

Chaplains Basic Training



Name and state and your organization if other than VFW comrade

1

After launching the Zoom meeting, click on the "Participants" icon at the bottom of the window.



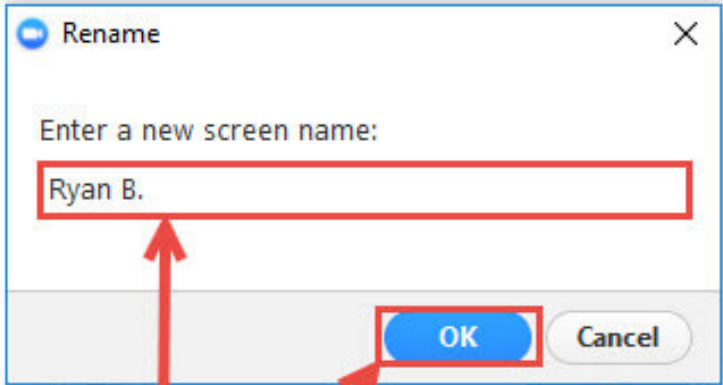
2

In the "Participants" list on the right side of the Zoom window, hover over your name and click on the "Rename" button.



3

Type in the display name you'd like to appear in the meeting and click on "OK".



How to rename yourself in Zoom

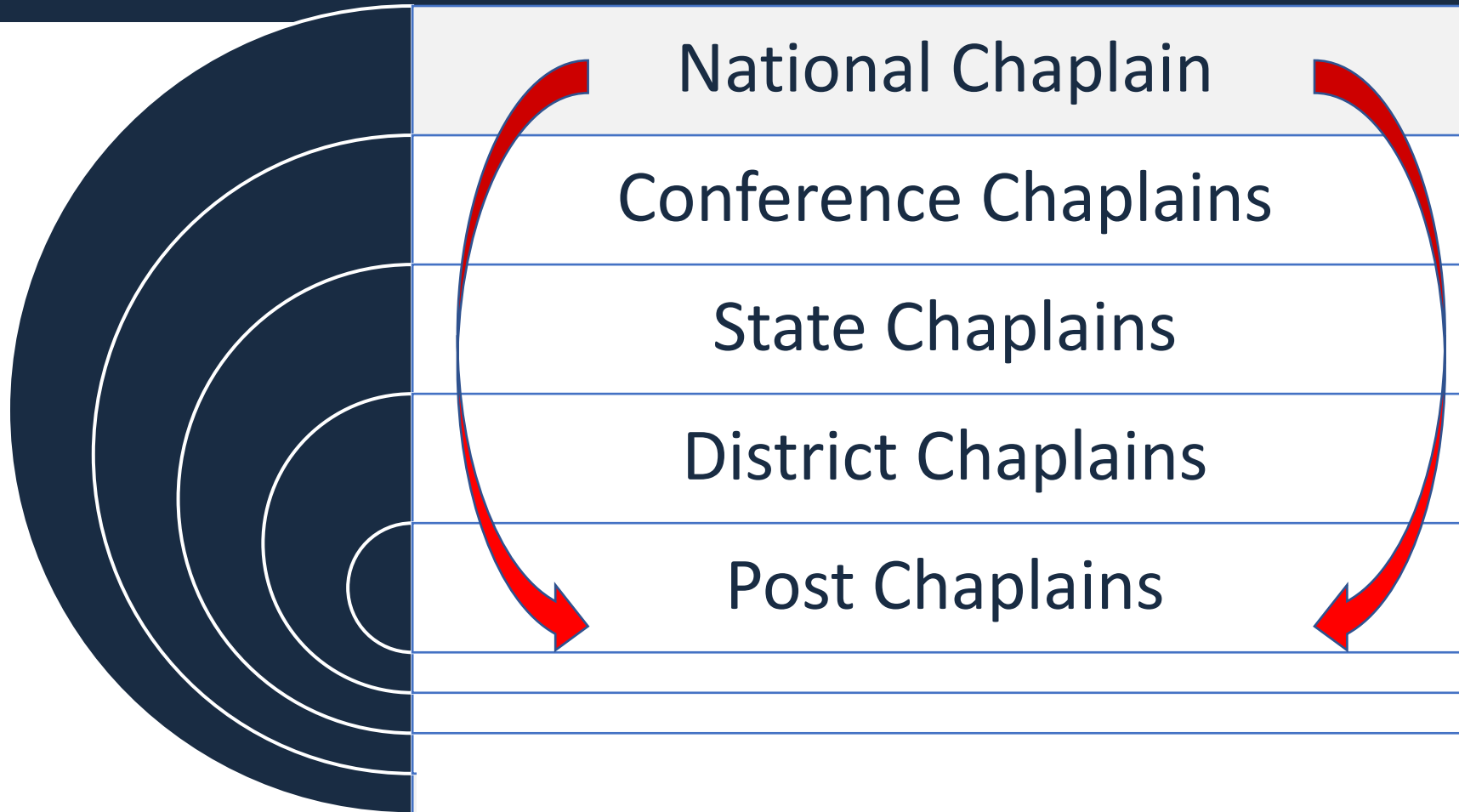
Topics



1. Org structure: chaplains
2. Your role & duties
3. Available training & resources for Chaplains
4. Chaplain reports



Organizational Structure



Organizational Structure



**Elected at National convention:
Nominated by conference**

National Chaplain

Elected by Conference

Conference Chaplains

Elected at Dept Convention

State Chaplains

Appointed by District Commander

