

Working alongside people from different faiths and faith groups is an education in diversity. I've been humbled to observe God working with people whose outlooks are different from my own. The Naval Reserve provides training, motivation to stay in shape and travel, as well as opportunities to lead and to excel.

**Stephen B. Wall-Smith,
Navy Reserve chaplain**

Presence in the Sacred Moments

Everyone has a sacred story to tell. As chaplain I am there in the sacred holy moments in which people need a companion to enter into the journey with them. Completely in the flow of the moment, giving my full attention, listening to discover this person's sorrow, suffering, joy, strength, unique experiences, and connectedness to the divine. Such moments allow the fullness of our human spirit and divine presence to be fully realized.

**Melinda Cree-Anthony,
hospital chaplain**



Ministry of Living Quilt Repair

As a pastoral counselor I am trained as a pastor in theology and ministry, and I am trained as a professional mental health counselor. I am called to extend the church's ministry beyond the walls of the local church.

My ministry includes counseling techniques and interpretation, biblical storytelling, speaking truth to the powerful, and listening attentively to the sacred story presented by each one in the counseling space and responding as God's representative. All of these are important in my ministry of living quilt repair:

Ellen Comstock, pastoral counselor.



God Breaks Through the Hardest of Hearts

When people enter prison, their former lives are stripped away and they are separated from family and friends. Many feel as though they have hit rock bottom. However, when imprisoned people come face to face with the love of the Lord, their future becomes brighter and hope flourishes. Time and time again, God breaks through the hardest of hearts and hardest of criminals.

Heidi Kugler, prison chaplain

More Alike than Different

I am the chaplain in a nursing home complex where the average resident's age is 90. They want to maintain their dignity, self-esteem, and faith. That is where I come in. It is one spirit talking to another spirit—sharing hope, encouragement, and love. We are all children of God, regardless of our age, and we are more alike than we are different. We are journeying through life together.

**James M. Weisz,
retirement community chaplain**

Everyone is important to God.

Everyone is worthy of God's grace revealed in Jesus Christ.

The United Methodist Church takes seriously its responsibility to provide a complete ministry to persons in special situations with special needs.

Interested in knowing more? Visit www.GBHEM.org/chaplains.

Civilian Endorsement Settings

Children's Home
Clinical Pastoral Education
General Hospital
Hospice
Marriage and Family Therapy
Mental Health
Pastoral Counseling
Police
Prison/Correctional Institution
Retirement Community
Specialized
Substance Abuse
Veterans Affairs
Workplace

Military Chaplaincy Settings

Army
Active – Reserve – National Guard
Navy
Active – Reserve
Air Force
Active – Reserve – Air National Guard



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