



Canadian Police Chaplain Association

September 2016

THE CHAPLAINS CHAIN NEWSLETTER LE LIEN DES AUMONIERES LA NOUVELLE



From the President's Desk



Greetings to all of you across Canada. I want to convey my thanks to all of you for the care and support that you bring to police officers, families, and employees of the police services under your care. As chaplains, we fill a unique role of "being there" as we listen and watch during the mundane times and sometimes are confronted with

the full weight of the crises and danger faced by police and peace officers in their line of duty. Your work is so important.

I invite and encourage you to attend our 2016 Annual Training Seminar in St. John's Newfoundland, November 13-18. If you have never attended an ATS before, I especially want to invite you. Training and support of chaplains is our primary purpose. We are looking forward to some very informative and practical training. Our trainers are experienced chaplains from our own ranks and specially skilled trainers from police and other organizations. We also hope to have some fun as we come together. St. John's has a character and flavor that should make for some interesting times.

The Executive has been hard at work. We will have a number of new manuals to review and approve at the Annual Meeting at the ATS. We will be presenting a new approach to accreditation training for certification with CPCA. Our new website is "almost live". We hope to be fully live by October 1st. Please come and join us!

With warm regards,
Chaplain Rod Willems
CPCA President

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Special points of interest

- Chaplain Robert Parmenter provides an update on Fort McMurray after the fire
- Mark your calendar and make plans to attend the CPCA 2016 ATS will be held in St. John's, NFLD on Nov. 14-18. The time to register is now!

St. John's Newfoundland to Welcome CPCA Chaplains for Annual Training Seminar and AGM November 14-18, 2016



Mark the dates now: Nov. 14-18, 2016.

Location: Holiday Inn St. John's Government Centre Hotel

180 Portugal Cove, St. John's Nfld

844-545-9257—Reservations

709-722-0506—Hotel Front Desk

Registrants are requested to make hotel reservations personally. Ask for Canadian Police Chaplain Association 2016 Annual Training Seminar room rate when registering

Registration and pre-event information is provided through Eventbrite on the CPCA website.

Cost: Members \$350

Non-members \$450

Core Courses to be Offered:

Stress Management
CISD PTSD
Responding to Crisis
Notification of Next of Kin
Ethics
Liability and Confidentiality

Enrichment Courses:

Road to Mental Recovery
The Role of a Chaplain in Natural and Other Disasters
(Full day course)
Gossip and Slander—The Root Causes of Workplace
Strife
“Don't Call Me Killer”—Police Involved Shooting Death

Scholarships are available for first-time attendees. An application form for the scholarship is available on our website by clicking on "Conferences" and then on "Peterborough" - the sponsorship application will pop out of Peterborough.

Our CPCA Executive set as one of their 2016 goals to have our website updated and as of October 15 it should be fully operational. To register for the CPCA Annual Training Seminar in St. John's or for more information on the CPCA, please visit our new website at

<http://www.canadianpolicechaplains.com/>

Fort McMurray Rebounds

By Chaplain Robert Parmenter

The lingering smell of smoke kept [McMurray Gospel Assembly](#) from holding worship services for five weeks, but on June 12th the church was finally able to conduct public services for the first time since the devastating wildfires that swept through the area in early May. Robert Parmenter, associate pastor at MGA, and Chaplain for the Wood Buffalo RCMP detachment, reports that about half of the city's population has since returned. He says that while the church building itself did not sustain any physical damage, it had taken a while to "almost" clear up the smoke. Their first gathering was a great service with a time of communion and a lunch together afterwards.

"We still have lots to do," Parmenter says. "We have identified over 44 families in our church alone who have lost everything." While their entire lives have been shaken, more than those who lost little or nothing, Parmenter notes that **none escaped entirely**. "We have all been affected in one way or another," he says, "but God is still on the throne and his name will be glorified."

Out of the ashes, good things come.

Parmenter has heard stories of the fire reuniting families who had not spoken for a long time but are now rebuilding their relationships. Others have surrendered their lives to God in the aftermath, recognizing that **Someone** was watching over them.

A father and his three sons, separated for many years, reconnected because of the fire. They were finally able to forgive each other. "This story was particularly touching," says Parmenter. "After being back in Fort McMurray just over a week, the father passed away from a heart attack at the age of 55. The fire made it possible for him to reconcile with his boys."

Parmenter had the privilege of doing the funeral service June 14th. "Out of the raging fire came a reconciliation that brought the family back together," he says. "We are believing in God for

great things in the coming weeks and months."

Parmenter tells another story of a couple, who had been not talking for a few months, and was looking at marriage separation. That was not what God had in mind, so because of the fire they have reconnected, have reconciled, and are committed now more than ever and have asked if he would renew their wedding vows. What was heading in the wrong direction has now turned around and is stronger than ever. Parmenter comments, "Many times as we trust and put our faith in God, what is meant for destruction can be turned around for the good. There are so many other stories that we have heard and many we have not heard yet because the people are not back. I believe in September, we will hear other stores of seeing the hand of God in all that happened."