District Chaplains

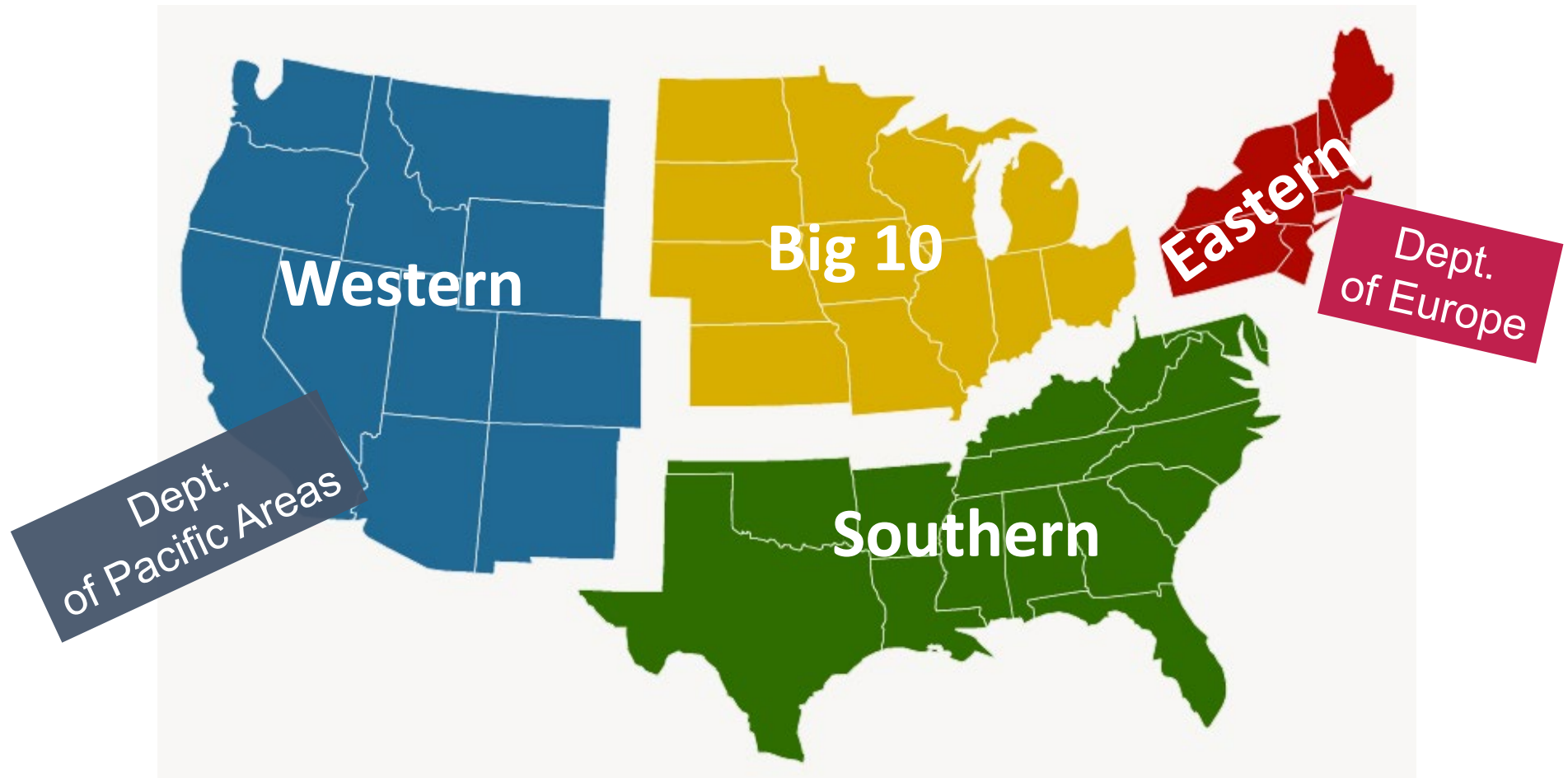
Appointed by post Commander

Post Chaplains

Develop Assistants

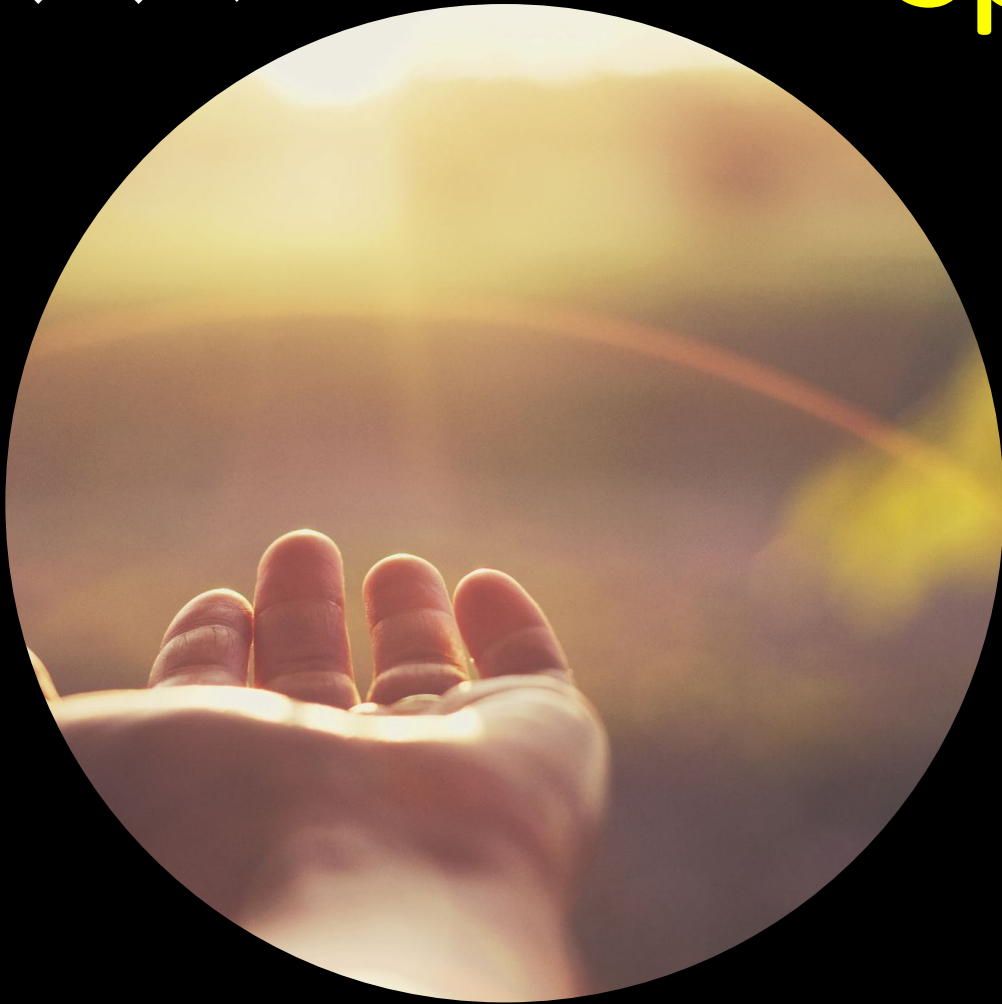
Each is elected /appointed for one year term

Four Conferences





Spirituality in America



- 89% of Americans believe in a god or universal spirit
- Only 50% of these believers regularly attend any religions services



“Demographic and Military Service Characteristics of Military Families”

National Institutes for Health

- Christian faith (69%), with the most common denominational preferences being Catholic (20%) and Baptist (14%)
- Non-Christian reported affiliations that made up 1 percent or more of the force were
 - Humanist (4%),
 - Pagan (1%)
 - Jewish (1%)
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK547615/#:~:text=The%20majority%20of%20military%20personnel,2>) accessed 8/13/2023

Many faiths and
Worldviews

Use your
resources!





