

Emergency Chaplains



October 5, 2009

Dear Friend,

Emergency Chaplains is on the verge of great things. More agencies have requested our services to care for their first responders. Calls have increased for service through our counseling center. Opportunities to provide Critical Incident Stress Debriefings are on the rise.

With increased calls come increased demands for additional chaplains and more counselors. Additional hours are being spent in an effort to recruit, screen and train volunteers who will help us multiply our efforts to take the comfort of Christ to those in crisis.

Expenses have increased while donations have decreased. The economy and the summer have taken a toll on us physically, emotionally and financially.

You are receiving this letter as an appeal to support this important ministry.

Some people that I talk with are under the impression that Emergency Chaplains is funded by the agencies we serve. Others believe that I am employed by the county. A few think that a local church is paying our salary. A man once threatened to report me to the county manager's office for using a county vehicle for my personal use. The last time I checked my name was on the title.

We are not funded by the agencies that we support. We do not charge for counseling. I drive my personal vehicle when responding to calls for assistance.

Our desire is to support every agency that asks for our services. We want to take in every request for counseling that comes our way. I am willing to drive my Chevrolet anywhere there is a need for a chaplain.

This is why I am asking for your help. Most agencies that we support are not able to include us in their budget. Many individuals who need counseling never seek help because they are reluctant to pay a professional counselor. A good number of first responders are underpaid and could not afford to pay for help even though they are willing.

Will you commit to contributing \$10, \$25 or even \$100 each month to make sure that we are able to meet the needs of those we serve? Will you consider being a part of this ministry to our public servants and the people they care for?

Every time that you hear a siren or see flashing lights, you can know that you are providing chaplaincy for the public servants who take care of us. You can be assured that the brave men and women who answer and respond to emergency calls have someone who is willing to take care of them.

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You can also rest in the assurance that your financial support makes it possible for chaplains to respond and help citizens in the midst of great crisis.

Events such as sudden, unexpected death or injury happen every day. Many people find themselves completely alone during this time. Emergency Chaplains will go anywhere they are called...at anytime of day or night...so that no one has to face a great crisis alone.

One of the first calls that I ever responded to as a chaplain was an early morning cardiac arrest. The paramedic was able to reestablish a pulse in the 70 year old man and I assisted the fire fighters as they quickly moved the patient to the ambulance and rushed him to the hospital.

As the ambulance pulled away, I stood on the driveway with the wife of the patient. She looked at me through her tears and said, "what do I do now?"

I helped her get in my car and we headed toward the hospital. During the ride I learned that she and her husband had moved to Durham for their retirement. They were new in the area and did not know anyone. Their only son lived an 8 hour drive away.

Although her husband had been resuscitated by the medics, his death was inevitable due to his health and the additional damage to his heart. I called her son and got him headed toward Durham.

Then I sat down and stayed with her for the next 8 hours until her son arrived. I checked back every day for 3 days. On the 4th day, her husband died.

A couple of years later, Carter and I were greeted by a smiling, happy woman in a local restaurant. It was her...the lady whose husband had died. She thanked me, over and over, for helping her on that terrible day. "You stayed with me a long time," she said. "You took care of me when I didn't have anyone to take care of me."

That encounter changed my philosophy of ministry when it comes to caring for folks in crisis. The Lord clearly showed me that no one should be left alone when facing the greatest crisis of their life.

In the years since, I have been given many opportunities to minister to those in similar crises. Because of generous donations from people like you, I have been able to care for everyone that I have been called to help.

Your gift has never been more needed than now. We need your investment in order to keep answering these calls. We need your investment so that we can train others to do this same type of work.

You can use the enclosed envelope to send a tax-deductible gift to Emergency Chaplains. Later this fall, we will be sending information on how you can start a monthly bank draft if you would like.

Thanks for reading this far and thanks for your prayers and your financial support. Let's do this. Let's do this so that we can continue to bring the comfort of Christ to those in crisis.

In His Name,



Ralph Thompson