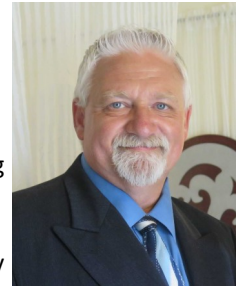
"We can look at all the devastation of the fire," says Parmenter, "or we can look at positive things. Fire brings destruction and devastation but it also refines, and brings new growth. Because of the fire, new growth is already taking place, both in nature and in the church."

Some looked at burnt trees and destruction; others saw new growth.

McMurray Gospel Assembly saw new people attending worship in God's house since the fire, "and it is only the beginning," says Parmenter. The church believes God will be glorified as people who lost everything will receive new houses and a new start—both spiritually and materially.

The church asks for continued prayer. "We still have a long road ahead of us," says Parmenter. People in some areas with houses still standing have not yet been allowed back home to live. It could be September or longer before restrictions are lifted.

(Please see Prayer for Fort McMurray →page 4)



Fort McMurray Rebounds

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So for all the challenging days ahead, the people of McMurray Gospel Assembly appreciate your prayers.

Looking back on the experience, Parmenter reports:

‘As Chaplain for the RCMP, it has been a privilege to serve with them and be part of their family. I am so impressed with all of the members, support staff as we sat and talked about the whole event from the start to the returning dates. While there could have been a lot of anger, bitterness coming from this event, it was quite the opposite and while there was constructive criticism, there were many great suggestions as to what needs to be improved in moving forward. But all the meetings were very positive and thankful for the way everyone pulled together and stepped up to the plate. They felt they had a job to do and they did it for the municipality of Wood Buffalo. While we appreciate all the fire fighters did to save our city, I am impressed with the statement that was made that” While the firefighters fought to save our city, it was the RCMP who saved the people”. WOW, it was the members that got almost 90,000 people out without injury, or loss of life. In fact during the evacuation, there were babies born, so new life started right away. Words fail to express.

The mayor and municipal leaders are so appreciative

of all that the members did to ensure the safety of the residents of Wood Buffalo.

Words cannot convey the thanks and appreciation that has been shown to them since their return. The road ahead is unknown and we would appreciate continued prayer support for Fort McMurray, as well as all the members and support staff of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo RCMP Detachment.

Many thanks to all of you, who have kept us in your prayers and for the many outpourings of support, in whatever way it is needed, for all of us. I know you will be blessed for doing this.”

May God Bless You Everyone.

Robert Parmenter
Chaplain - Interfaith

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We Are Looking For Your Stories and Input

CPCA chaplains serve in many different contexts and places across Canada. We would like to highlight some of the work you do.

If you have a story to tell about your experiences with police chaplaincy, consider writing a short article to share with other chaplains.

Have you read a good book or do you know of an upcoming training event in your area? Deadlines for our quarterly publications are the 15th of March, June, September and December. We would like to hear from you. Submissions may be sent to:

marion.jamer@gmail.com

Devil's Night

By Richard Vander Vaart, Police Chaplain in St Thomas, Ont.



The arrangement for chaplain ride-alongs was simple: show up at BOLO and you'll be assigned to an officer. You can ride for an hour or two or as much of the twelve-hour shift as you're able to complete. It seemed like a fun idea to go out on "Devil's Night" (October 30th) and see what shenanigans our officers might face. BOLO was done and the Staff Sergeant assigned me to the officer who was intently staring at the tile pattern on the floor. Naturally, he was chosen.

A couple of expletives later and a caution from the Staff to "watch the F-bombs" and we were ready to face the evening. He radioed in, noted he had a chaplain on board, and the night began. It was fine by me, funny actually, and awkward for him. "WTF do you actually do? You a f-king cop wanna be?" I had heard it before. There was no chance to answer. We were called to a park where a couple of kids were smoking up. Fifteen minutes later, this officer had them. It was cool to see the professionalism with which he worked.

After the loads of paper work—one thing that stands out for me as a chaplain is how much paper work there is for officers to complete—we were on the road again. Now on foot, chasing some youths who were throwing eggs at passing cars. I was not keeping track of the F-bombs that were muttered at the thought of running, chasing these kids down and perhaps getting pelted ourselves. The chase was on. Two other officers caught them. "At least there's no #*\$% paperwork on this one!" he taunted, waiting for me to react.