Use your Resources



The Work of the Chaplain

**the Chaplain nurtures
the living.**

**the Chaplain cares for
the dying.**

**the Chaplain honors the
dead.**

WHAT THE CHAPLAIN PROVIDES

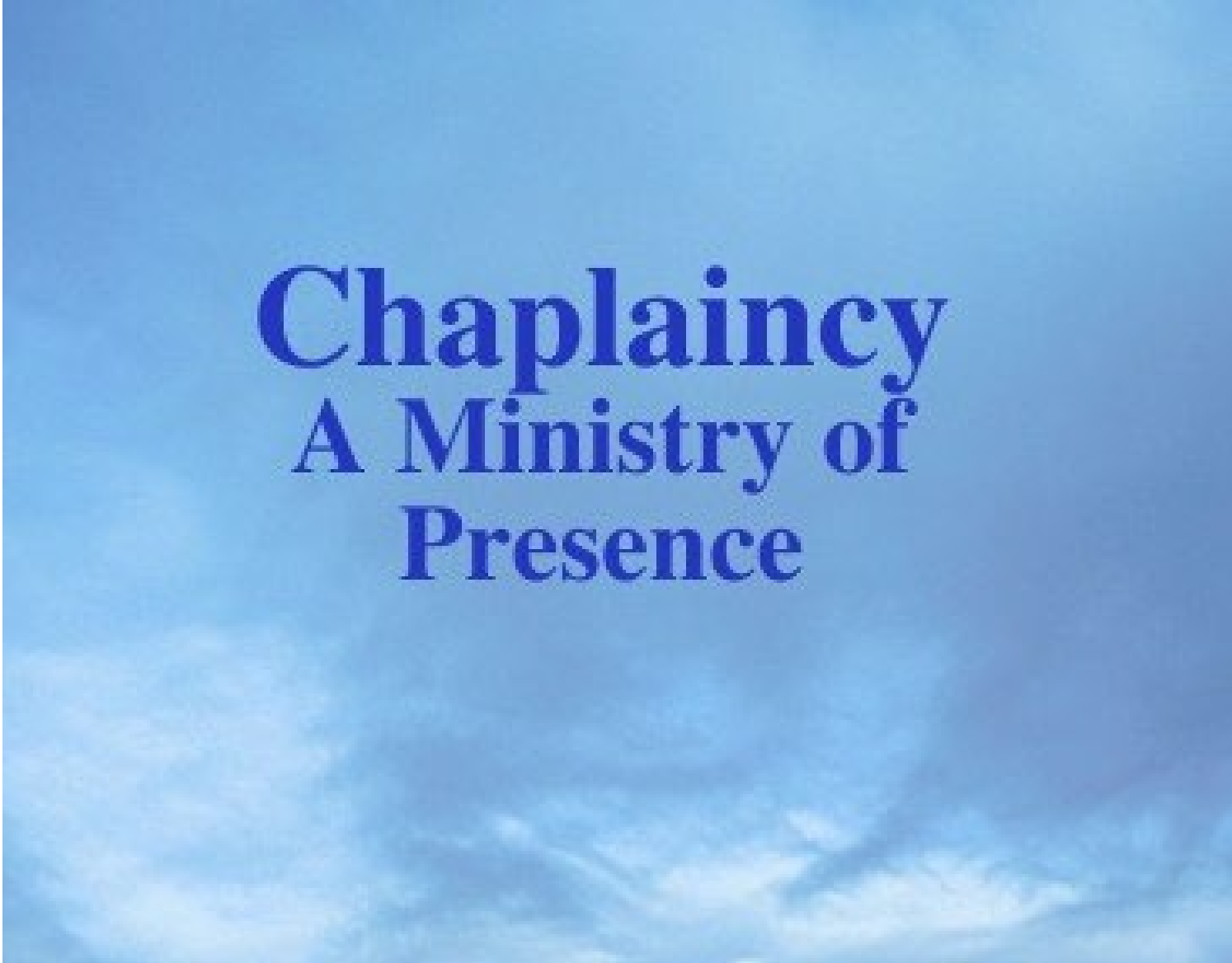
1. SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE:
2. ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:
3. CONDUCTING/ASSISTING AT FUNERALS:
4. COUNSELING:
5. VISITATION:
6. ATTENDING FUNCTIONS:



How we can serve our members

- Chaplains can help fill that gap for the unchurched.
- Broach the topic of spirituality
- Be available and a good listener
- You don't have to be an expert; you just have to care.
- How to achieve this: Be a friend! We all know how to do this





Chaplaincy

A Ministry of Presence

How to be approachable

Don't have an agenda

Listen more than you speak

Non judgmental

Initiate conversations and get to know people

QUALIFICATIONS OF CHAPLAINS

A VFW Chaplain candidate is not required to be a "professional" clergy person or have formal seminary training. . (Most Post/Auxiliary Chaplains are not.) The qualifications are simple yet important:

- 1-** A willingness to serve the office.
- 2-** A sense of spiritual maturity.
- 3-** Committed to providing a Chaplain's ministry.
- 4-** A caring person.
- 5-** A desire to help people.
- 6-** The ability to keep things confidential.(Extremely important.)
- 7-** Willing to be neutral and objective when settling disputes.
- 8-** Chaplains should be proud of their office and determined to do a good job.

What's NOT required

- Ordination
- Seminary (or similar)degree
- Certification



New Chaplain Learning Goals



Familiarize yourself with
the *Chaplains Handbook*



Familiarize yourself with
VFW National Chaplains
Website



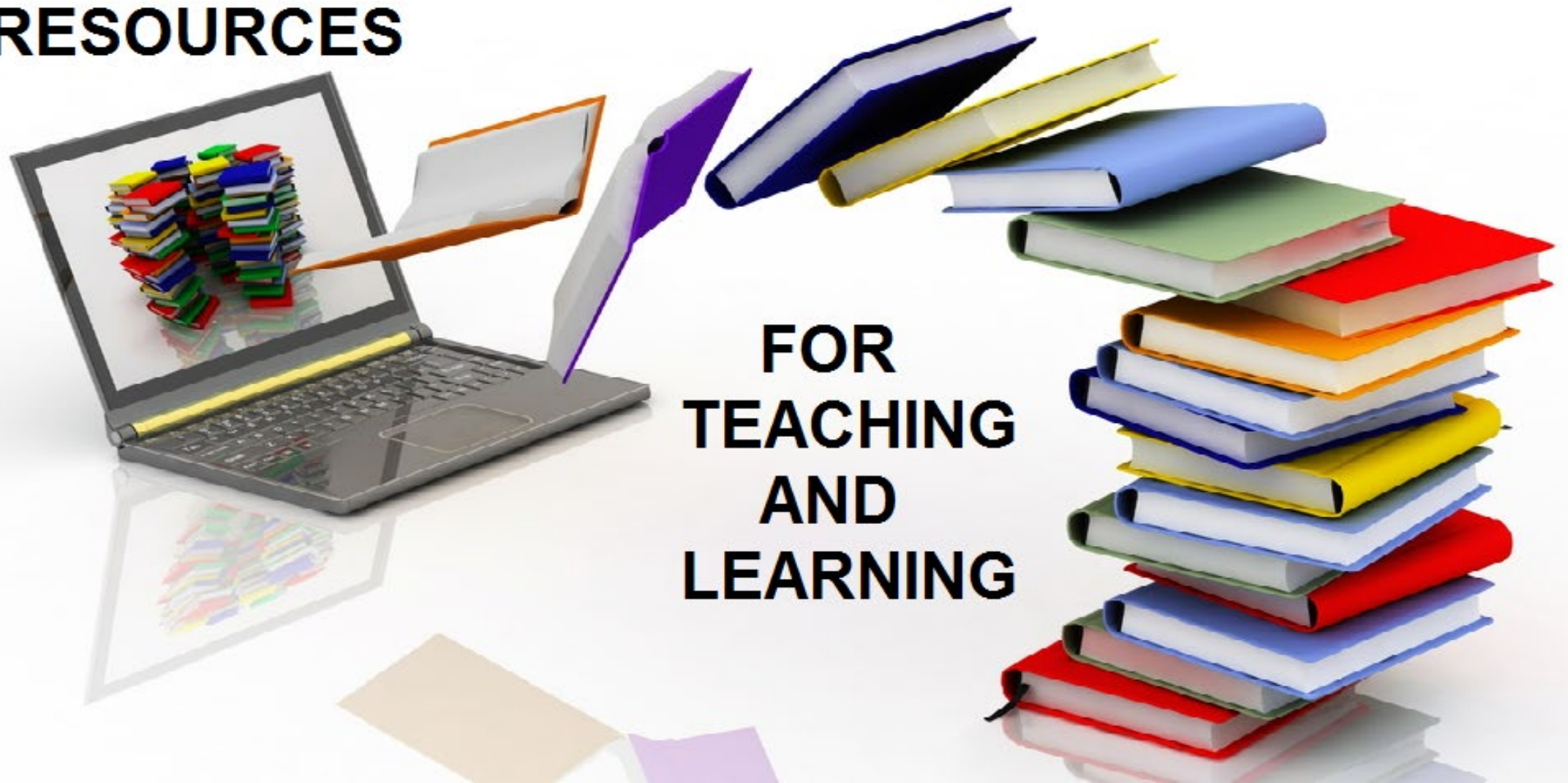
Attend monthly
chaplains training

Equipping Yourself as Chaplain

- Communicate your needs and interests
- Network with other chaplains
- Ask for help
- Take advantage of any training available
- Share all resources with other Chaplains



ONLINE RESOURCES



https://lotcs.org/vfw_chaplain.html



The seal is circular with a gold border. Inside the border, the words "VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS CHAPLAIN" are written in gold at the top, and "INTEGRITY COMMITMENT SERVICE" is written in gold at the bottom. The center of the seal features a torch with a bright yellow flame, set against a dark blue background with white stars. A white scroll with a red ribbon is visible at the bottom right of the seal.

scribe

Welcome to the VFW Chaplain Portal

Listen Comrade Chaplains,

There comes a moment when someone looks to you—and nothing in the room feels steady. A veteran loses a loved one, a family member is hurting or a call comes when you least expect it. In those moments, you are counted on to **stand in the gap**—to listen, being a steady source of caring comfort. This space was built for that moment. No theory. No fluff.

Just real tools for real situations—so when the ground starts to shake, you don't have to.

Or just search for “VFW National chaplain”



ENHANCED BY Google

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Deborah Halter

National Chaplain

Veterans of Foreign Wars



Search



1:41 PM
8/13/2026

VFW National Chaplain Workshops

JUL 2026, Reno, NV(Class Presented by Western Conference Chaplain Frank Correa)

Class Documentation

[Ethics for Chaplains Slideshow](#) (pptx)

[Ethics for Chaplains Slideshow](#) (PDF)

[Ethics for Chaplains](#) Lecture Notes (PDF)

[Ethics for Chaplains](#) Lecture Notes (Word)

Subscribe

AUG 2025, Columbus, OH

[Workshop Slideshow PDF](#) (Class Presented by Past National Chaplain Peter R. Hook, Past National Chaplain Deborah Halter and Western Conference Chaplain Frank Correa)

[VFW Ritual Prayers PDF](#) (Presented by Past National Chaplain Jim Jenkins)

ZOOM TRAINING

IMPORTANT NOTE:

All Zoom training links will be shared via email. When participants log into a Zoom training session, the screen name must be formatted as: **First** and **last** name with the **state**. For example: **Darren Atkins (KY)**. This will help us know who is on, enabling us to count attendance by state.



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Updated August 10, 2026

[VFW Ceremonies Handbook](#)

Updated July 20, 2026

[2026 VFW Digital Podium Edition](#)[Subscribe](#)

"We gratefully acknowledge Supreme Headquarters, Military Order of the Cootie, for generously hosting this chaplain web page."