For a few hours I got out at each stop, at all the calls. Back in the car he'd swear again. I knew what was happening. Then a call went out to look for a stolen vehicle. We were in the part of town that had a few access points to the river. A perfect place to dump a stolen pick-up. Near the water we saw a pick-up, wrong colour, wrong model, and unfortunately for the two youths in the pick-up, wrong time. The pick-up was rocking. The officer was knocking on the window and I stayed in the police car, chuckling to myself. He told the shame-faced young man to zip up

and get out of the area as they were trespassing on private property. Gravel flew in all directions as the lad drove out of there as quickly as possible.

Now I was facing an angry officer. He wove together an impressive tapestry of swear words as he asked me why I didn't come out with him this time? I had been out on the foot-chase, I'd been out for the all the other stops, why did I stay in the car this time?

"Look at me," I said. "I'm wearing a clerical collar. The poor kids were embarrassed enough to see you. Imagine if then they saw me, clerical collar and all. And what would I say to them? Something like, 'I see you have consummated this relationship, would you like me to officiate it now?'" The officer laughed. He didn't stop for a couple of minutes. "Chappy, you are all-right."

"Now I was facing an angry officer. He wove together an impressive tapestry of swear words as he asked me why I didn't come out with him this time?"

Over the course of the next hour or so, I realized why he was so hesitant with me in the car. Was I evaluating his work? Would I report his actions to his superior? Why did we need chaplains anyways? All great questions. Here are some answers: No, I was not evaluating his work. No, I do not report to his superiors.

We need chaplains because it seems everyone is happy to see the fire truck arrive, but very few people are happy to see the police officer arrive. As a chaplain, I represent the many, many ordinary citizens you'll never come into contact with, the ones who are not criminals, not drug-dealers, but are the citizens who wave, who pray for you and are thankful for your work.

You need a chaplain because there are times you see the worst of the human condition. There are times when you are at a suicide or a traffic accident and
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Devil's Night

(→ page 5)

you wonder, "Is my kid safe right now?" In those moments, you don't want to appear weak in front of your peers. But you can admit your fears to me and know they're safe. You are a cop; but you are human first. Often being a cop means you don't admit your fear. Being human is to admit your fear and struggles in a safe place and then to go on from that moment continuing to do the good you do.

- Richard Vander Vaart and his wife Carolyn live in St. Thomas, Ontario where he has been a parish minister for 22 years and for the last 10 years has been a volunteer police chaplain as well. He enjoys running and swimming. This article is reprinted from The Blue Line magazine.



From the Editor's Desk

Crisp, frosty mornings and the fall colours herald the changing season. Here in Atlantic Canada the forecast is for a snowy, cold winter. Time has slipped away, and my plans for an earlier release of the September newsletter have been sabotaged by a rash of "bad calls" that have meant defusings and debriefings with first responders. I marvel at how resilient police officers are in the midst of so much tragedy, even as I follow up with several who are willing to share their struggles. I am thankful for my training in CISM and

Road to Mental Readiness.

I am reminded that the role of a police chaplain is to walk with the officers and members we serve., but I often find that we share each others burdens. When they ask how I am after I have listened to their stories, they are showing a genuine concern for how I am reacting to the horrific scenes they have described. It is then that we truly travel the road together and have each other's backs. The conversations deepen and we are able to talk about the things that really matter.

Frigid temperatures and snowstorms are a predictable part of life here in New Brunswick. So are the motor vehicle collisions with fatalities, domestics, murders, missing persons, and other calls that police respond to on a frequent basis. Taking time to prepare for the challenges we will face helps us become resilient in the tough times. Part of the preparation is building a strong network of caring people for times when life can overwhelm us. The CPCA Annual Training Seminar is a great place to meet people who share in ministering to law enforcement officers and to add new tools to your existing toolbox. I hope to see you there!

May you be blessed by good friends, and wise counsel as we prepare for the days ahead,

Chaplain Marion Jamer, Editor

The Lighter Side

At the Pearly Gates, a taxi driver and minister are waiting in line. St. Peter consults his list and says to the taxi driver, "Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

St. Peter next greets the minister saying, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Just a minute," says the minister. "That man was a taxi driver, and he gets a silken robe and golden staff while I get a cotton robe and wooden staff. How can this be?"

"Up here, we work by results," says St. Peter. "While you preached, people slept; while he drove, people prayed."



It Is Not Too Late To Pay Your CPCA Dues!!

Here's a quick reminder that CPCA dues prior to March 31 were \$60, thereafter are \$75.

Thanks to all who've renewed already.

If you wish to remit using electronic transfer of funds (e-TF), please be in touch with our Treasurer Gord Demchuk directly by email: gord.demchuk@gmail.com

Please make cheque payable to:

Canadian Police Chaplains Association
c/o Brian Krushel, Registrar
2803 – 55th Street

Updating Training Information

The 2016 CPCA Executive is focusing on training this year. Have you updated training you may have done that should be included in your CPCA records? For more information, check out the CPCA website under Information/ Membership Certification Program.



Canadian Police Chaplain Association

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