The Chaplain's Handbook

Articles - Information - Prayers - Guidelines

Revised by Rev. Peter R. Hook
Past National Chaplain
August 14, 2023

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Chaplain
Learning
opportunities



VFW Chaplains



National Chaplains Training meetings

3rd Thursday of most months

7:30 p.m. CST monthly ZOOM
training

Contact to be on notification list
peterhook@verizon.net

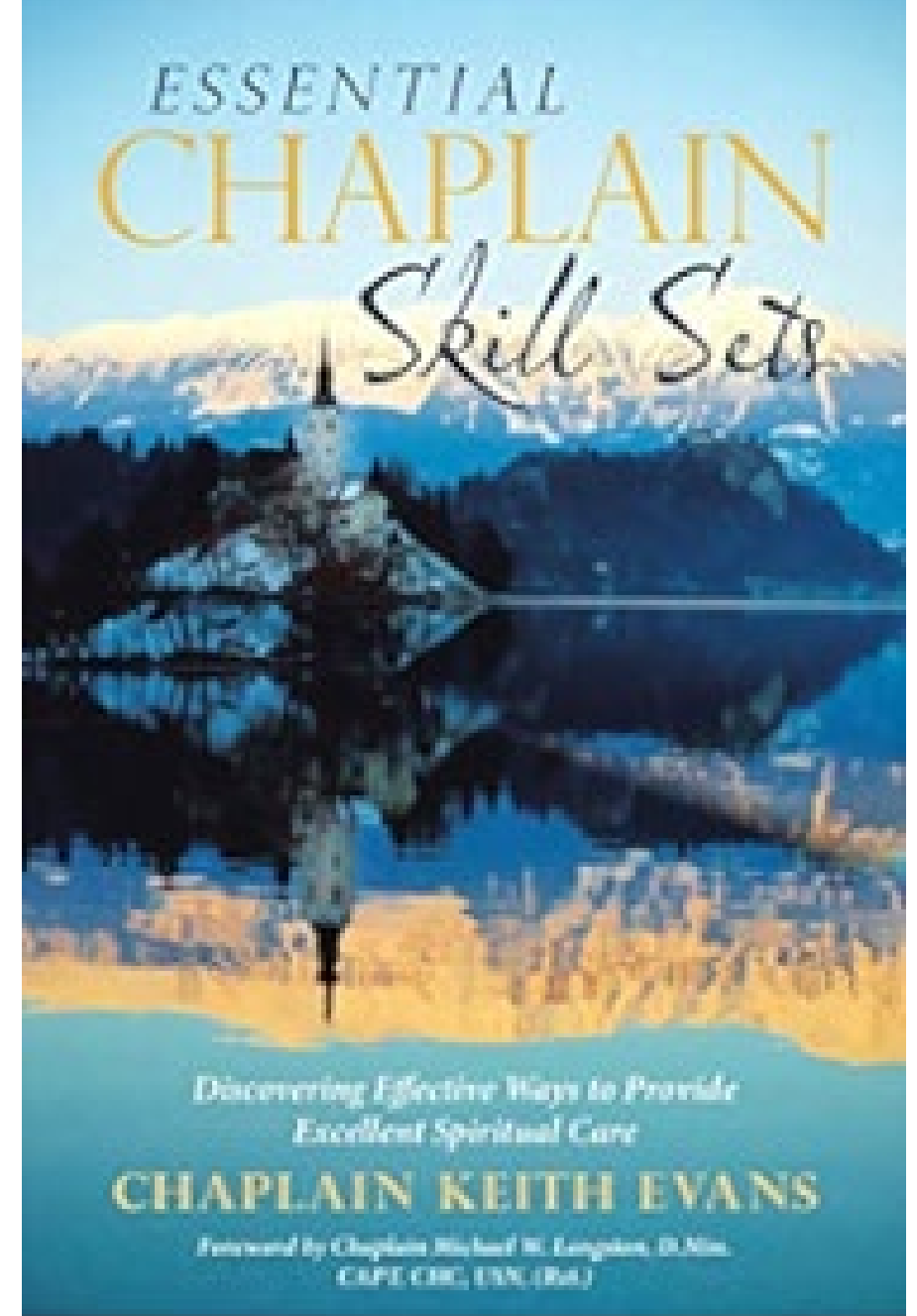
Previous training classes

- Introduction to VFW Chaplaincy
- Praying in the VFW Environment
- Lessons learned as a Chaplain,
- lessons learned.
- Dealing with Grief
- Suicide Awareness
- PTSD
- Ethics

Previous training classes

- VFW Rituals,
- Confidentiality issues
- Active listening skills, Draping the Charter
- Basic introduction to different religions and faith groups.
- Hospital visits
- Dashboard reporting, the importance of crediting chaplain work

Great Introductory book On Chaplaincy Basics



Chaplaincy Bibliography



- Baily, Joseph. The Last Thing We Talk About
-
- Becker, Arthur, H. The Compassionate Visitor; Resources for Ministering to the Ill
-
- Biddle, Perry, H. A hospital Visitation Manual
-
- Cheston, Shanon E. (Ed.) Essentials For Chaplains
-
- Dayringer, Richard (Ed.) Pastor and Patient; A Handbook for Clergy Who Visit the Sick
-
- Kirkwood, Neville, A. Pastoral Care in Hospitals
-
- Kirkwood, Neville, A. A Hospital Handbook on Multiculturalism and Religion.
-

Chaplaincy Bibliography

- Linn, Erin. I know Just How You Feel: avoiding the clichés of grief
-
- Reimer, Lawrence. The Hospital Handbook: A Practical Guide to Hospital Visitation.
-
- Wiersbe, Warren. Comforting the Bereaved
-
- Wiersbe, Warren. When Life Falls Apart
-
- Wright H. Norman. Crisis Counseling
-
- Yancy, Philip. Where is God When it Hurts
-
- Bible Promise Book.
- Keith Evans, Essential Chaplain Skill Sets: Discovering Effective Ways to Provide Excellent Spiritual Care



Apply God's Word to Your Life TODAY!

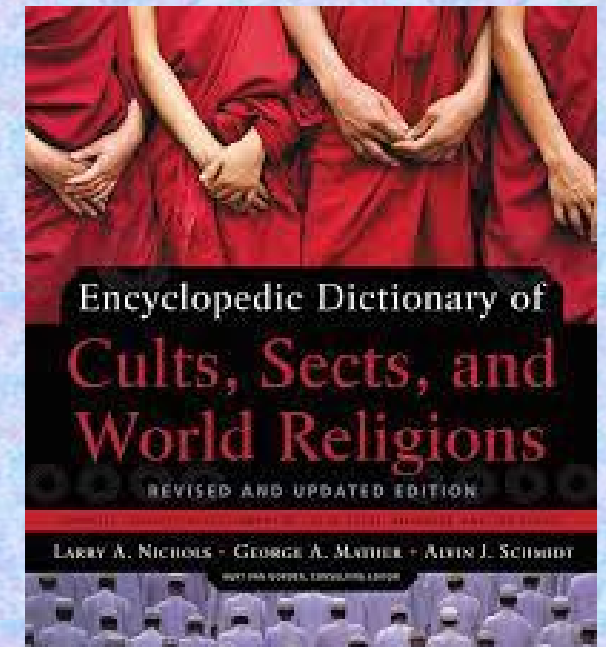
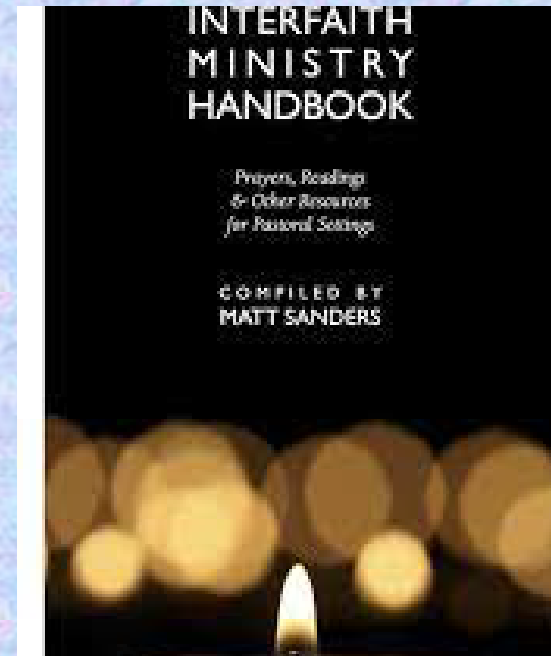
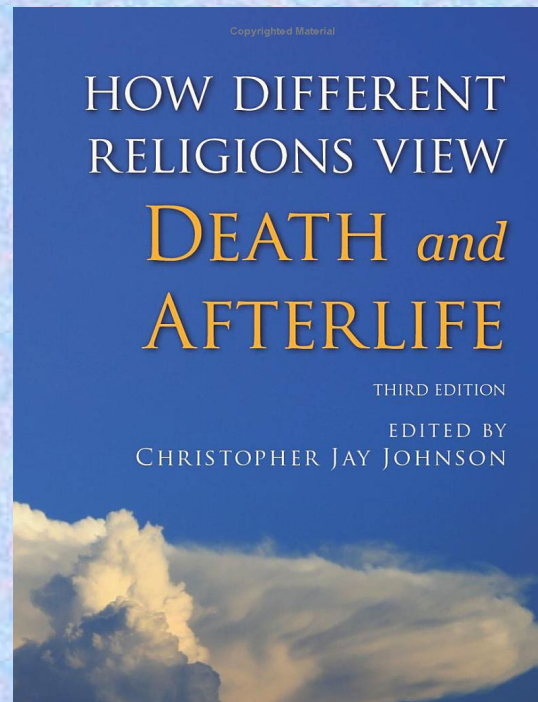
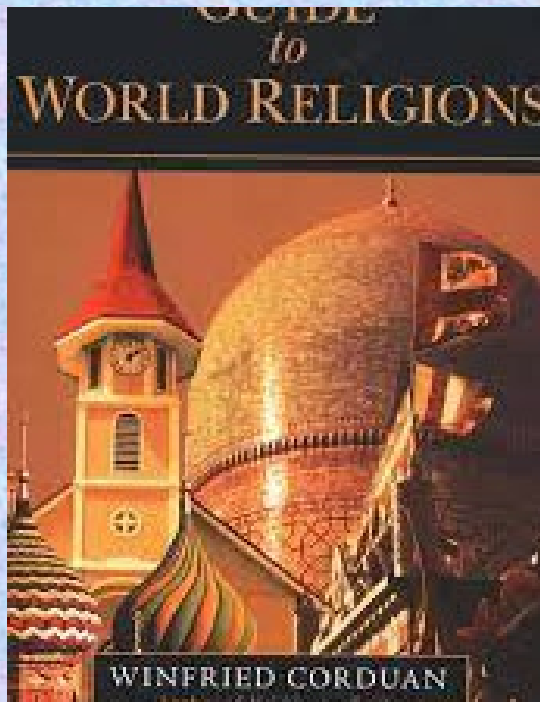
the NLT
**BIBLE
PROMISE
BOOK**



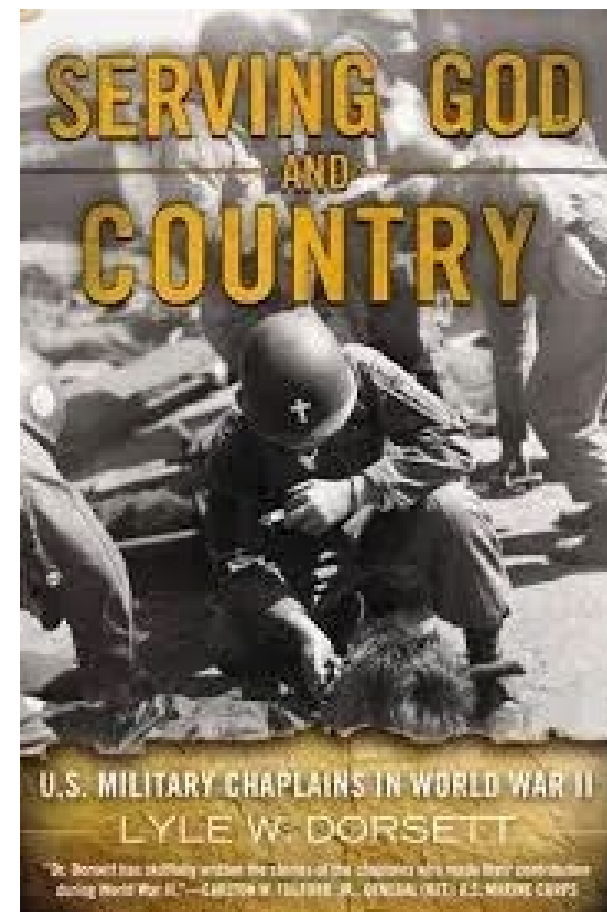
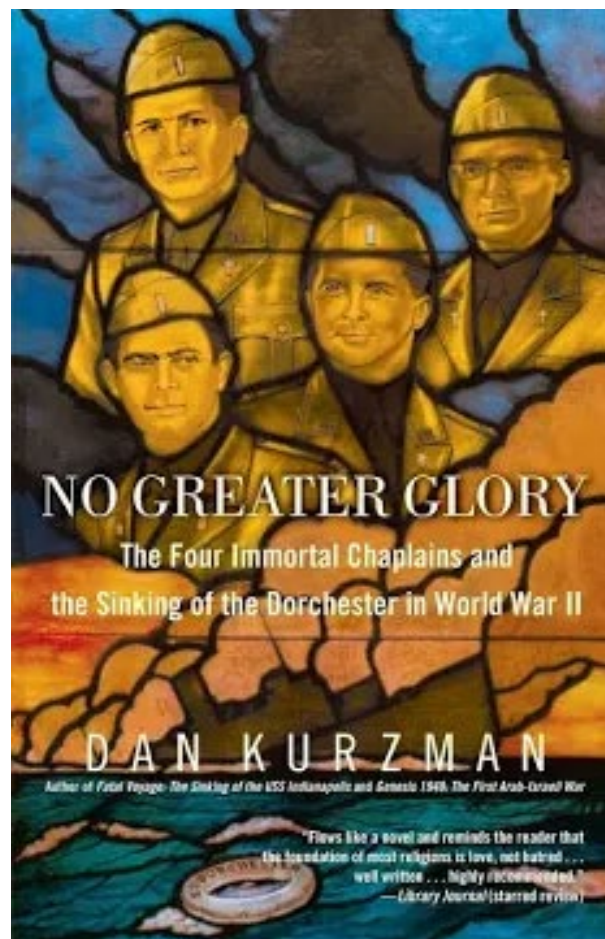
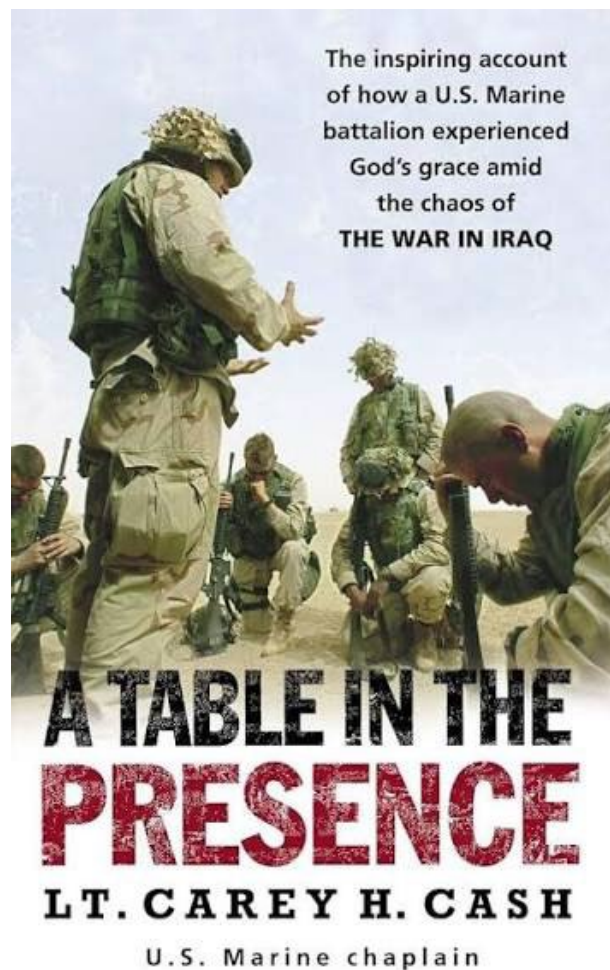
GOOD GRIEF

Granger E.
Westberg

A Companion for Every Loss



Many Resources on world religions



A Basic Introduction on informal counseling

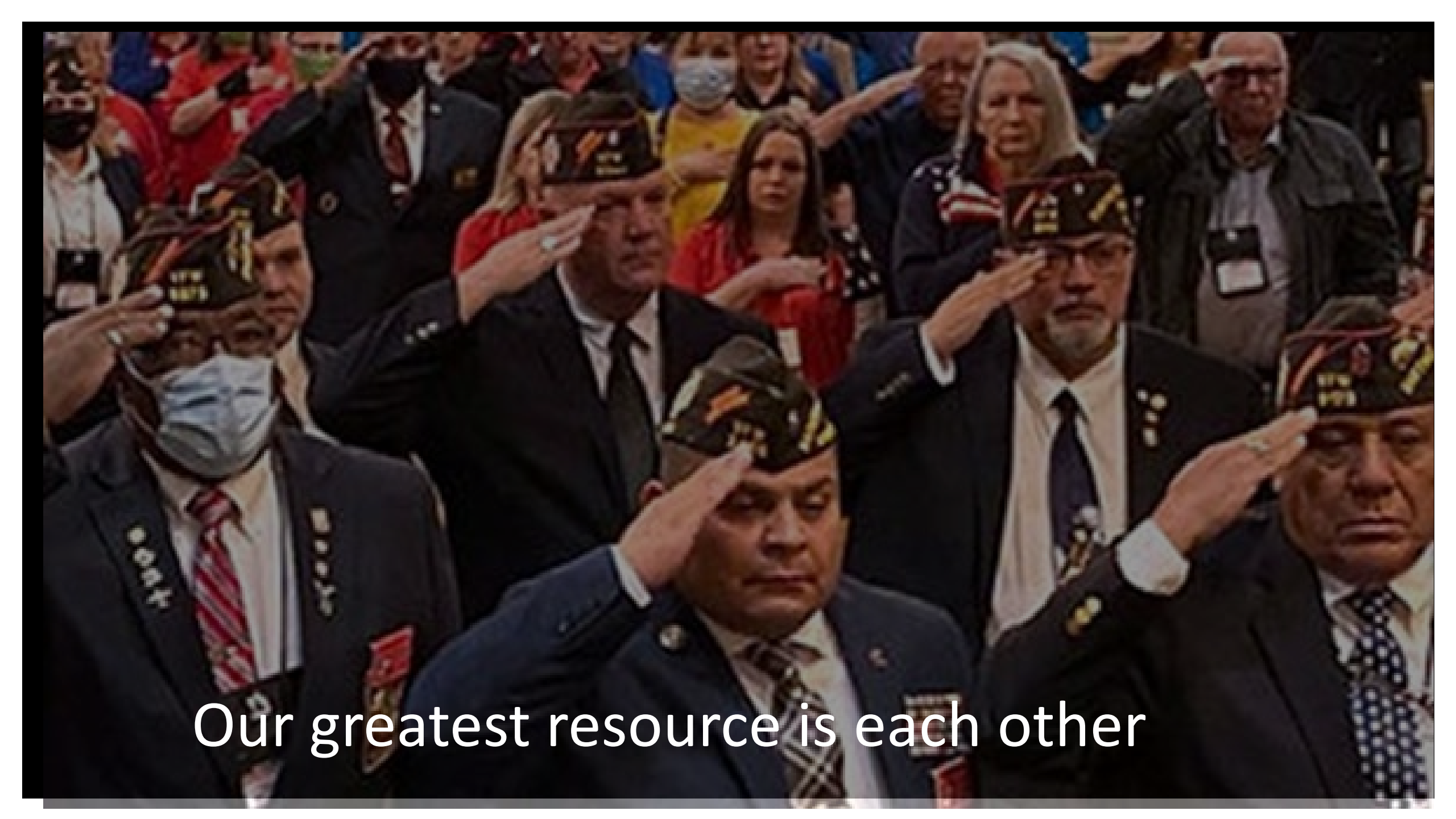
Suggested reading
Excellent and short easy read

COFFEE CUP COUNSELING

How to be
ready when
friends ask
for help

HAROLD SALA

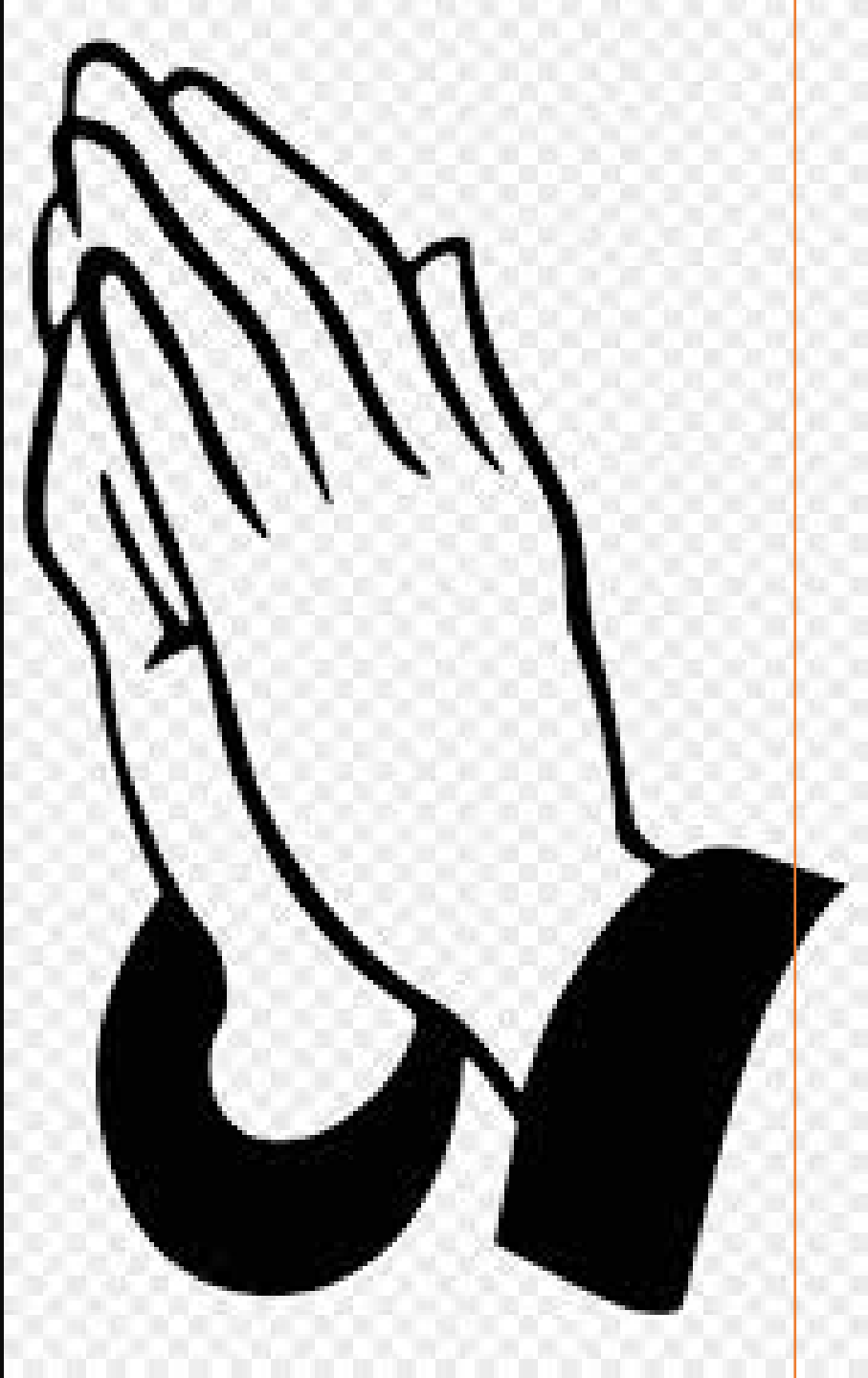


A photograph of a group of men in military uniforms, likely the U.S. Marine Corps, saluting. They are wearing dark blue uniforms with gold rank insignia and campaign medals. The man on the far left is wearing a white surgical mask. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, some wearing masks. The scene appears to be a formal ceremony or a public event.

Our greatest resource is each other

Prayers

1. Changes to Podium Edition
2. Options: a. use verbatim,
b. modify prayers
c. write your own
3. Always be prepared
4. Shorter is better



Prayers

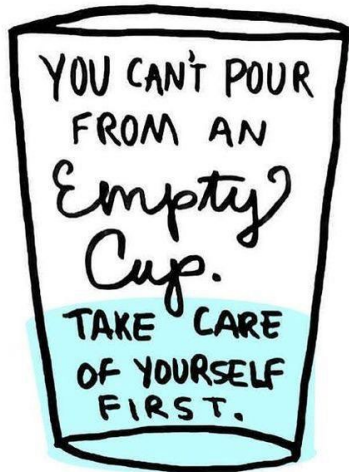
1. Meeting invocations and benedictions
2. Memorials
3. Graveside services
4. Public meetings
5. Banquet invocations
6. Holiday events
7. Prayers for the sick



Visitation Principles

- Client centered
- Listen
- Look professional
- Be a friend!





Know your limitations:
time, health etc

Set limits



Emergency Checklist

RAPID DECOMPRESSION

1. OXYGEN - ON, 100%
2. CREWMEMBER SECURED
AS REQUIRED
3. PATIENTS AND PASSENGERS
ASSIST AS REQUIRED

Put on your own oxygen mask first!



Chaplain self care

*Self-care is not about
self-indulgence, it's
about self-preservation.*

- Audreya Lorde

www.facebook.com/twuhealthstudies

*Thank
You*
for your time





Questions?

Contact information



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